

DAY 7 OF "MATAVELE CASE" TRIAL

"Comrade" Machava: a deponent who should be seating on the dock



Seven months after the murder of Anastácio Matavele, the car used in the crime remains registered in the name of Henriques Albino Machava, Mayor of Chibuto. The guarantee was given yesterday by him when heard as a deponent in a case in which he was already a defendant.

This means that, legally, "Comrade Machava" remains the owner of the Toyota Mark X

that was carrying the GOE platoon who killed the social activist Anastácio Matavele at point-blank, one week before the 2019 General Elections.

In fact, being the owner of the car used in the murder, Henriques Machava's name was on the list of defendants during the provisional indictment. However, after the contradictory instruction was finished, the Public

Prosecutor decided to set aside “comrade Machava” and kept the name of Ricardo Manganhe, the so-called buyer of the car, in the final indictment.

Manganhe is the supposed buyer because no document proves that he bought the car from the Chibuto Mayor: the title deed is in the name of Henriques Machava; there is no declaration of purchase and sale (public deed) signed by both; and, as it seems, even the proof of payment has not yet been submitted.

Machava told the court that on August 29 or 30, he received the deposit slip of 200 thousand meticals related to the payment of the first installment of the sale of the Toyota Mark

X. When asked if he had already received the remaining amount of 50 thousand meticals, the deponent responded positively.

However, he couldn’t tell when he received the last installment of the sale of his car. That is, Henriques Machava has in-memory facts that occurred nine months ago, namely the date of the payment of 200 thousand meticals, but he no longer remembers when Manganhe paid the last installment of 50 thousand meticals. Today, Friday, he promised to provide to the Court the proof of the payment, whose oral agreement stated that it would be done within two months, that is, until October 2019.

Machava was in Maputo the day Matavele was murdered

speaking to the Court, the Mayor of Chibuto said that his driver learnt that the car was for sale the day the two went to the mechanic who had the Toyota Mark X in his custody. “He followed the conversation I had with the mechanic and learned that the car was for sale when he said he hadn’t found a customer yet”.

However, Vitorino Muchanga had already told the Court, minutes before, that it was “his boss”, Machava himself, who instructed him to inform the mechanic that the car was for sale. When confronted with these statements, the Mayor of Chibuto admitted that he may have spoken to the driver, but he did not remember since the “process of selling the car had been going on for a long time”.

When asked to clarify under what circumstances Ricardo Manganhe, an official from the municipality of Chibuto, contacted him to purchase the car, Machava replied that, first, he spoke with the driver, Vitorino. “It was only later that I had contact with Ricardo. In this interaction, Ricardo said that he did not have the full amount for the payment. After solving this issue of money for the payment, I told him that he could do everything with Vitorino”.

Regarding the involvement of the car in the crime, Machava explained that he learnt that it had been used in the crime against Matavele through his mechanic, who lives in Xai-



-Xai. He was in the city of Maputo. “I tried to talk to Manganhe, but he had his cell phones off.”

On the following day, October 8, the Mayor said that he saw Manganhe in the celebrations of Chibuto City Day, but did not speak to him. “On the 9th, I called him to my office and asked him to explain to me what would have happened to the car. He replied that he had lent the car to Nóbregas”.

Coincidence or not, the fact is that Henriques Machava met Nóbregas Chaúque, one of GOE officers who died in the accident. “Nóbregas’ uncle married my cousin”. That is, Manganhe bought the Toyota Mark X from his superior and lent it to his friend Nóbregas, who, in turn, is related to the Mayor of Chibuto.

And also: In the provisional indictment, it is said that Manganhe kept his cell phones

offline on October 7 and 8 and that he was not present at the commemoration of Chibuto City Day.

When asked concerning the reasons for the non-existence of a declaration that attests that the car was actually sold, the deponent replied that he never imagined that “a pro-

blem would happen”.

Just yesterday, the Court heard the owners of the three cars that were parked at the scene of the accident and were damaged, and the owner of the mechanic shop, who saw part of his fence knocked down by the Toyota Mark X carrying Matavale’s murderers.

A deal done between colleagues of the municipality of Chibuto

Located about 70 kilometers from the Court that tries Matavele’s case, Chibuto has always been a reference in the hearing and trial sessions. And yesterday was no exception. Apart from the Mayor of Chibuto, another deponent, who is also an official in the same municipality, was heard. His name is Vitorino Muchanga, protocol driver for Henriques Machava and an intermediary for the sale of the car.

That is, the car business, or rather, the hypothetical car business involved Mayor Machava, his protocol driver, and a mu-

nicipality employee, Ricardo Manganhe. Furthermore, deponent Alfredo Chichongue, appointed by the defendants as the person who distributed Frelimo’s campaign material to members of the platoon on October 4, 2019, said he knew Nóbregas Chaúque. On his Facebook page, Chichongue appears in many gatherings with the Mayor of Chibuto, Henriques Machava. Nevertheless, the investigation into the Matavele murder failed to demystify the “web” of Chibuto, that seems to have a connection with those responsible for the crime.

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