

## **Carlos Cardoso murder trial update**

**10th December**

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### **Metical journalists testify**

Maputo, 10 Dec (AIM) - Two colleagues of murdered Mozambican journalist Carlos Cardoso on Tuesday told the Maputo City Court of visits made to Cardoso's offices by two of the six men charged with the assassination.

Victor Matsinhe and Zacarias Couto were reporters on "Metical", the daily newsheet owned and edited by Cardoso, and Couto was also the "Metical" office manager.

They both said that Carlitos Rashid, the man who has confessed to firing the shots that killed Cardoso, visited the "Metical" office very regularly in October and November 2000.

He would arrive in the late afternoon to buy a single copy of the paper, but would never have the right change. While the "Metical" staff looked for change for a large banknote, Rashid had plenty of time to spy on the office and on Cardoso.

When the "Metical" staff became suspicious, they asked Rashid where he worked. He gave them the addresses of two Maputo shops, but when these were checked, their owners said they had no employee of that name.

The "Metical" staff demanded to know why Rashid did not take out a subscription to the paper, but never received a satisfactory reply. The last time he bought the paper was 17 November: when he returned, five days later, it was with an AK-47 rifle, the weapon that snuffed out Cardoso's life a couple of hundred metres from the "Metical" offices.

The two journalists also confirmed that Anibal dos Santos Junior ("Anibalzinho"), the man accused of organising the death squad, and who is being tried in absentia, visited the "Metical" office twice.

Matsinhe said that, one evening in October 2000, Anibalzinho came to buy the paper, while Cardoso was working on his computer.

He asked the "Metical" staff "Is that white guy Carlos Cardoso ?" On a second occasion, Matsinhe saw Rashid get into the same car as Anibalzinho.

Matsinhe also told the court that a "Metical" security guard warned the paper's management about a red Citi-Golf he had seen parked near the paper one afternoon. It stayed there for a long time, but as soon as Cardoso drove away, the Citi-Golf took off in

pursuit. The staff were concerned enough to ring Cardoso's destination, the offices of the General Union of Maputo Cooperatives, to check that he had arrived safely.

Some weeks later, on 22 November, it was a red Citi-Golf that the death squad used to ambush and murder Cardoso.

Defence lawyers demanded to know whether any additional security measures were taken after the suspicions of the "Metical" staff were aroused. The presiding judge, Augusto Paulino, objected to this line of questioning. By suggesting that "Metical" was careless about security, the lawyers sounded as if they were "trying to turn the victim into the guilty party".

Eduardo Jorge, the Portuguese lawyer representing money lender Momade Assife Abdul Satar ("Nini"), one of those charged with ordering the murder, treated the two Mozambican journalists with open contempt, particularly when Matsinhe failed to understand one of his questions. When asked what issues had most concerned Cardoso towards the end of his life, the first one that sprung to Matsinhe's mind was the fraud at the country's largest bank, the BCM, through which the equivalent of 14 million US dollars was stolen.

Since those publicly accused of the fraud, in the pages of "Metical" and elsewhere, include Nini Satar, and other members of the Satar family, this was not a reply Eduardo Jorge wished to hear. He demanded to know what Cardoso had written about the second privatised bank, Austral, and was disdainful when Matsinhe said he could not remember.

In fact, as a glance through back issues of "Metical" will show, Cardoso did not write much about Austral in the closing months of his life. He was certainly investigating the bank, and did not believe the management's claims that the bank's recent losses were relatively small: but the collapse of Austral, and the exposure of the bank's catastrophic lending practices, did not occur until April 2001, over four months after Cardoso's death.

Matsinhe also recalled that Nini Satar, and his brother and co-accused Ayob, had visited "Metical" to reply to the articles Cardoso had written about them. When Jorge asked whether Cardoso had ever expressed fear of the Satars, Matsinhe replied "Carlos Cardoso was not afraid of anyone, and treated everybody with respect".

A third witness, student Eliseu Jamine, was leaving classes on 22 November 2000, when he saw the ambush. He told the court he had seen a blue vehicle (the "Metical" Toyota) driving up Avenida Martires de Machava, pursued by a red Citi-Golf.

He saw the cars side by side, and thought at first they had crashed. Then he heard the sound of shots, and realised this was no traffic accident.

Jamine said he heard first one shot, then several others, "maybe six or seven", in quick succession.

But he did not hang around to look at the killers: instead he ran to a nearby stall, and alerted a security guard, who was also unwilling to tangle with the gunmen. But by then the shooting, which only lasted a few seconds, was over. Jamine was unable to identify any of the occupants of the Citi-Golf.

The court session ended early because two other witnesses called for Tuesday did not appear. One, Luis Matusse, could not be located and the prosecutor, Mourao Baluce, believed he had gone to South Africa.

But the second, Vasquinho Matavele, had received the subpoena - and disobeyed it. He told the court official he would not appear at the trial "because my personal safety is not guaranteed".

Paulino was not amused, and issued arrest warrants for the two absent witnesses.

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### **Lawyer tries to impose censorship**

Maputo, 10 Dec (AIM) - Eduardo Jorge, the Portuguese lawyer who represents Maputo loan shark Momade Assife Abdul Satar ("Nini"), one of the men charged with ordering the murder of journalist Carlos Cardoso, on Tuesday tried to gag the Mozambican press.

He objected to an article published on the front page of the latest issue of the weekly paper "O Pais", under the title "Nini may be involved in the death of Siba-Siba".

The article suggested that those responsible for the murder of Cardoso on 22 November 2000 may also have ordered the killing, on 11 August 2001, of the chairman of the Austral Bank, Antonio Siba-Siba Macuacua. Jorge requested the presiding judge, Augusto Paulino, to summon the editor of "O Pais", Ramos Miguel, to explain himself before the court, and tell it whatever he knew about the Siba- Siba case.

"This systematic sort of article must be ended", spluttered Jorge. "No more of this type of news items must appear - or at least their authors must appear before this court to explain on what basis they are writing them".

"Have you read the Mozambican press law ?", Paulino asked Jorge mildly. The Portuguese lawyer admitted that he did not have a detailed knowledge of Mozambican media legislation "It seems to me", remarked Paulino, "that the level of aggressive reporting in our media in recent years is very high.

If we start hauling editors before the court, then we'll never finish judging the case".

"Dr. Eduardo Jorge does not know our press very well", the judge added, and then suggested that, if anyone was upset by media coverage, they should opt for the remedies available under the press law - either demand the right of reply, or start libel proceedings.

Jorge, however, insisted that journalists must be held responsible for what they write. He claimed it would be "complicated" to use the press law, "and it won't have any effect".

Asked for his comments, prosecuting attorney Mourao Baluce said it made no sense to question an editor about the Siba-Siba murder in a court that was trying a completely separate crime, the murder of Carlos Cardoso.

The Cardoso family lawyer, Lucinda Cruz, pointed out that there was nothing new in the "O Pais" story: the same claims had appeared elsewhere in the press weeks ago, and Nini Satar had publicly replied to them. Paulino noted that throughout the preliminary investigations, in the two years since the death of Cardoso, articles had appeared in the media, some of which caused judges "to shake their heads sadly".

"But we never got into a war with the media", he stressed.

The "O Pais" article "is simple stuff. There have been much more violent articles" "Let us follow the normal procedure and use the press law", urged Paulino. "This trial will never end if we subpoena an editor every time a paper publishes something we don't like".

<http://www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news/newsletter/Cardoso11.html>