



MOB JUSTICE AND THE RIGHT TO LIFE IN MITYANA DISTRICT.

A CASE STUDY OF MITYANA TOWN COUNCIL

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ABSTRACT

Mityana has become a den of mob justice in spite of the existing legal framework. The study was therefore bent on establishing why this happened that led to a violation of not only the right to life but also a number of other rights. The aim of the study was to investigate the causes of mob justice in relation to the right to life, assess the existing legal framework from the human rights perspective as well as analysing how widespread was the vice of mob justice in Mityana. A case study of Mityana Town Council was undertaken with a sample population of 106 chosen for a quantitative study. A qualitative study took a total of 6 focus discussion groups each composed of 6 people and 38 village Local Council Chairpersons who participated as key informants. The selected sample population included the youth, the boda-boda riders, civil servants, politicians among others. The causes of mob justice in Mityana were found to range from failures of police, corruption, ignorance of the law, loopholes in the judiciary, weak laws, love for quick justice, social behaviors, rampant and habitual criminality, poor leadership and economic problems but with corruption in the enforcement bodies taking the lead. The cases that attracted mob justice were murders, thefts, witchcraft and assaults. Mob participation took a form of both organised and community mob justice. The lead perpetrators were mainly the youth and the boda-boda riders. A small group of the educated and those that attended LC and Police meeting did understand that the 1995 Constitution did enhance protection of human rights but were completely ignorant about the international instruments on human rights. The municipal law was deemed ineffective due to corruption, weak laws among other causes. Mob justice affected the whole of Mityana District with at least all the villages having had one or two cases of mob violence. Owing to this, mob related cases were on the increase in Mityana District and therefore the government needed to take up its mace as the lead protector and promoter of human rights. The need to reform the enforcement agencies to enable an environment for zero tolerance for corruption is crucial, increasing remuneration for police and judicial officers as well as ironing out complaints of under facilitation can quickly culminate into a full fledged fight against mob justice in Mityana. This coupled with public sensitization and increased public confidence as a result of a reformed enforcement system will make mob violence something of the past.