

# Haffejee's ex-girlfriend tipped off the police, inquest hears

**Witness**

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Pietermaritzburg's Hoosen Haffejee got word a day before his arrest that his ex-girlfriend had tipped off the security branch about his political activities.

He was advised to leave the country immediately, but the following day could not be reached.

Two days later, on the morning of August 3, 1977, his family and friends were told he had died in detention, allegedly having committed suicide.

The ANC policy was that people who were detained must "hold out" for 24 hours to give their fellow activists time to disappear. After that time if they broke under torture it would be "understood".

Dr Kalappen Moodley.

This emerged on Wednesday in evidence by Dr Kalappen Moodley, a fellow activist and friend of Haffejee at the reopened inquest into Haffejee's death. He was 26-years-old.

The inquest is taking place in the Pietermaritzburg High Court.

Moodley and Mohamed Hanef Bhamjee testified yesterday that they were instrumental in recruiting Haffejee into the activities of the ANC and SA Communist Party.

Haffejee had been one of the youngest members to join the Indian Youth Congress in Pietermaritzburg chaired by Bhamjee. Both men also had extensive contact with him while he was studying in India and following his return to South Africa in 1976.

Moodley told Judge Zaba Nkosi that on July 15, 1977 when he visited Haffejee at his flat, he overheard a telephone conversation during which Haffejee was "quite rude" to the other person and slammed down the phone.

Moodley said Haffejee felt obligated to explain to him that he and his girlfriend had broken off their relationship and she didn't appear to be accepting of it.

He said he warned Haffejee that this was a "dangerous situation" for an activist to be in and that he advised him to resolve the issue amicably.

At the end of July, Haffejee went to Moodley's parents' home and gave them a "shocking report" that he had been

told by another nurse that his former girlfriend had reported him to the security branch.

He had responded by telling Haffejee to leave the country immediately and to confirm the following day that he was on his way out of the country. The next day, Moodley said he was unable to contact Haffejee and his phone “just rang”.

## Haffejee ‘did not break’ under torture

Bhamjee and Moodley were both emphatic that Haffejee did “not break” under torture following his arrest.

Bhamjee said if Haffejee had talked to people he knew, including his own brother, he would have been arrested.

Moodley said after hearing about Haffejee’s death he personally sat in his room for six hours thinking of the possibilities if he’d broken.

“The position was that you never take your own life...that is why the 24 hour rule was introduced.”

Mohamed Hanef Bhamjee.

“I certainly would have been picked up had he spoken. After six hours I went to Pietermaritzburg, to the family home. I saw the body and attended the funeral,” said Moodley.

Bhamjee and Moodley said ANC policy was that people who were detained must “hold out” for 24 hours to give

their fellow activists time to disappear. After that time if they broke under torture it would be “understood”.

They were also adamant that Haffejee did not commit suicide.

“The position was that you never take your own life...that is why the 24 hour rule was introduced,” said Bhamjee. The inquest will resume on Thursday.