

Let's Talk about Mob Justice

By Melisha Lottering

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It has been several months since a 22-year-old man was accused of stealing and nearly beaten to death by a group of young men in the street in Eldorado Park, Delaware Extension 7. It had been alleged that the young man stole from one of the houses on Delaware Street, Eldorado Park. Following the accusation, a group of young men took matters into their own hands and subjected him to mob justice. Community members were angered by the incident, with one resident stating that mob justice should not be a way of dealing with crime.

No, mob justice is not a way of solving violence; it just creates more violence. Mob justice is when a group of people in the community take the law into their own hands and punish someone for stealing, robbing, raping or committing any other crime. They may beat, burn or even kill the person instead of calling the police.

The reason why people resort to this behaviour is because they feel the justice system is failing us and is not trustworthy. In March 2026, in Eldorado Park, Delaware Extension 7, a 22-year-old man was subjected to mob justice after being accused of stealing and was nearly beaten to death. Community members were angry, and one woman felt that this should not be a way of dealing with crime.

Many people think mob justice is the only way to solve violence, but there are alternative ways. You can't fight violence with violence – it's senseless. When we fight violence by committing violence, we become part of the problem because it creates more violence.

Normalising violence has become an easy way to deal with the lack of service delivery. People feel that the police are not doing anything about crime, so they do it their own way by humiliating and hurting suspects.

I conducted an interview with one of the Eldorado Park residents to find out his view on mob justice. Chadewin Smith, aged 27, said: "I think using mob justice as a way to deal with crime is a factor that's contributing to violence. We want to fight crime by committing a crime, and in communities it has become the new normal. I believe if we as the community can work together to fight crime and find out what the reasons are behind the crime being committed, we can make a difference. We should create community groups where we report crimes and also have community watch."

Another community member, Valron Davids, added: "The community watch can also be a way to generate income for unemployed community members. We can charge each house in the community R50 or even less, depending on whether the household will be able to contribute that much, and use that money to pay the people who are patrolling. Keeping our community safe should be a priority, and if we stand united, we can overcome anything."

Finding alternative ways to deal with violence should be a peaceful way of dealing with violence. If communities can form community forums and discuss issues that endanger the community, they can make collective decisions and find ways to deal with violence or any other challenges they encounter.

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