

# Phoenix Unrest

2021 Phoenix Unrest Of South Africa and Its  
Consequences

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# Introduction

- The 2021 South African unrest, also known as the **Zuma unrest**, or **Zuma riots** was a wave of civil unrest that occurred in South Africa's **KwaZulu-Natal** and Gauteng provinces from 9 to 18 July 2021.
- **Reason:** the imprisonment of former President **Jacob Zuma** for contempt of court.
- **Resulting:** protests against the incarceration triggered wider rioting and looting.



## Jacob Zuma



- Former South African president **Jacob Zuma** was charged with corruption in March 2018, mainly in connection with the **South African Arms Deal**, known as the "**Strategic Defense Package**" worth R30 billion.
- On 29 June 2021, Zuma was sentenced to 15 months in prison for contempt of court.
- He was given until the end of 4 July to hand himself in, after which the **South African Police Service** would be obliged to arrest him.





# Fight For Zuma

- Supporters had gathered near his home with weapons to prevent his arrest.
- but he handed himself over to the police on **7 July**.
- Zuma was jailed at the **Estcourt Correctional Centre**.
- On **8 July 2021**, Minister of Justice and Correctional Services **Ronald Lamola**; announced something but violent protests by his supporters quickly developed into widespread looting in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.





# Consequences

## Civil Disorder

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# Riots And Looting

- On **9 July 2021**, the same day Pietermaritzburg High Court upheld his conviction and prison sentence, the unrest began.
- The riots continued on the evening of Sunday, **11 July 2021**.
- The violence quickly escalated, as of **22 July**, 337 people have died due to the unrest, and 3,407 were arrested.



# Racial Tension

- In the Indian-majority township of Phoenix, KwaZulu-Natal, some of the residents had armed themselves to fight off looters. (vigilantes)
- *India's Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar* negotiation with African *Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Naledi Pandor*.
- *Police Minister Bheki Cele* stated that the main motive behind the Phoenix riots was criminal and that racial issues were secondary.







These threats of violence were linked by  
some commentators to memories of  
the Durban riots in 1949



**Durban Riots**





On **3 August**, **Cele** stated that the rioting in Phoenix did have a partially racial nature. He explained that on 12 July, some residents had set up roadblocks and started patrolling the streets after rioting in Durban. Some of the vigilantes had started racially profiling people, mainly black people, and restricting their entry.



An illustration featuring a white rectangular sign held by two hands. The hand on the left is dark brown, and the hand on the right is light beige. The sign is centered in the upper half of the image. The background is a textured, light brown surface. Below the white sign is a dark brown rectangular area containing the text 'Washington Post'.

**African News**

An illustration featuring a dark brown rectangular sign held by four hands. The hands are of various skin tones: light beige, dark brown, and black. The sign is centered in the lower half of the image. The background is a textured, light brown surface.

**Washington Post**



# African News

- On the face of it, Phoenix is a peaceful South African town, with affluent homes, a shopping center, and several places of worship perched on a hill.
- So peaceful that Mahatma Gandhi started a settlement and printed a newspaper there to spread his ideas of non-violence in the early 20th century.
- But more than 30 people were killed three months ago on the streets of this mainly Indian town of 180,000 people, in an outbreak of vigilante violence as South Africa experienced its worst unrest in decades.
- The victims were mostly black residents of Inanda.
- Mobs overwhelmed police in Durban, 25 kilometers (15 miles) south of Phoenix -- prompting residents to form armed vigilante groups.



- 'It's racism'

The hangover from the violence has influenced political campaigning ahead of local elections scheduled for **November 1**.

Other township residents claimed they heard Indian vigilantes shouting, "***Kill the kaffirs***", using South Africa's worst racial slur.

***“We were made third-class citizens, while Indians were regarded as second-class citizens,”*** said Pastor Vusi Dube, who buried several victims in Inanda during the unrest.



# Washington Post

- Armed Indian vigilantes clashed repeatedly with black rioters, here again, today, as at least 30 more people died in what has now become the worst round of violence to hit this country since political unrest erupted 11 months ago.
- Mobs from the two factions fought a pitched battle with guns, rocks, clubs, and machetes on a hill overlooking the township and at the historic Gandhi settlement nearby. The site, founded by Indian independence leader Mohandas K. Gandhi, was later looted and burned.
- The security forces have appeared outnumbered and at times confused, and those in evidence today often seemed more intent on containing the unrest within township borders than confronting the rioters.
- The death toll during four days of intensifying interracial violence now is at least 54, according to tallies from area hospitals, with as many as a thousand injured.



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**#SouthAfrica:** 20 people from nearby townships were reportedly murdered in Phoenix since the outbreak of unrest in KwaZulu-Natal, as some of the grassroots mobilisation groups in Indian communities turned violent **#KZNViolence** **#PhoenixMassacre** **#SARIOTS** **#KZN**



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KwaZulu-Natal riots highlight ethnic tensions



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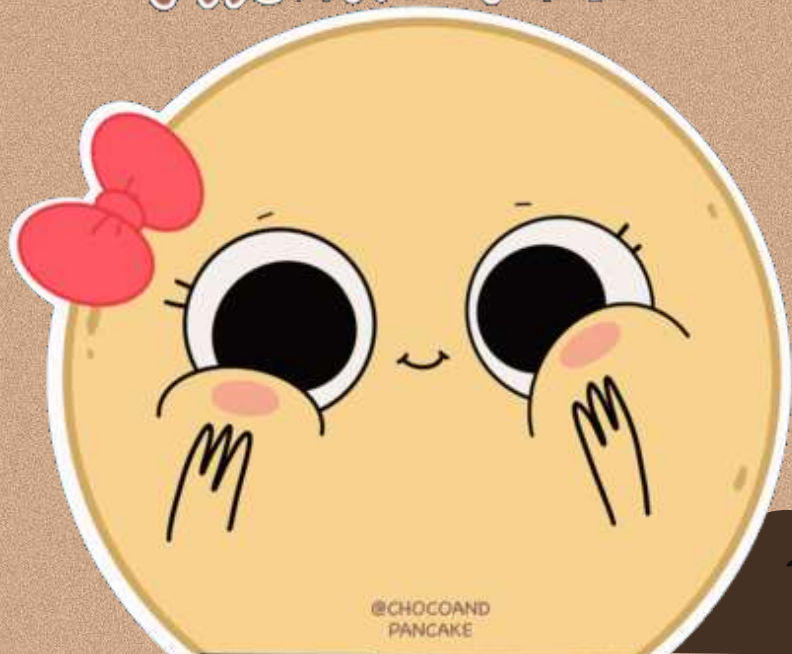
A dozen black religious leaders marched to the **#Phoenix** police station and prayed for peace. Pastor Vusi Dube said that only arrests would "quench the anger of the people".

**#SouthAfrica** **#PhoenixMassacre** **#KZNViolence**  
**#SARIOTS** **#KZN** **#Durban**





Thank You!



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