

News24.com | 3 KZN churchgoers killed after lightning strike [South Africa]

2016-02-13 21:00

By Mpho Raborife, News24

<https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/3-kzn-churchgoers-killed-after-lightning-strike-20160213>



(KZN EMS)

A tree at Fantini temple where the Shembe church members had gathered for church service were left wrecked on Saturday afternoon after the lightning had struck. Photo by KZN Emergency Medical Services

Harding – Three churchgoers were killed on Saturday and 38 others were injured when a bolt of lightning struck a tree in an open field in kwaMachi, near Harding, KwaZulu-Natal’s emergency medical services said.

“The deceased are members of the Shembe Nazareth Baptist Church who are known for worshipping under trees,” spokesperson Robert Mckenzie said.

All three women, aged between 50 and 65, died as the church leader was about to close the service.

Thirty-eight people managed to survive the incident with minor injuries and were taken to nearby hospitals. They were currently in a stable condition, complaining mostly of pain in their hands and feet, Mckenzie said.

Co-operative Governance MEC Nomusa Dube-Ncube cautioned people against using trees as a cover in cloudy conditions.

“We urge our people to be always on alert as we are in the middle of summer. I appeal mainly to our people in the rural areas who use trees for cover in their community gatherings, to disperse once clouds show there is going to be a storm.”

She sent condolences to the families of the three deceased