

# Richards Bay Minerals GM gunned down

Nico Swart, general manager of Richards Bay Minerals, was killed in a hail of bullets early on Monday morning, but police are still finding a motive to the murder.



Image: Rio Tinto

However, more than 20 high-calibre bullets had been fired into his vehicle, bearing all the hallmarks of a planned hit, by three unknown men who were on foot. He was declared dead at the scene.

Swart's murder was the latest of at least six assassinations linked to the mine since 2016. In 2019, mining activities were temporarily suspended when an employee was shot. Then, in the same year, Meshack Mbuyazi – a local leader - was shot dead while getting into his car after attending a meeting called by KwaZulu-Natal premier, Sihle Zikalala, to try and end an impasse in the Kwambuyazi community at Richards Bay where the mine was located.

In April, Rio Tinto, the owners of Richards Bay Minerals (RBM) - which employs thousands of locals - announced that its R6.7bn mining expansion project would remain on hold until security issues threatening its operations were resolved. it cited attacks on some of its employees.



Rio Tinto invests \$463m in Richards Bay Minerals operation

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