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## Death for Tanzania albino killers

**A court in north-western Tanzania has sentenced three men to death by hanging for killing a 14-year-old albino boy.**



Albino people live in fear in Tanzania and Burundi

They were found guilty of attacking Matatizo Dunia and severing his legs in Bukombe district in Shinyanga province.

In the past two years there has been a huge rise in murders of albino people. Witchdoctors use their body parts in potions they claim bring prosperity.

Dozens of people have been arrested, but the justice system is notoriously slow and this is the first conviction.

In July a court in neighbouring Burundi sentenced one person to life in prison and eight others to jail for the murder of albino people whose remains were sold in Tanzania.

### Lucrative business

The three men attacked and killed the young boy last December - one of a string of more than 50 albino murders that have taken place in Tanzania over the past two years.

They have the right to appeal against the death sentence - a punishment their lawyers described as unexpected.

Albino people are killed because potions made from their body parts are believed to bring good luck and wealth.

Witchdoctors in Tanzania and other parts of East Africa - especially Burundi - have made tens of thousands of dollars from selling potions and other items made from the bones, hair, skin and genitals of dead albino people.

Witchdoctors pay a lot of money for body parts.

The Tanzanian government has publicly stated its desire to end the killings.

In March, President Jakaya Kikwete called on Tanzanians to come forward with any information they might have.

Officials banned witchdoctors from practising, however many have continued to work.

Some correspondents say it is possible that Wednesday's death sentence will deter people from killing albino people.

But BBC Africa analyst Mary Harper says in a country as poor as Tanzania, it is likely that some murders will continue because so much money can be made from selling the body parts.

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There are estimated to be about 17,000 albino people living in Tanzania. They lack pigment in their skin and appear pale.

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