

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF NEW ZEALAND
AUCKLAND REGISTRY**

**I TE KŌTI MATUA O AOTEAROA
TĀMAKI MAKURAU ROHE**

**CRI-2024-044-000138
[2026] NZHC 101**

THE KING

v

**MATTHEW SNAYLAM
ZAK HUAKI KAMETA
HASAN AL-FADHLI**

Hearing: 4 February 2026

Appearances: A McClintonck, R Benic and S Meyerhoff for Crown
A Ives and M Goodwin for Defendant M Snaylam
R Mansfield KC and W Mohammed for Defendant Z Kameta
J Harder and C Baun for Defendant H Al-Fadhli

Sentenced: 4 February 2026

SENTENCING NOTES OF VENNING J

Solicitors: Meredith Connell, Auckland
Counsel: R Mansfield KC/W Mohammed, Auckland
A Ives/M Goodwin Auckland
A Holland/J Harder/C Baun, Auckland

[1] Matthew Snaylam, Zak Kameta, and Hassan Al-Fadhli, you are for sentence this morning because following a trial the jury found you guilty of murdering Jayden Mamfredos on 21 April 2023. The sentence for murder in New Zealand, unless it would be otherwise manifestly unjust, is life imprisonment.

[2] Given the circumstances of the murder, and having regard to your personal circumstances, it would not be manifestly unjust to impose a sentence of life imprisonment on each of you, including you Mr Snaylam. Ms Ives has responsibly acknowledged that even though you were 19 at the time of the murder and while your age is a factor it does not affect that position. I will return to your age later when considering the appropriate minimum non-parole period (MPI) for you. But for the moment I confirm that all of you will be sentenced to imprisonment for life for the murder of Mr Mamfredos.

[3] The real issue for the Court this morning is the MPI each of you must serve before you may be considered for parole.

[4] I start with the background facts to the offending. These will be familiar to you, but as the sentence takes place in open Court and in public, it is necessary for me to set out the facts. Having presided over the trial, and reviewed the notes of evidence, I have a clear view of the facts and of your respective roles in the murder of Mr Mamfredos.

[5] In April 2023, Mr Mamfredos was 19 years old. He was a friend of yours Mr Snaylam, as you had been at school together. At the time you were prospecting for the Head Hunters gang and knew Mr Kameta through that. Mr Kameta, you were a patched member of the gang and a methamphetamine dealer. Mr Al-Fadhli, you were a long-term friend of Mr Kameta and were associated with and close to other members of the Head Hunters gang. You were a user of methamphetamine.

[6] Mr Mamfredos himself was involved in drug dealing. He was apparently involved with the Bloods gang and had access to large amounts of methamphetamine.

[7] Mr Snaylam, you made Mr Kameta aware of your friend Mr Mamfredos' involvement in drug dealing and his access to significant quantities of methamphetamine. The three of you, I include you Mr Al-Fadhli, made a plan to kill Mr Mamfredos and to steal his methamphetamine. The plan was for you Mr Snaylam and you Mr Kameta to lure Mr Mamfredos to the rural property Mr Al-Fadhli was renting at Dairy Flat, to kill Mr Mamfredos there and to dispose of his body by burying it on the property using Mr Al-Fadhli's digger. Mr Al-Fadhli, your role was to make the property available and to ensure that your partner, her children and others were away from the property for a sufficiently lengthy period to enable the other two to kill Mr Mamfredos and dispose of his body as planned. You also assisted with the concealment of the site thereafter.

[8] Mr Mamfredos was lured to the property under the pretence that Mr Kameta had arranged a deal with a Black Power gang member to purchase his methamphetamine but rather than doing the deal, the other gang member would be "ganked". Mr Mamfredos was told the purchaser would be robbed and you would keep both the money and the methamphetamine. But there was no other Black Power member or gang member or purchaser of methamphetamine. The supposed "ganking" was no more than a ruse, an excuse, to lure Mr Mamfredos to Mr Al-Fadhli's property at Dairy Flat to be killed and to ensure that he brought the methamphetamine with him.

[9] Despite your counsels' submissions to the contrary, I accept, as the jury I consider accepted, that the plan was hatched in early April, most likely 11 April 2023, when the three of you met at Mr Kameta's home for approximately an hour. While the actual methamphetamine Mr Mamfredos had with him on 21 April was only manufactured later, you all knew he regularly had access to large quantities of methamphetamine, indeed that was your case at trial. Mr Snaylam, shortly after that meeting on 11 April, and while you were still with Mr Al-Fadhli, you contacted Mr Mamfredos by Facebook to arrange a meeting. Then on 21 April 2023, the three of you met in the early hours of the morning at the Dairy Flat address to finalise the details of the plan for that day.

[10] Just before 5 o'clock that afternoon on 21 April, Mr Al-Fadhli, you took your partner, her children and friends away from the property. You took them to various restaurants, gaming venues and shops and kept them away to ensure there was no-one at the property in order to enable Mr Kameta and Mr Snaylam to take Mr Mamfredos there to ensure they would be undisturbed and be able to carry out the plan, which you knew about, to kill Mr Mamfredos and to dispose of his body at your property.

[11] Shortly after Mr Al Fadhli left the address Mr Kameta, you arrived there. I infer that at the time you dug the grave which you were going to use to dispose of Mr Mamfredos' body, and then at about 8.45 pm Mr Mamfredos met with you and Mr Snaylam as arranged by Mr Snaylam at Birdwood Park in Ranui. Mr Mamfredos got into your ute and travelled with you to the Dairy Flat property. During that trip all three of you turned off your cell phones within minutes of each other. I reject the evidence of Dr Sathyendran that Mr Mamfredos was not in the ute. Indeed, Mr Kameta, Mr Mansfield KC effectively accepted on your behalf that he was. He clearly was.

[12] The GPS records from the ute driven by you Mr Kameta showed you and Mr Snaylam and Mr Mamfredos arriving at the Dairy Flat address around 9.10 pm. I accept that shortly after, it is not possible to say exactly when, Mr Mamfredos was shot in the head with a firearm and killed. It is not possible to say whether you Mr Kameta, or you, Mr Snaylam shot him, but one of you did and the other intentionally assisted or encouraged the shooting and knew of the intention to kill Mr Mamfredos. Mr Kameta, as Mr Mansfield has accepted on your behalf, you then disposed of the body by using the digger at the property. I have found you did so by burying him in the grave that you had prepared earlier that evening. The timing of the GPS data suggests that at this time and while you were burying Mr Mamfredos' body, Mr Snaylam you had driven down the access road to act as a lookout to ensure that Mr Kameta was not disturbed while burying the body. I reject Ms Ives' suggestion that Mr Mamfredos may have been killed while you were acting as a lookout. The background to the murder, the planning and the evidence supports the conclusion you were both present and with Mr Mamfredos when one of you fatally shot him.

[13] After Mr Mamfredos' body was buried, you both then left the address. Mr Al-Fadhli, you and your family and friends then returned to the address.

[14] During this time and over the following months all three of you took steps to ensure that Mr Mamfredos' body was not discovered. In the days and weeks following the murder Mr Al-Fadhli you arranged for the driveway to be paved with crushed concrete to ensure the grave site was covered over.

[15] Mr Snaylam, you actively and directly deceived Mr Mamfredos' family. You pretended to be a concerned friend and purported to send a message to Mr Mamfredos despite knowing you had been responsible for his death. You continued to communicate with Mr Mamfredos' mother and lied to the Police. All three of you lied and hampered the Police inquiries when you were spoken to.

[16] Mr Mamfredos' body was finally discovered on 12 January 2024, after the Police had conducted a second major excavation at the property.

[17] The primary purposes of sentencing in this case are:

- (a) to hold you all accountable for the harm done, by the killing of Mr Mamfredos, and that is the harm to Mr Mamfredos' family but also to the community by such killings;
- (b) to promote a sense of responsibility in each of you for the harm you have caused;
- (c) to denounce your actions;
- (d) to the extent possible, to deter others from committing similar offending;
- (e) in this case, counsel have referred to it, but I consider the purposes of your rehabilitation and reintegration into society in due course to be secondary considerations.

[18] Your offending has affected the community generally as I have said and Mr Mamfredos' family in particular. The victim impact statements read to the Court this morning and the others I have read confirm the ongoing impact your killing of Mr Mamfredos has had on his family. Mr Mamfredos himself was involved in drug dealing as I have said but that in no way lessens the seriousness of your actions or the sense of loss felt by his family.

[19] The relevant principles the Court has regard to are the gravity of the offending; the seriousness of the offence itself; the level of your culpability; and the need to achieve consistency with other sentences to the extent that is possible.

[20] Aggravating and mitigating factors under s 9 of the Sentencing Act 2002 are also relevant.

[21] Relevantly, as you have heard counsel discuss, s 104 of the Sentencing Act provides that in certain circumstances the Court must impose an MPI of at least 17 years unless it would be manifestly unjust to do so.

[22] In the present case, I am clear that s 104 is engaged. Your murder of Mr Mamfredos involved a premeditated and carefully calculated plan formulated over some time to kill him for the approximately one kilogram of methamphetamine he had at that time. It was worth between about \$80,000 and \$120,000. I also consider the murder you were all party to was committed with a high level of callousness. The deliberate killing of Mr Mamfredos in cold blood for the value of the methamphetamine was itself callous. Your actions in deliberately burying his body in the preprepared grave in an attempt to ensure it was never found were also callous. The callousness of your actions and the little value you placed on his life was apparent in your subsequent interactions with and misleading of his family. It was also exemplified by your comments Mr Kameta in an intercepted telephone conversation. During that conversation you referred to Mr Mamfredos as just "some bloods hang around" and joked about his disappearance.

[23] There are a number of aggravating factors of the murder. First the deliberate use of a firearm which you brought to the scene to kill Mr Mamfredos. Next, the harm

that you caused Mr Mamfredos' family, which was exacerbated by the length of time his body remained unrecovered because of your deliberate actions to conceal it; the disposal of his body using a mechanical digger in a preprepared grave and concealing it for approximately eight months. Next, as noted, the offending was effectively a cold blooded execution for monetary gain. It was cynical and callous. Further, links to the Head Hunters gang and drug dealing is a relevant factor. While this was not a gang motivated killing or a sanctioned gang action, the allegiance that Mr Snaylam felt towards you Mr Kameta and the relationship Mr Al-Fadhli had with you because of the gang connection played a role in all of you working together in this way. The significance of that gang overlay is confirmed in your pre-sentence report Mr Kameta. But the short point is all of you were prepared to get involved in drug dealing, which I have no doubt was because of your familiarity with that through the gang and in this case ultimately that led to the murder of Mr Mamfredos for commercial benefit.

[24] Finally, as I have noted, there was the high degree of planning involved in the murder of Mr Mamfredos. That careful planning extended to the efforts you took after the murder to conceal your actions. Quite apart from the disposal of Mr Mamfredos' body, for example, Mr Kameta, you and your partner travelled to Tauranga that evening and later removed a pistol from the scene. Mr Snaylam, you and Mr Kameta discussed an alibi. You disposed of cell phones used during the time. You deleted social media accounts and sent a series of false messages.

[25] The Crown submits that, having regard to s 104 and the aggravating features of the circumstances of the offending in this case the appropriate starting point would be a 19 year minimum period of imprisonment for all of you.¹

¹ *R v Reddy* [2016] NZHC 1367; *R v Korewha* [2015] NZHC 308; *R v Rapira* [2003] 3 NZLR 794 (CA); *Dickey v R* [2023] NZCA 2; *R v TH* [2023] NZHC 630; *R v Gottermeyer* [2014] NZCA 205; *R v Frost* [2008] NZCA 406; *R v Williams* [2005] 2 NZLR 506; *R v Winders* [2016] NZHC 2964; *R v Winders* [2018] NZCA 277; *R v Nattrass-Bergquist* [2016] NZHC 1089; *Tihema v R* [2022] NZCA 444; *Harvey v Ministry of Primary Industries* [2020] NZHC 1357 citing *Reedy v Police* [2015] NZHC 1069; *Burns-Wong-Tung v R* [2024] NZCA 597, citing *Purutanga v R* [2023] NZCA 442; *Churchward v R* [2011] NZCA 531, (2011) 25 CRNZ 446; *Arahanga v R* [2014] NZCA 379; *Mehrok v R* [2021] NZCA 370; *R v Gu* [2023] NZHC 2109; *Price v R* [2021] NZCA 568.

[26] Ms Ives has submitted that having regard to a number of authorities,² the starting point for you Mr Snaylam would be 15 years before taking account of your relative youth at the time and psychological issues.

[27] Mr Mansfield also argues for a notional starting point of 15 years for you Mr Kameta before taking account of personal aggravating and mitigating features.³

[28] Mr Harder has argued for a notional starting point of 13 years for you Mr Al-Fadhli in the event the Court considered s 104 was engaged, although he argues it should not apply to you.⁴

[29] As I have found s 104 applies on two separate grounds, the issue is whether it would be manifestly unjust to impose an MPI of at least 17 years or more on each of you. In *R v Williams* the Court of Appeal confirmed the appropriate approach is a two-step one.⁵ If one of the factors in s 104 is engaged, as it is in this case, the Court must first assess whether there are factors which would make the imposition of an MPI of 17 years (or more) manifestly unjust. In that exercise the Court is to consider your culpability in relation to that and compared to “standard range” of murders to the extent that is possible. In doing so the Court takes account of the aggravating and mitigating factors of the murder. However the Court is required to have regard to the policy that where one or more of the s 104 factors are present effect should be given to the legislative policy which requires the Court to impose higher minimum terms of imprisonment that might otherwise have been the case.

[30] The Court must then decide the minimum term of imprisonment justified in all circumstances, having regard to your personal circumstances. Comparison with other cases is of some assistance. If the first step indicates the appropriate MPI is 17 years or more the minimum term must reflect that assessment. If the first step points to a

² *Berkland v R* [2022] NZSC 143 [2022] 1 NZLR 509; *Marong v R* [2020] NZCA 179, leave declined in Supreme Court in *Marong v R* [2024] NZSC 115; *Baillie v R* [2021] NZCA 458; *R v Li* HC Auckland CRI-2010-004-9725, 27 May 2011; *R v Rameka* [2024] NZHC 324; *R v Kriel* [2024] NZCA 45; *Dickey v R*, above n 1; and *Churchward v R*, above n 1.

³ *Moses v R* [2020] NZCA 296; *Orchard v R* [2019] NZCA 529; *Zhang v R* [2019] NZCA 507; *Gosset v R* [2019] NZHC 1366; *R v Casey* [1931] NZLR 594.

⁴ *R v Leuluaialii* HC Auckland CRI-2003-092-35815, 11 February 2005; *R v Cahill* [2022] NZHC 3030; *R v Zhao* [2022] NZHC 2919; *R v Yu* [2023] NZHC 1391; *R v Lewis* [2018] NZHC 1877;

⁵ *R v Williams*, above n 1.

lesser minimum term being justified the Court must then consider whether the imposition of an MPI of 17 years would be manifestly unjust.

[31] *In R v Gottermeyer* the Court of Appeal confirmed the approach in *R v Williams* and noted the requirement for the circumstances to be exceptional.⁶ Importantly however in *R v Williams* the Court had made it clear:⁷

... The Court may not, however, approach sentencing in s 104 cases on the basis that the 17 year minimum can be reduced whenever the Court considers that is appropriate. There is no warrant to interpret the provision merely as a guide to judicial discretion. The question of whether the outcome of the assessment would make a 17 year minimum term manifestly unjust must also be approached in a principled way.

[32] Having regard to the cases referred to by counsel and the circumstances of this particular case, including the aggravating features of the offending, I accept that both the planning and callousness of your actions were exceptional in this case.⁸ I consider the circumstances of your offending to be more serious than the cases that have been referred to by defence counsel. For example, I reject the suggestion that killing Mr Mamfredos by a single shot to the head was in some way less serious than other cases where the victim has been beaten or stabbed to death in a frenzy. The full circumstances of the killing must be considered. In this case they involved a breach of trust or friendship, a cold blooded and carefully calculated and preplanned execution of Mr Mamfredos for his drugs and their value. Mr Al-Fadhli, Mr Harder argued you did not know the identity of the victim or that the killing was for profit. You gave evidence and denied your involvement. The jury rejected your evidence in finding you guilty. I find you were a fully informed and willing participant in the plan that was originally discussed on 11 April. You knew exactly what was to happen. Mr Mamfredos was to be killed at your property and you knew why.

[33] In *R v Leuluaiālīi*,⁹ Mr Kopelani was a driver but had not actually participated in the killing. The Court imposed a 15 year MPI. However his culpability and involvement was substantially less than yours in the present case Mr Al-Fadhli. The

⁶ *R v Gottermeyer*, above n 1.

⁷ *R v Williams*, above n 1, at [54].

⁸ *R v Winders*, above n 1; *R v Nattrass-Bergquist*, above n 1; and *Tihema v R*, above n 1.

⁹ *R v Leuluaiālīi*, above n 4.

features of this case are quite different to that and in my judgment are more serious than the cases of *Rameka*, *Bailliee and Burns-Wong-Tong* that have been referred to for example.¹⁰ The other cases counsel have referred to in my view can be distinguished on various grounds, for example, in *Li*,¹¹ the offenders were immature 18-year-olds and the killing lacked the careful planning present in this case. In *Morris*,¹² the defendant had accepted responsibility by pleading guilty.

[34] In the circumstances of this case, I accept the Crown submission that an MPI of 19 years would be appropriate for the offending before having regard to your personal aggravating and mitigating factors. I then have regard to the personal aggravating and mitigating factors of each of you to determine whether they would lead to an MPI less than 17 years which could mean the imposition of an MPI of 17 years or longer would be manifestly unjust.

[35] Mr Snaylam, your upbringing has been described as normal. You generally had a good family life. While you shifted house regularly it is apparent your family are supportive, albeit that you have had a degree of familiarity with drugs and alcohol and a limited degree of violence in your life. You left school at 15 or 16 and started an apprenticeship in drain laying. Your family remains supportive. They and others have written letters of support for you. I have to say however the suggestion in some of the letters that you are a kind and compassionate young man is completely at odds with your behaviour towards Mr Mamfredos.

[36] It is clear from your pre-sentence report you do not accept responsibility for the offending. You say you were young and under the influence of the wrong crowd and older people and effectively in the wrong place at the wrong time. Your suggestion you wanted to distance yourself from what occurred is at odds with you being found in possession of a firearm months after Mr Mamfredos was killed. Also your conviction for injuring with intent to injure after the killing, which was a completely separate incident was also apparently gang related. The report notes your risk of reoffending is high. While I have considered the material in your support and the

¹⁰ *R v Rameka*, above n 2, *Baillie v R*, above n 2; and *Burns-Wong-Tung v R*, above n 1.

¹¹ *R v Li*, above n 2.

¹² *R v Kriel*, above n 2.

letters you have written, your letter is not an expression of true remorse at all. There is no acceptance of your role in the killing of your friend. You are not genuinely remorseful.

[37] The Crown have sought an uplift for your offending after the murder. Ms Ives argues for a totality adjustment to take account of the sentences imposed on you for that offending. You have served those sentences. I do not consider an uplift to be warranted or necessary but equally I do not consider any adjustment for totality is required either. The sentences were of a quite different nature and have been served. In my view the lack of uplift and those sentences balance each other out.

[38] Ms Ives emphasised your age and the psychological report which suggests your neurodivergent traits led to your leaving high school and going to a gym where you began associating with and idolising gang members. But your actions were not the impulsive actions of a young person who had no understanding of the consequences. You were a willing party in a premeditated and carefully planned murder. The planning took some weeks and you were involved throughout that process. Indeed, you were substantially responsible for Mr Mamfredos' death in that you were his friend and were responsible for luring him to the property to be murdered.

[39] However, I do take into account that at the time of the offending as a young man prospecting for the gang, you were subject to a degree of influence from Mr Kameta given his position in the gang. In the circumstances I consider the appropriate MPI for you, taking account of your relative youth and the influence that you were acting under, to be 17 years.

[40] Mr Kameta, you described your childhood as okay and mostly happy, but that gang associations were always present in the wider family. You say you were abused when you were a young boy which led to your use of alcohol and drugs. Your father has written a letter confirming that. You disclosed that abuse to him in recent years. You had a son at the age of 17 and you have maintained a good relationship with him. You and your brother whom you are close to were successful in business. Obviously you are a capable digger operator. Mr Kameta, there was no need for you to become involved in drug dealing which has led you to where you are today.

[41] Unfortunately you also do not accept responsibility for what you did. You continue to deny your offending. You told the probation officer you really couldn't say what had happened as you were in a "Catch 22" situation. Your denials are completely at odds with the evidence before the Court. If there was another story to be told you could have told the jury. You chose not to, as was your right, but there was no evidence to support the argument that was advanced on your behalf of any third party being responsible for the killing. Given the overwhelming evidence against you the jury quite rightly rejected that suggestion and found you guilty.

[42] The report writer suggests you appeared remorseful, however I do not accept that at all. You described the incident as "A fuck up. Something that went wrong and shouldn't have". It is hard to imagine anything further removed from genuine remorse than such statements. Your concern is only for your own situation and the impact of the sentence on you and your family. You also have previous convictions for violence and drug dealing.

[43] In June 2025 you were sentenced to four years' imprisonment for supplying methamphetamine. In *R v Gu* the Court accepted that when imposing a sentence for murder it may in some limited circumstances be appropriate to adopt an adjustment to the MPI on that basis.¹³ The Crown initially suggested that could apply to you. Ms McClintock now accepts perhaps the best approach is one of totality and I agree. I am not so sure that the analysis applied by Moore J in *R v Gu* applies in your case, but I do accept that as the non-parole period will be cumulative on your existing sentence, the Court is required to consider totality. Having regard to that totality and your personal circumstances the appropriate MPI in your case is 18 years.

[44] Mr Al-Fadhli, you were born in Kuwait. You migrated to New Zealand when you were three years old with your family. You describe your upbringing as 'alright'. There was no alcohol or drugs in your home. Your brother has deposed that you were subjected to racism and bullying because of your background. You started getting in trouble when you began hanging out with the wrong crowd. You suggest despite that you have a strong connection with your culture and Muslim religion. You associate

¹³ *R v Gu*, above n 1.

with members from gangs. You say that is due to your being raised in the same area and have known your co-defendant Mr Kameta for approximately 11 years. You accept at the time of your offending you were regularly using methamphetamine, cocaine and cannabis. You also deny any involvement and are not remorseful.

[45] Mr Al-Fadhli, you also have prior convictions but nothing of any particular relevance to the present offending. Again I decline to impose any uplift for those offences and previous convictions. However your involvement in the murder occurred while you were on bail for a charge of common assault which is an aggravating factor.

[46] As I have said, while you were not directly at the scene of the murder Mr Al-Fadhli, you facilitated it, and you were a willing participant in the plan. Using your property as the place where Mr Mamfredos was to be killed, and then to hide his body was an essential part of the plan. As the Crown submits your involvement was fundamental. You were fully aware of what was to happen. However, to reflect that you were not present at the time Mr Mamfredos was killed and to take account of your personal circumstances which were outlined by Mr Harder in some detail, I consider the appropriate MPI in your case to be 17 years.

[47] Given those conclusions there can be no question that an MPI of 17 years or more would be manifestly unjust in any of your cases.

[48] Please stand.

[49] Mr Snaylam, for the murder of Mr Mamfredos you are sentenced to life imprisonment. You are to serve a minimum term of 17 years. Mr Kameta, for the murder of Mr Mamfredos you are sentenced to life imprisonment. You are to serve a minimum term of 18 years. Mr Al-Fadhli for the murder of Mr Mamfredos you are sentenced to life imprisonment. You are to serve a minimum term of 17 years.

[50] Stand down.