



Sam Nkomo (1974 –)

MENDI DECORATION FOR BRAVERY IN SILVER

AWARDED TO
SAM NKOMO
FOR BRAVERY AND
FEARLESSNESS IN THE
FACE OF GRAVE DANGER
WHILE PROTECTING THE
LIVES OF TOURISTS NEAR
MADIKWE, NORTH WEST

On 27 July 2003, Sam Nkomo, a game ranger at the Jaci's Tree lodge, near Madikwe in North West, was driving two tourists in his off-road vehicle when an angry elephant unexpectedly attacked the vehicle.

The elephant buffeted the vehicle twice, piercing the bodywork with its tusks. One tourist was catapulted out of the open bodied vehicle, whereupon the elephant charged the tourist, eventually pinning him to the ground.

Having lost his game ranger rifle in the commotion, Nkomo reached for a branch of a tree and began beating the elephant vigorously, forcing it to retreat. With seven other elephants coming towards them, Nkomo protected the injured tourist by placing his own body in the path of the elephants and simultaneously contriving a tumultuous disturbance and clamour, which finally drove them away.

Sam Nkomo displayed great presence of mind, extreme bravery and fearlessness, and risked his own life to protect the lives of others.