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**HINDS COUNTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
ROBERT SHULER SMITH, D.A.**

PRESS RELEASE

Bennie Beal found guilty of murdering Shell station owner Dilip Patel over \$4.74 worth of gas

For Immediate Release
December 4, 2013

(JACKSON, MISS.) Hinds County District Attorney Robert Shuler Smith today announced Bennie Lederric Beal, age 18, 348 N. Flag Chapel Rd. in Jackson, was convicted by a Hinds County jury of murdering Dilip Patel, a resident of Madison, MS.

Patel, age 49, owned the Shell Station at 1141 Terry Rd. in Jackson. On the morning of September 5, 2011, he walked outside his business and confronted Beal, whom he believed was stealing \$4.74 worth of gas.

Prosecutors proved Beal then fired three shots at Patel, one of which struck him in the head. Patel died in the hospital the next day.

Hinds County Senior Circuit Judge Tomie Green will sentence Beal at a later date. He faces a mandatory life without parole.

"Bennie Beal was only 16-years-old when he gunned down Mr. Patel," noted Smith. "But youth is no excuse for such a terrible act.

"Even after six years in this job, I'm at a loss to comprehend how someone is killed over a few dollars of gas money," said Smith.

"All I can offer is justice for the Patel family."

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