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Oprah Winfrey ... devastated.
Photo by AP/Stephen Chernin

Oprah matron on sex charges!

By DANIEL THOBAGALE
THE MATRON of Oprah Winfrey's school appeared in court yesterday on charges that include the sexual assault of young girls!

Virginia Makopo (27) says she will plead NOT guilty to all charges against her.

They include:

- Assault,
- Indecent assault,
- Crimen injuria (wilful injury to the dignity of another) and
- Soliciting people to perform indecent acts.

The alleged victims include six young girls and one 23-year-old woman.

Because the girls are very young, court officials have ruled that their names and other details may NOT be published.

All the alleged victims came from the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls at Henley-on-Klip, south of Joburg.

Young girls from around the country had been carefully selected in a multi-million-rand project by the queen of US talkshow TV in the hope that they would become leaders in a future SA.

Makopo appeared in a jam-packed Sebokeng Regional
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Oprah is 'shaken to her core' by charges

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 Court.

Security was tight... everyone entering was searched by cops.

Prosecutor Alta Nieuwoudt said the accused woman would face a total of 13 charges.

It's alleged the matron fondled the girls' private parts and breasts. Those who did not want to be touched by her were allegedly assaulted...

Charges were eventually laid at the Sebokeng Police Station.

Because of Oprah's worldwide fame a large number of foreign TV reporters were in court.

Makopo was released on R3 000 bail.

Magistrate Thelma Simpson imposed strict

conditions. One of them states that Makopo may not enter the school premises.

She was also ordered to report at Sebokeng Police Station every Monday. She has also been barred from applying for a passport.

And she will be back in court on 13 December.

Winfrey said yesterday the abuse charges at her all-girl academy in South Africa was one of the most devastating experiences in her life.

"This has been one of the most devastating, if not the most devastating experience of my life," she said in a video news conference from Chicago.

"It has shaken me to my core."

