

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: INITIATION SCHOOL RAPIST GETS 17 LIFE SENTENCES

Seventeen life sentences were handed down to Johan Jabulani Mlombo (51) in the Nelspruit Circuit Court on Friday, after being convicted of seventeen counts of rape and three of sexual assault. His customary wife, Sister Mapalese Khoza (52) was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment for assault to cause grievous bodily harm which was wholly suspended for three years.

Rape carries a minimum of life sentence where the victim is under the age of 16, in this case 16 of the 17 victims were below the age of 16 when they were raped.

The incidents took place in August 2012 at an initiation school in Mahushu outside Hayzview in Mpumalanga. The victims told the court that Khoza lined them up and ordered them to strip naked. Mlombo inserted his finger and penis in their private parts in a dark room under the pretext of performing an initiation ritual.

In aggravation of sentence, victim impact statements were handed in to the court. According to the victim impact statement some of the victims are struggling at school, others have suicidal tendencies.

Advocates Dorah Ngobeni and Moeng Molatudi argued for the imposition of a minimum sentence. They contended that there were no compelling circumstances to deviate from the minimum sentence. They further argued that the accused was placed in position of trust by the parents of the children and used his status as a prophet (Sangoma) to violate young children.

Judge Strydom agreed with the state that there are no compelling circumstances to deviate from the prescribed minimum sentence. The judge said, "rape is an extremely

serious crime, even if a finger is used it remains rape. The manner in which their virginities were taken will leave psychological scars.”

The court ordered that the life sentences run concurrently.

The National Prosecuting Authority welcomes this sentence. The heavy sentence is in line with our commitment to combat sexual offences and gender based violent crimes.

Kind Regards,

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