

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 14 OCTOBER 2019**

**RE: CHILD RAPIST SENTENCED TO LIFE**

Last week Wednesday, the Cala Regional Court sentenced Mziyanda Mbedla (24) to life imprisonment after convicting him for the rape of a 9 year-old girl two years ago.

The court heard that on 03 October 2017, three girls who had gone to fetch dry cow dung for making fire were accosted by an unknown man near dongas in the village of Mbhenge in the district of Cala. Two of the girls managed to run away, but the eldest of them, aged 9, was cornered and raped. When she returned home, she told her grandfather that the person who raped her was a man who had been to their home earlier to borrow a saw.

A case of rape was opened at Cala police station and the grandfather was able to recall Mbedla as the person he had earlier lent a saw to. However, he had fled Mbhenge village, where he had been employed at a local Hardware shop for a few months. It took the police almost two years to trace him to his remote home village of Gobhoti, in the neighbouring district of Ngcobo.

Mbedla, who was also linked to the crime through DNA, pleaded guilty.

Addressing the court for an appropriate sentence, prosecutor Monde Magenu, stated that Mbedla's guilty plea could not be seen as a mitigating factor because he did so when he realised that the evidence against him was overwhelming. Had he not been arrested by the police in his hideout, justice would never have been realised for the young victim, prosecutor Magenu added. The court concurred and sentenced the rapist to life.

NPA welcomes the sentence with the hope that it will serve as a deterrent to like-minded rapists who intend targeting defenceless women and children.

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