

Media Statement



Tel: +27 12 845 6000

Email:
media@npa.gov.za

Victoria & Griffiths
Mxenge Building
123 Westlake Avenue
Weavind Park
Silverton
Pretoria

www.npa.gov.za

TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR RAPING AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD

Last week, the Ladysmith Regional Court sentenced Atiso Stenly Mofokeng (30) to life imprisonment after he pleaded guilty to raping an eight-year-old child near Elandslaagte in August 2020.

The victim was returning from school when she was approached by Mofokeng who asked her to go buy him cigarettes from the shop. He then grabbed her and forced her into a ditch where he undressed and raped her. He put his hand over her mouth to prevent her from screaming. When he was done, he asked her to get dressed. The victim immediately went home and told her grandmother.

Molefe was arrested after police received information through an informant and he was then positively identified by the victim. At first, he denied the charges against him and pleaded not guilty. However, on the trial date he changed his plea to guilty.

Initially, there wasn't anyone who witnessed the incident as the area was secluded, but, upon investigation a student from a nearby high school mentioned that he had seen Molefe exiting the ditch and a small child leaving shortly thereafter.

The Regional Court Prosecutor, Ashina Devi Singh submitted a Victim Impact Statement (VIS) to the court. In the statement, compiled by the victim and facilitated by the Court Preparation Officer, Sibusiso Ntombela, she said that she was afraid to walk outside or play with her friends. Her granny, a 73 year old woman, had to walk her to school. Also, the incident caused her mother to be hospitalised as her father had recently passed on at the time of the incident. Eventually, her mother moved her to Johannesburg where she now attends school.

Singh also presented Molefe's previous convictions of housebreaking and assault to the court. She told the court that there were no substantial and compelling circumstances that warranted a deviation from the prescribed minimum sentence of life imprisonment.

The NPA welcomed this successful prosecution. "There is a huge outcry from civil society that crimes, especially those against children, be dealt with thoroughly and expeditiously. This case is indeed an example of how the NPA is dealing with such cases. Since the state did not lead DNA evidence, it was the evidence of the eyewitness that bolstered the case. Members of the public are urged to be observant," said the Director of Public Prosecutions in KwaZulu-Natal, Advocate Elaine Zungu.

Natasha Kara

Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN

Enquiries: nramkisson@npa.gov.za

0716700229