

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 19 FEBRUARY 2019

RE: MAN SENTENCED TO 22 YEARS FOR RAPING A PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE

Yesterday, the Mthatha High Court sentenced Siyabonga Mkhiza (37) to serve an effective twenty-two years imprisonment after he pleaded guilty to a number of counts relating to an incident during which a professional female road runner was raped, a day before she was to take part in a race in 2016.

Mkhiza was sentenced to 22 years for rape, 15 years for robbery with aggravating circumstances, five years for kidnapping and three years for assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. The court ordered all the sentences to run concurrently with the sentence on the count of rape.

According to the his plea explanation, on the evening of 12 November 2016, Mkhiza was looking for missing livestock near his village of Mhlakulo in the district of Tsolo when he came across the 38 year-old woman athlete. The woman informed him that she was getting lost and was looking for directions to the homestead of her fellow athlete who was to provide her with overnight accommodation, as she was to take part in a marathon the following day. The would-be-rape victim made a call to her teammate and handed over her cellphone to Mkhiza, who knew the homestead she was looking for and volunteered to accompany her.

On their way, Mkhiza proposed love to the woman but his proposal was rejected and he did not take kindly to the rejection and decided to deliberately lead the victim to a wrong direction towards a forest. When the victim realised that the footpath was leading to a forest she became hesitant and did not want to go any further. That is when Mkhiza grabbed and pulled her deep into the forest, where he took her money and two cellphones while assaulting her with a hammer before raping her. He then left the victim in the forest after unwittingly showing her directions to the homestead she was looking for.

Mkhiza was arrested a few days after the commission of the offences still in possession of the victim's identity document.

The case was finalised by Senior State Advocate Mbulelo Nyendwana.

Kind Regards,

Luxolo Tyali

Regional Spokesperson: DPP Mthatha

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