

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DEFAMATION AFTER SOCIAL MEDIA VIDEO

Samadhanum Jane Andrew pleaded guilty in the Durban Regional Court on Tuesday, to the kidnapping, assault and criminal defamation of a 52-year-old woman in Chatsworth in May last year.

The complainant was in a relationship with Andrew's boyfriend. Andrew found out that the pair had recently visited a hotel together and decided to attack the complainant. She and her co-accused, Sarah Ishwarlall, forced the complainant into a car and took her to Ishwarlall's house where they assaulted her and cut off portions of her hair. They filmed this interrogation and posted it on social media, along with defamatory comments about the complainant. This video went viral.

Regional Court Prosecutor, Sureka Marimuthu handed in a Victim Impact Statement, compiled by the complainant and facilitated by Court Preparation Officer, Nondumiso Nyembe. The complainant mentioned that this ordeal caused her to lose her job and become withdrawn as people were laughing at her. Her child was unable to attend school because he was mocked as well.

The court sentenced Andrew to a fine of R20 000 or six years imprisonment, wholly suspended for a period of three years. She was further ordered to compensate the complainant with R5000. Andrews must also issue an apology to the complainant, which must be published in two newspapers, namely The Post and Sunday Tribune.

In welcoming the conviction, the Director of Public Prosecutions in Kwa-Zulu Natal, Advocate Elaine Zungu said, "The complainant suffered humiliation not only at the hands of the accused but also on social media, with members of the public forwarding the video. Matters of similar nature are becoming prevalent and we hope that this sentence

deters like-minded individuals. Congratulations to the officials involved in this successful finalisation.”

Natasha Kara

Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN

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