Court remands man for raping minor in Lagos

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The Lagos State Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Court in Ikeja, on Tuesday, ordered the remand of a man for allegedly raping a 17-year-old girl.  
  
The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reported that the defendant, Adeshina Adeyemi, raped the minor twice, on 15 August 2019 and 22 February 2024.  
  
The name of the survivor, a minor under Nigerian law, which defines adulthood as starting from 18 years old, is not disclosed to protect her privacy.  
  
Mr Adeyemi allegedly assaulted her with a cane leading to bodily harm.  
  
He now faces two counts of defilement and physical assault, contravening sections 137 and 173 of the Criminal Laws of Lagos State.  
  
Section 137 of the law criminalises sexual intercourse with a minor and prescribes life imprisonment upon conviction. Also, section 173 states that anyone who unlawfully assaults another person commits a felony and is liable to three years imprisonment.  
  
Mr Adeyemi pleaded not guilty to the charges.  
  
After his plea, the prosecution counsel, Inumidun Solarin, pleaded with the court to remand the suspect in a correctional centre.  
  
Ms Solarin also informed the court of her intention to present five witnesses against the defendant. She also requested a Yoruba interpreter.  
  
With no objection from the defence counsel Scholastica Nwogu, the judge, Rahman Oshodi, ordered the remand of the defendant.  
  
Endemic of child rape  
  
In January, PREMIUM TIMES reported a disturbing trend of cases involving the rape of minors and how it has become a menace in the country.  
  
Similarly, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in its February monthly dashboard also noted a spike in the number of rape cases.  
  
However, while this trend signals the risks faced by girls by sexual predators, a disturbing concern is the extended duration of trials in the courts.  
  
This newspaper reported how the trial of one Mohammed Sani charged with raping an underaged girl has been adjourned four times at the instance of the prosecution.  
  
Such a lack of diligent prosecution is often detrimental to trials, which often end up in abandonment of cases and avoidable acquittal of perpetrators.