Man jailed 14 years for raping 78-year-old woman

Date: 2024-06-08

Source: https://thenationonlineng.net/man-jailed-14-years-for-raping-78-year-old-woman/

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Justice Rahman Oshodi of an Ikeja Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Court yesterday sentenced a man, Lawal Moshod, to 14 years imprisonment for sexually assaulting a 78-year-old woman (name withheld) now deceased.  
  
The judge convicted the defendant of a one-count amended charge brought against him by the state for raping the woman.  
  
The defendant had pleaded not guilty when arraigned on May 13, 2022 by the prosecution, Mr B. E. Okeowo.  
  
He was re-arraigned on May 30, 2024 on an amended one-count charge bordering on an attempt to commit sexual assault by penetration contrary to section 262 of the criminal law of Lagos State.  
  
The amended information was read to the defendant on May 31, 2024, to which he pleaded guilty.  
  
The judge asked the defendant whether he understood the content of his guilty plea and the obligation of the court to give out the maximum sentence on the charges.  
  
Lawal admitted he made the plea bargain voluntarily and was satisfied by the advice of his counsel.  
  
Earlier, during resumed proceedings yesterday, the prosecuting counsel told the court that she called two witnesses, two IPOs and exhibits were tendered to prove his case.  
  
Okeowo urged the court to sentence the defendant according to the plea bargain agreement dated May 30, 2024.  
  
Delivering judgment on the matter, Justice Oshodi said that the defendant was charged on a lone count of rape through information dated August 26, 2019, which was filed on September 9, 2019 and he pleaded not guilty to it on May 13, 2022.  
  
“The defendant met the survivor, a 78 years old woman, now deceased, in Maryland on January 2, 2019. She had dementia and could not find her way home.  
  
“The defendant offered to assist her. As it turned out, it was a deliberate act to abuse her sexually.  
  
“The defendant took the 78 years old survivor to a secluded area and raped her. Some Good Samaritan heard her cry and mobilised to rescue her.”  
  
She was taken to the police station and it was confirmed that the survivor was bleeding through her private part with bruises on her face.  
  
“She was later taken to Mirabel Medical Centre for examination. The medical examination result was received as exhibit F in evidence which documents physical trauma and forceful penetration of the survivor’s vagina.”  
  
The prosecution counsel, B. E. Okeowo, informed the court that both parties have entered a plea and sentence agreement dated May 30, 2024.  
  
Oshodi asked the defendant if he had anything to say to the court.  
  
“Forgive me,” Moshod said.  
  
The defendant counsel Oyebanji Yusuf pleaded with the court to temper justice with mercy.  
  
“He is remorseful about what he has done. I plead to this honorable court to temper justice with mercy. He committed a very grievous offence considering the age of the victim.”  
  
The prosecution counsel, Okewo, urged the court to sentence the defendant according to the plea bargain.  
  
“My lord, we urge this honorable court to sentence the defendant according to the plea bargain. The plea bargain agreement does not reduce the gravity of the offence committed by the defendant.  
  
“The victim was 78 years old. She only sought for help from the defendant, which he took advantage of and raped her, which caused the victim a lot and led to her death.”  
  
She added that this will send a powerful message and signal to the society.  
  
Oshodi sentenced the convict to 14 years imprisonment on the one-count charge after considering the plea bargain agreement between the prosecution and defence counsel.