

Jail for woman who cried rape

Published: 10:04, 27 August 2008



Maidstone Crown Court

A young mother has been locked up for falsely claiming she was raped by a taxi driver.

Joanne Rye, who kept up the pretence for about 20 months, was told by a judge her behaviour was despicable.

Victim Sherekhan Kali felt disgraced because he was a devout Muslim and believed he brought shame on his family.

Maidstone Crown Court heard Rye, then 18, was known as a drunken troublemaker at the All Night Car Hire in Dartford and had been banned.

A week before she made the rape allegation she used racially insulting language to Mr Kali.

Valeria Swift, prosecuting, said on October 21 2006 Rye was very drunk, and was taken to hospital claiming she had suffered an asthma attack.

She was aggressive and police were called. It was then she made the rape claim, giving a detailed account.

She said she was waiting for taxi in Dartford when she was grabbed and a pellet gun was fired into her kneecap.

He dragged her into an alley, she said, pulled down his trousers and raped her.

She told in a detailed statement how she had recognised Mr Kali because he had given her a lift in his taxi a week before.

The part-time cabbie was arrested at his home and taken to the police station. Intimate samples, DNA and fingerprints were taken.

“All the while bewildered Mr Kali denied the attack,” said Miss Swift.

The prosecutor said the only motivation for the false allegation was the incident a week earlier when the fare was disputed. “They had no other contact whatsoever,” she said.

Rye, of Sheridan Court, Dartford, continued to maintain she had been raped up to the first day of her trial in June, accused of perverting the course of justice. She then admitted the charge.

Miss Swift said of Mr Kali: “This case has had a very profound effect on him indeed.”

Jailing Rye for a “modest” eight months, Deputy Judge Crawford Lindsay, QC, said he had no doubt the matter was so serious there had to be an immediate prison sentence.

“I consider this to be a despicable offence,” he said. “You made an allegation that this entirely innocent taxi driver had raped you.

“It was fully investigated with the consequences that police time and doctors’ time was wasted in the investigation.”

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