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Walvis gang-rape claim said to be false

MAGGI BARNARD

THE 14-year-old Walvis Bay school girl who claimed she was gang-raped by three men at Dune 7 in January has retracted the charge.

She declared in a written statement at the Walvis Bay Police Station on Monday that she was not raped.

The De Duine High School pupil initially alleged that she was on her way home from an athletics practice on January 23 when she was abducted by three men and taken to Dune 7 where she was gang-raped.

In her statement this week, she said they never went to Dune 7 at all.

One of the "suspects", Max Junior Indongo (28), was arrested the day after the incident and remained in custody for four weeks. He was released on N\$2 000 bail on February 15.

He appeared in the Walvis Bay Magistrate's Court again yesterday when the case was withdrawn by the Prosecutor General (PG).

Lana Fouche, Control Prosecutor at Walvis Bay, told The Namibian there were some loopholes in the girl's story from the start.

"This was confirmed by witnesses," Fouche said.

According to Fouche, the girl said she made up the story because she was mad at the taxi driver when he ordered her to get out of the taxi because she did not have money for the fare.

The incident immediately caused a public outcry.

Close to 4 000 pupils and community members from the harbour town took to the streets on January 30 to express their shock and dismay.

The march was organised by the Town Council and Junior Council who managed to mobilise the community in a short space of time for one of the biggest demonstrations ever held at the town.

When contacted late yesterday afternoon, Mayor Theresia Samaria

said she had only heard a report that the rape was fictional.

She said she first wanted to speak to the family and authorities before making any official statement, but said she would be very shocked if it was the case that the rape claim was false.

Samaria said the girl's close family had written her a letter and the girl's mother had asked her to "do something" about the incident.

The Prosecutor could not confirm yesterday whether Indongo was considering laying charges against the girl. He received his bail money back.

<https://www.namibian.com.na/archive19982004/2002/March/news/02493F10FF.html>

Tuesday, March 12, 2002 - Web posted at 9:17:30 am GMT

School girl apologises over false rape story

MAGGI BARNARD at SWAKOPMUND

A 14-year-old Walvis Bay school girl who claimed she was gang-raped by three men in January has apologised to the Mayor and the community after withdrawing the charge.

"To the Mayor and community, I would like to apologise. I made up a very big story and now everybody is angry with me and I do not want you to be angry. I am very ashamed and I am very sore. I just want to say that I am very sorry for what happened," the girl said in a handwritten letter to Mayor Theresia Samaria.

Shortly after the teenager claimed she had been raped, the community under the leadership of the Mayor organised a mass demonstration. Close to 4 000 people, mostly school children, took part.

Samaria met with the girl and her family on Friday to get to "the bottom of the story". The girl wrote a letter of apology afterwards and asked that it be published.

"I also want to apologise to my family, because everybody has turned against them as well," she wrote in Afrikaans. "I would please like to apologise to everybody. I love you and ask that you forgive me."

"I would also like to apologise to the taxi driver for letting him sit in prison and that the community has said many words and things to him."

She added that she wanted the community and the Mayor to know that no member of her family was aware that she had made up the story.

A spokesperson in the Mayor's office said it was evident from the tone of the letter that the girl was very confused and scared.

After retracting the rape charge, she appeared in the Magistrate's court on two charges last Wednesday.

She is charged with defeating the cause of justice and making false statements. The case was postponed to next month for plea and trial.

Lana Fouche, Control Prosecutor, told The Namibian the girl had been screened for the juvenile justice system.

The De Duine High School pupil alleged she was abducted in a taxi and taken to Dune 7 where she was gang-raped by three men on January 23.

The case against one of the "suspects", Max Junior Indongo (28), who was arrested the day after the incident, was withdrawn by the Prosecutor General last Tuesday.

He remained in custody for four weeks and was released on N\$2 000 bail on February 15.

Fouche said the girl underwent medical examinations by two doctors after the incident. The full results of the medical and forensic examinations are not yet available.

<https://www.namibian.com.na/archive19982004/2002/March/news/024ACE5A28.html>