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Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique (Maputo) »

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## Mozambique: Three Arrests in Albino Kidnap Case

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Maputo — The Mozambican police have arrested three people in the norther province of Nampula, accused of kidnapping a albino citizen named Rosario Rodrigues, according to a report on the independent television station STV.

The three men enticed Rodrigues, with promises of employment, to a place ten kilometers outside Nampula city. After they detained, they admitted to the police that their true intention was to cut off their victim's hair, and sell it to a Tanzanian witch 450,000 meticaais (about 112 US dollars).

The gang was arrested after an anonymous tip-off, apparently before they could remove any hair from Rodrigues. A fourth I escaped and the police are searching for him.

Rodrigues told reporters "They enticed me and when we got to the place they said they were waiting for a boss who wanted hair. I was surprised, because I didn't know that hair could be sold, and I was afraid I was going to be killed".

The kidnapers claimed that their victim's family was involved in the deal with the Tanzanian. "His mother told us to sell Rosario one of them claimed. "The mother said that when the money arrived, we would divide it. Rosario's brother rang me up later, to charge 450,000 meticaais. My share would be 50,000 meticaais".

The family strongly denied they were complicit in the kidnapping. They said that, when they noticed that Rodrigues was missing went to the police since they were well aware of the kidnappings and murders of albinos that have occurred in Nampula.

Seven albinos have been reported missing in Nampula so far this year. This crime appears to have been imported from Tanzania at least 76 albinos have been murdered since 2000.

Superstitious claims have been made that albino body parts possess magical powers, and that potions containing these parts (hair) can provide a short-cut to wealth and success. Unscrupulous witch-doctors make money out of these murderous rituals.

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