



THE PLIGHT OF PEOPLE WITH ALBINISM IN SWAZILAND

Report



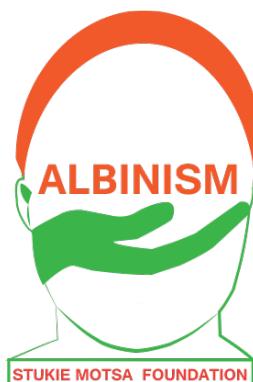
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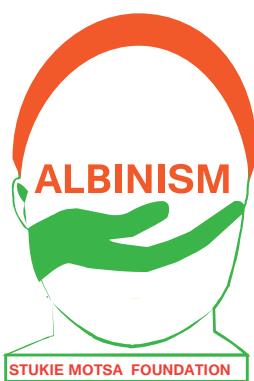
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THE PLIGHT OF PEOPLE WITH ALBINISM IN SWAZILAND

In Swaziland, persons living with albinism are often marginalised, they are more vulnerable to human rights violations and are sometimes also victims of (deadly) violence. There were two instances of murder in Swaziland in 2010 that sparked a discussion on the vulnerability and the need for protection of albinos in the country, however few measures were taken and sporadic reports continue on attacks against persons living with albinism.

In an indication of the environment in which persons with albinism live in Swaziland, in 2013 national and international media reported that Swaziland's albinos have called on the government for protection before elections expected later in the year, fearing their body parts will be harvested by candidates seeking good luck. In a separate report in the same year, a call for albinos to be allowed to carry guns in order to protect themselves against attacks, was publicized.

OHCHR ROSA tried to verify reports through UNDP Swaziland on 2 cases of murder and 2 cases of attack against persons with albinism in 2013 and received a reply from the Royal Swaziland Police. It was reported that the murder cases are still under investigation by the Shiselweni Serious Crimes Investigation Unit, in one case of attack the perpetrator was not found while in the other the person is serving a five year prison sentence.

.....Advocating For The Voiceless.....



Protection measures - examples

In June 2013, Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini said that the government would look into protecting people with albinism. So far, no specific measures were reported to be taken.

In 2010, police in Swaziland indicated that they will set up a national register of albinos as a way of protecting them. To date the register has not been compiled.

The killing of people with albinism

Although this may not be prevalent in Swaziland, we believe that people with albinism are killed and these incidents are not reported.

In 2016, a person with albinism was killed for ritual purposes after his wife was asked by a witchdoctor to bring him so that he could get his blood for ritual purposes. The wife and her accomplices were arrested and the matter is pending before court

In March 2018 three cases have been reported to the police, where families of these children were approached by unknown people to give them the children in exchange for money.

March 2018, as witchdoctor was arrested in South Africa for the killing of two children of which one was with albinism, he alleged that the body parts were taken to a witchdoctor based in Swaziland. The matter is still pending before court.

Health

People with albinism suffer skin disorders. Local clinics, hospitals do not have some of the ointments that are necessary for these disorders. They then have to buy them (ointments) in private pharmacies which charge very high prices i.e, efudix ointments cost US100. Faced with that predicament they are left with no alternative, but to go home and die.



Education

The Swaziland education system does not cater for people with albinism, the children are put in the main stream like all other children, these causes them to drop out of school as they cannot cope.

Employment

Employment laws of Swaziland do not cater for people with albinism. People with albinism are not employed, save for a few that have managed to be employed. Even those that are employed are not reasonable accommodated at the work place.

Social Acceptance

People with albinism are discriminated, victimised and marginalized by the communities and their families. In 2017, a child was born at Pigg's Peak and the father denied paternity and chased his wife away.

In 2016, a man with albinism passed on after illness, and the local authorities refused that he be buried in that community.

In conclusion, it is evident that a lot of awareness and education programmes are necessary. It is also necessary to lobby government with a view of getting supports and having a nation budgets that will include amenities needed by people with albinism.

