

Beat: Local

South Africa;s worst serial rapist hangs self hours be

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USPA News - A man suspected of being South Africa`s worst known serial rapist was found dead in his prison cell on Thursday after an apparent suicide, just hours before he was to go on trial for raping 34 children and two women, prosecutors said. Sifiso Makhubo, 42, was found dead in his cell at Johannesburg Prison on early Thursday morning after hanging himself with a blanket.

He was due to appear at Palm Ridge Magistrate`s Court on Thursday morning to face 122 charges relating to rape, kidnapping, murder, robbery and attempted murder. If Makhubo had been convicted of the crimes, it would have made him South Africa`s worst known serial rapist. The attempted murder charges were filed over allegations that he raped his victims - one just 10 years old - while knowing that he was infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The series of sexual assaults took place in Kathorus, east of Johannesburg, between 2006 and 2011, when Makhubo was arrested. Prosecutors had since secured as many as 33 DNA samples from evidence collected from the rape victims, and South African media said they were a match with Makhubo. The South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Department of Correctional Services are investigating the apparent suicide. Several victims who were due to testify in court were sent back home after prison officials discovered the body of Makhubo, who was already a convicted rapist when he was arrested in 2011.

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