



**The Praktiseer Magistrate's Court
Dismissed the Trespassing and
Assault Cases against Journalist
Thomo Nkgadima**

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The trespassing and assault case against journalist Thomo Nkgadima, arrested in December in Limpopo, has been dismissed by the Praktiseer Magistrate's Court.

Nkgadima was arrested in December after writing a story about illegal electricity connections in the Fetakgomo Tubatse Municipality in Limpopo that mentioned Mayor Eddie Maila, who had previously threatened Nkgadima. Nkgadima spent Christmas in custody before being released on bail.

Nkgadima is a freelancer who wrote the story for Sunday World newspaper.

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With the support of the Campaign for Free Expression, working with Media Defence in London, Nkgadima's lawyer, Everton Dankuru, last month submitted an application to the prosecuting authority to drop the charges on the basis that there was no case against him. "The case is an example of the many cases wherein journalists face reprisal for reporting on issues of public interest," the lawyer argued on the submission.

"The case is not worth of prosecution ... and to proceed would be a great injustice, abuse of court processes and a waste of state resources."

The prosecutor rejected the submission, but when Nkgadima appeared in court last Friday, no evidence was presented and the magistrate dismissed the case.

“We have always considered this to be a case of harassment and attempted intimidation of a journalist doing his work by local authorities and are pleased that the courts have confirmed that there is no case against him,” said CFE executive director Anton Harber.

The Campaign for Free Expression is a non-profit organisation dedicated to protecting and expanding the right to free expression for ALL, and enabling EVERYONE to exercise this right to the full, whether it by speaking out, by protesting, by revealing information, by blowing the whistle on wrong-doing, by arguing, debating, writing, painting, composing or just by shouting out your opinion.

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