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Officials assaulted artist — counsel



Mr Gocini

A BLACK artist, Livingstone Gocini, 20, escaped from the custody of Bantu Affairs inspectors because he had been assaulted and feared further injury, it was alleged in the Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Mr Gocini pleaded not guilty to the charge of escaping from custody after his arrest on March 10 for a reference book offence. Mr C Fredericks, for Mr Gocini, said that his escape was based on necessity.

"He was threatened with assault and was in fact assaulted. He had no alternative but to flee," he said.

Mr Harold Horne, a Bantu Affairs inspector, said that early on March 10 he and another inspector made a check on the sleeping quarters at the Doll House in Sea Point.

Mr Gocini showed him a reference book but its photograph did not correspond with Mr Gocini's appearance. He arrested Mr Gocini and took him to their van.

When he had been placed inside, another man came up with Mr Gocini's proper reference book but this did not allow him to be in the area.

"He was illegally in Cape Town from King William's Town," Mr Horne said.

He said that Mr Gocini was then taken to the Sea Point police station where he escaped from custody.

Under cross-examination by Mr Fredericks he denied that he had assaulted Mr Gocini and that that was why Mr Gocini had escaped. He also denied that he had used the word "kaffir" in an abusive sense shortly before the escape.

Constable Leonard Pretorius, who chased Mr Gocini — "he ran so fast I had to open up the throttle on my motor bike" — said that when he was recaptured there were no visible injuries on him.

The case was postponed till June 22.

"Owing to the allegations of assault, which are denied by the State, further evidence must be led," Mr L Botes, the prosecutor, said.

Bail of R50 was extended.

Mr E van Zyl was on the Bench.