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'HIV murderer' Canadian sentenced to life in prison

MONTREAL: A Canadian man convicted of murder in 2009 for knowingly transmitting HIV to women was sentenced to life in prison and may not be eligible for parole due to the risk he could commit the same crime.

Johnson Aziga, a 50-something man of Ugandan descent, was found guilty in April 2009 of two counts of premeditated murder – a first in Canada – and 10 counts of aggravated sexual assault for spreading the AIDS virus to his lovers.

A life sentence in Canada often carries with it the possibility of parole after 25 years behind bars, but an Ontario court designated Aziga a “dangerous criminal,” meaning a commission will decide whether parole can be granted.

Aziga – who learned of his condition in 1996 – had unprotected sex with 11 women, none of whom were told of his HIV-positive status.

Seven women were infected, and two have since died of AIDS-related complications.

Aziga, a former employee of the provincial justice ministry, told the court he never intended to transmit the virus to the women, and that he had not revealed his status due to cultural and religious taboos in his homeland.

Prosecutors argued Aziga was at heightened risk of infecting other women if eventually released. – AFP