

## **Media Statement: Health official and her accomplices get seven years for fraud**

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In February an official of the Department of Health, together with four other people, were arrested after they fraudulently used the department's order book to obtain a loan of R2, 8 million from Ithala Bank.

Yesterday, the former health official, Ms Zoleka Cheryl Bomoyi, and her accomplices were sentenced to seven years imprisonment by the Durban's Special Commercial Crimes Court, three years of which was suspended for five years. Her accomplices were her husband; Mr Mthetheleli Bomoyi, Ms Nokuthula Cynthia Mthembu, Ms Ntombizodwa Patricia Dubazane and Mr. Sifiso Reginald Mnikathi.

The five approached the Ithala Bank for a loan claiming that they have been awarded a tender to supply medical equipment to various hospitals and clinics. It emerged that Mr. SR Mnikathi wanted someone who had a company that was a service provider to the department of health. Ms NC Mthembu agreed to provide her company (Senza Ngendlela Trading 1 cc). A few weeks later an order form from the department was handed over with an amount of R 3 496 036.65 as well as a letter of appointment from the department's infrastructure unit. The order form was stolen from the department and used as surety to secure the loan of R 2, 8 million.

"Corruption has a devastating effect on poor people - especially corruption in the public health services. Corruption has cost the department millions every year, money that could have been spent on delivering quality healthcare. Corruption also means that some people get an unfair advantage because they can be bribed to do special favours for certain people. In this way it breaks the companionship spirit amongst public servants" says the MEC for Health, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo.

Speaking at the KZN Legislature on the 29th of July 2010, the MEC announced that the Department is very serious about issues of fraud and corruption that plagues the department. He said that as part of the turnaround strategy of the Department, a number of initiatives have been introduced by the Joint Management Team, amongst which, cases of alleged fraud and corruption are at the forefront. He announced that a total of 27 cases have been investigated, these with serious financial prejudice to the Department. As a result of these efforts, there were dismissals, resignations, final written warning and many more pending cases.

The MEC further announced that the investigations are in addition to the ongoing investigation undertaken within the department and by the end of June, 377 cases were at final stages of investigation.

"Fundamental to the fight against corruption is the involvement of all stakeholders. It is the collaboration between various state agencies, the public and honest public servants that today we can report such progress. As government, we have created a powerful platform for the campaign against corruption, and all similar misdeeds, in that we recognized the societal nature of corruption, and our fight against corruption requires a social consensus and co-ordination of activities. Our successes in our efforts are a clear indication that we shall overcome" concluded the Dr Dhlomo.

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