

PRESS RELEASE

To : All News Editors
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Attention : News Reporters / Transport Reporters / Newswires



LIMPOPO TRAFFIC OFFICERS FOUND GUILTY OF CORRUPTION

GAUTENG-: Two Limpopo traffic officers have been found guilty of corruption by the Tzaneen magistrate court.

The two, Mr Kgapane Stanley Makhurupetje (42) and Portia Ramphelo (34) were arrested in December 2017 in a joint operation by the Road Traffic Management Corporation's National Traffic Anti-Corruption and the Hawks dubbed Operation Siyabangena.

They have forfeited their R1000 bail and they were taken into custody yesterday. Sentencing proceedings are set to start this morning.

The two were arrested on allegations of soliciting bribes from motorists while they were on traffic law enforcement duties in Limpopo.

A total of 13 traffic officers were arrested as part of Operation Siyabangena. Some of them will be appearing in court this week.

The conviction of the traffic officers follows the sentencing of two other officials, employed by Viking vehicle testing station in Johannesburg last week.

The Lenasia Magistrate Court sentenced Mr Innocent Nepa Putuka and Ms Connelise Nesree Wee to eight months imprisonment suspended for five years after being found guilty of fraudulently issuing roadworthy certificates.

Mr Putuka and Ms Wee were arrested in July 2017 following an investigation by members of NTACU.

When passing the sentence, the magistrate took into consideration the fact that the two were first time offenders. Prejudice suffered by the state and the safety of the community were also considered.

In another case, an internal disciplinary enquiry has found a learner licence examiner, employed by Umngeni Local Municipality in Howick KwaZulu Natal, guilty of gross dishonesty and violation of the National Road Traffic Act and recommended that she be summarily dismissed.

The examiner, Ms Lindiwe Pretty Xulu had faced allegations that - over a period from June 2016 to January 2018 - she had unlawfully and in a concealed manner assisted learner licence applicants to answer test examination questions.

It was alleged that she used a battery operated laser pointer, concealed in her hand under her folded arm, to assist applicants to complete their tests or examinations without their proficiency being properly tested. The applicants subsequently obtained their learner licences unlawfully and in violation of the National Road Traffic Act and Regulation No. 93 of 1996.

The chairperson of the enquiry found Ms Xulu guilty of the charges against her and said she had failed to show remorse.

“Ms Xulu’s actions have been the stepping stone to dishonest and incompetent learner drivers being allowed to driver, albeit assisted, on our public roads which are already criticised for having such a high amount of road fatalities, especially in KZN,” the enquiry report said.

Xulu, her three colleagues together with nine applicants were arrested on March 6, 2018 when the RTMC’s National Traffic Anti-Corruption Unit, the Hawks and KwaZulu Natal Transport Investigative Unit swooped on the Umngeni Local Municipality Driving Licence Centre.

Xulu is currently on trial on charges of corruption together with her colleagues. They are expected to appear at the Durban Commercial Crimes Court on 07 March 2019.

The trial of the nine applicants has been separated from that of examiners. They have pleaded guilty to a charge of corruption and are expected to appear in the same court on February 22 for sentencing procedures.

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