

# NATIONAL PROSECUTING AUTHORITY

DATE: 20/09/07  
PUBLICATION: PRETORIA NEWS  
PAGE NO: 2

PAGE	1
OF	1

## Mogul, accused of being illegal alien, gets bail

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Family members and close associates of multi-millionaire businessman Eddie Rusike sighed with relief after he was granted bail in the Pretoria magistrate's court yesterday.

Rusike – whose South African citizenship is being disputed by Home Affairs – was yesterday granted R20 000 bail by magistrate Clifford Khoza.

He was arrested on September 12 on suspicion that he is an illegal Zimbabwean immigrant.

He faces charges of fraud and

contravening the Immigration Act.

The State alleges that Rusike used a forged South African ID to live and work in the country for at least seven years. During this period, among other lucrative deals, his Maokomavi Communications Company secured a R70 million tender with the Tshwane Metro Council.

In 2003, Maokomavi and Bytes Communication Systems were hired to "supply, install and maintain a complete integrated Alcatel voice and data networking solution" for the municipality over a three-year period.

State prosecutor Christine Moshidi

said Rusike had misused the system when he obtained his ID after he arrived in the country in 1991.

"His obtaining of the identity document was based on false representation. He is a foreigner with documents obtained illegally or fraudulently and according to law he shall not be allowed to remain in the country."

Rusike was involved in multi-million rand tenders, she said, and there would be a public outcry if he was released on bail. "It will be illegal for him to continue to operate his business in South Africa."

Advocate Mannie Witz argued that

there was no evidence indicating that Rusike was a flight risk. "The only issue is that Home Affairs maintains that he is an illegal immigrant. He is a law abiding citizen and will not flee."

Magistrate Chris Khoza said he had not found anything that was detrimental to justice to decline to grant Rusike bail. "You are only charged with obtaining your identity document fraudulently and contravening the Immigration Act.

"The officials alleged to have processed your identity document should have been brought to book.

The trial is set for November 5.



21