

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 09 OCTOBER 2020**

**RE: 10 YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR SARS FRAUDSTER**

The Pinetown Magistrate's Court sentenced Sheritha Hariram (55) to an effective 10 years imprisonment for theft and defrauding the South African Revenue Service (SARS).

Hariram was authorised by SARS to act as the Value Added Tax (VAT) administrator on behalf of race horse owners and was allowed to submit VAT returns on their behalf. Once the VAT refund was paid out by SARS, she was required to distribute the refund to her clients.

In certain instances, she did not pay her clients the VAT refund she received, amounting to R 761 784. She also created fictitious clients and claimed VAT refunds of more than R 2 million. The money was used for her personal benefit.

She was eventually exposed after investigations by SARS were guided by Senior State Advocate Selvan Govender.

In court, Advocate Govender led the evidence of an investigator and auditors from SARS. In addition, race horse owners, trainers and administrators from various parts of the country travelled to KwaZulu-Natal to testify in the trial.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in KwaZulu-Natal, Advocate Elaine Zungu said, "Tax fraud and tax evasion need to be dealt with by the courts. Stakeholder collaboration in dealing with such cases has produced a successful outcome which is welcomed. It is also a sentence sending out a clear message that law enforcement will deal with all those who involve themselves with such conduct."

**Natasha Kara**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP KZN**

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