



Media Statement

TO: All Media

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EMBARGO: For immediate release

AFU SEIZE ASSETS OF SABC PRESENTERS AND A BUSINESSMAN

The Asset Forfeiture Unit today seized the assets of well-known radio presenters, Thuso Motaung and his wife Mmamontha Motaung, as well as businessman Joshua Ramme.

Motaung and his wife were popular presenters at Lesedi FM, a Sotho radio station owned by the SABC, with a listenership of 2,5 million.

All assets were restrained pending a final order should they be convicted of the offences with which they are charged.

The assets seized include four properties owned by Motaung and his wife, valued at around R5 million, investments made by Motaung, numerous vehicles such as a Volvo, Chrysler Voyager, BMW and Nissan Hardbody as well as luxury taxis which were used by Motaung in his taxi business.

It is alleged that the taxi business was fronted by another person and not directly by Motaung. It was unlawfully promoted on air as were numerous other interests which were not disclosed to the SABC as required in terms of SABC regulations.

Property was also seized from various trusts of which the accused are trustees.

Motaung's numerous other businesses have also been restrained, including T&T Health Shop and Lavinia Hair Salon in Bloemfontein, and Kini M Saloon in Welkom.

The three accused were arrested on 7 December 2006 and appeared in the Specialised Commercial Crime Court. They have been charged with at 17 counts relating to fraud and corruption.

It is alleged that Motaung and his wife unlawfully promoted their business interests on air, “stole” airtime and misappropriated funds due to the SABC in terms of a business agreement which funds were to be donated to charities.

The benefit they derived from their alleged offence is estimated to be at least R32 million. Their main business interests involved selling health products such as Power Mix and Pam Pam throughout South Africa.

As public officials, Motaung and his wife were duty bound to disclose interests in other businesses and obtain permission to be engaged in them. They failed to do so. They have been charged with various forms of corruption. The offences date back to at least 2004 and continued until they were suspended last year.

Willie Hofmeyr, head of the AFU, said:

“This case is an excellent example of a case in which the NPA has worked closely with the victim of the crime and the SA Police Service to ensure that the crime is properly investigated and prosecuted.

The AFU will ensure that crime does not pay by removing the proceeds from the accused, and returning it to the victim of the crime.

Corruption is a serious offence and it is vital that we take tough action to deal with it.”

For further media enquiries please contact: Lucinda Moonieya on 012 – 845 6123 / 082 926 7738 or email: media@npa.gov.za