

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

DATE: 24 MAY 2021

RE: FORTY-ONE YEARS FOR FRAUD AND THEFT FOR TWO MEN

The Pretoria North Magistrates' Court sentenced Hugo Ras (53) and Willem Andries van Jaarsveld (56) from Sinoville and Rosslyn in Pretoria, respectively to a collective 41 years imprisonment for fraud and theft.

Ras was also found guilty of possession of unlawful firearm and ammunition while van Jaarsveld was additionally found guilty for forgery.

The two sold a boat to Michel Lester Bolhuis which belonged to Conroy du Plessis. The boat had been taken for repairs to the boat shop where van Jaarsveld worked. Ras saw the boat at the repair shop while he was visiting his friend, Van Jaarsveld.

Ras offered the boat to Bolhuis for R200 000.00 and together with Van Jaarsveld then falsified papers of the boat as though Du Plessis sold the boat to Ras.

Bolhuis reported the transaction to the police after he read in the newspaper that Ras was arrested in another matter. Bolhuis told the police that Ras had sold him a boat for R200 000.00, and he suspects that the sale might not be legit.

During investigations, it was discovered that the sale was indeed fraudulent.

In May 2013 while Ras had gone to a gambling house to gamble, the police received a tip off that the gambling house was also used for dealing with drugs. When police arrived, they searched people that were there for gambling, when they searched Ras they found him in possession of unlawful fire arm and ammunition which belonged to his wife. The police arrested him. The charge of possession of unlawful firearm and ammunition were then added to those of the arrest in 2011 of fraud and theft.

The prosecutor, Hanli Dupreez said though the matter took long to finalise due to delays caused by Ras's inability to appear in court, changing his legal representation and being arrested several times on other matters, she was, therefore, pleased the matter came to completion.

The National Prosecuting Authority welcomed the sentence.

Lumka Mahanjana

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