

Media Statement



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TO: ALL MEDIA

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RE: FRAUDERSTER SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS

Mickayla Kogie Mentoer (49) was sentenced to an effective 15 years imprisonment in the Durban Commercial Crimes Court on Wednesday after pleading guilty to five counts of fraud amounting to approximately R3, 3 million.

In her plea, the accused admitted to misleading the complainants into believing that she was an advocate and a former employee of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

She convinced them to pay her various sums of money, saying that she would obtain small business incentive grants worth millions of rands from the DTI, for their businesses and this money would be for her to submit applications to the DTI on their behalf.

The complainants were initially persuaded to pay the accused to do their application on-line and thereafter to pay various amounts in order to comply with what the accused claimed were DTI prescripts such as business plans, feasibility studies and penalties for late submissions.

To substantiate her requests for money, the accused gave the complainants documents which appeared to be from DTI. The complainants believed that they had it in writing from DTI that they were about to be paid millions of rands. After paying these large sums of money to the accused, the complainants discovered that DTI documents in their possessions were forgeries and that their applications had not even been processed let alone approved.

The DTI had provided an affidavit to the effect that they do not request monies from applicants applying for business incentive grants.

The accused was sentenced to 15 years for count 1, 10 years for count 2, 5 years for count 3, 4 years for count 4 and 5 years for count 5. The presiding officer ruled that the sentences on Counts 2, 3, 4 and 5 run concurrently with the sentence of 15 years.

The matter was successfully prosecuted by Senior Public Prosecutor, Wendy O`Brien.

The Director of Public Prosecutions in KZN Advocate Moipone Noko welcomed the sentence and had this to say, "the sentence metered out here is pleasing and indeed appropriate. I hope that this serves as a warning to would-be fraudsters."

Kind Regards,

Natasha Kara
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