

Media Statement



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TO : ALL MEDIA

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RE : NPA SEIZES ASSETS IN LAUDIUM DRUG CASE

On Tuesday 12 October 2010, the North Gauteng High Court granted the Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU) in the NPA a forfeiture order in terms of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act. The order was granted by Acting Judge Bam for the forfeiture of four (5) houses, a farm and (2) luxury vehicles to the State worth over R4 million.

The court found that these properties were the proceeds of a drug cartel ran by Pragasan Naidoo. Some of the properties were allegedly used to package and distribute the drugs. Naidoo, who is currently serving life in prison for a double murder, allegedly served the parts of the Laudium area with Mandrax since at least 2001 until his arrest in 2004. At the height of his business he was allegedly pushing drugs worth R1.5 million a day. He purchased all of his properties in three (3) years time in cash while he was unemployed.

The court found that the evidence against Naidoo was "overwhelming" that he used his properties to facilitate the crime and procured his properties by means of his unlawful activities. Naidoo employed various methods to conceal his wealth, including using a trust and a company to act as layers of asset location and information procurement barriers in order to add to the complexity and the apparent confusion surrounding the disposition of his wealth. He also registered some of the properties in the names of family members. However, despite his efforts the Asset Forfeiture Unit managed to unmask his activities and locate his property.

Justice in our society, so that people can live in freedom and security.

Naidoo's criminal case relating to his drug dealings is partly heard before Pretoria Magistrate's court and will resume on 25 October 2010 for further evidence.

Organised crime has become increasingly difficult to combat because organised crime kingpins use their resources to keep themselves distant from the crimes that they control and to mask the criminal origins of their assets. However, by means of asset forfeiture, the ill-gotten gains of drug kingpins are seized. This case illustrates the determination and resilience to fight organised crime vigorously and fearlessly by law enforcement and the NPA.

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