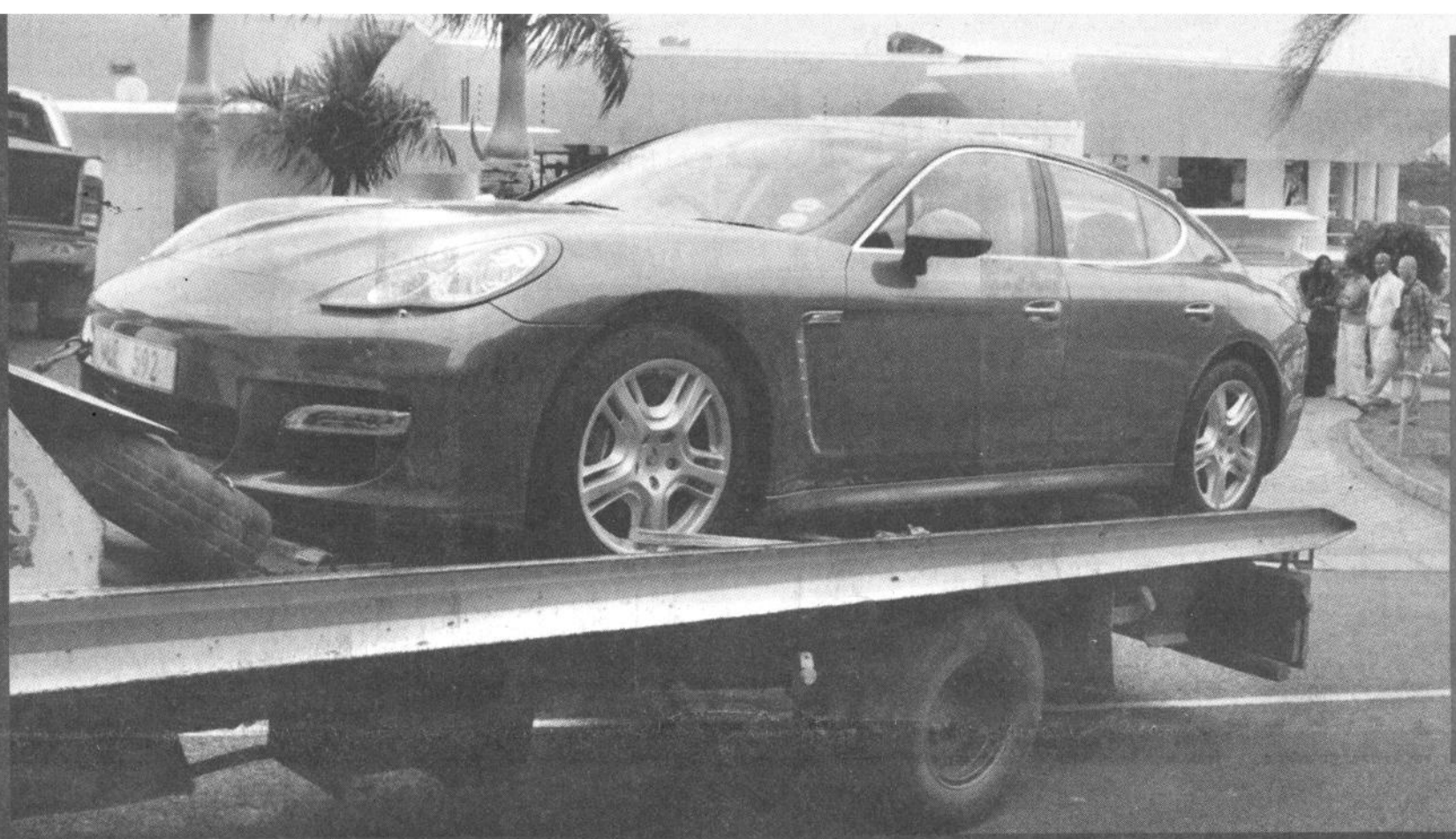


Luxury vehicles seized as police pounce on Durban couple over R140m fraud case



PROCESSION: A Porsche is driven away from the La Lucia, Durban, home of S'bu and Shauwn Mpisane. Several other vehicles – including Royces, a Ferrari, a Maserati and Lamborghinis – were confiscated yesterday.

ANITA BROUGHTON

S'BU AND SHAUWN Mpisane are now a two-car family, with only a BMW and a single Range Rover, after the authorities seized their fleet of luxury cars early yesterday. The Asset Forfeiture Unit seized the cars in a dawn operation at the couple's Addison Drive, La Lucia, home yesterday.

One by one the luxury cars – a Ferrari, two Rolls-Royces, two Porsches, a Maserati, a Hummer and a Dodge Ram – were carefully driven out of the couple's mirror-floored, showroom-like garage and either lined up to be hoisted onto flat-bed trucks or driven to a warehouse under the care of Ian Wyles Auctioneers.

The operation drew a crowd of neighbours, and motorists also slowed down to see what was happening, some of them hooting.

"Are they taking their cars again?" one shouted out of his window, in reference to a similar seizure by the SA Revenue Service a few years ago.

The impounding of the cars yesterday, authorised by Pietermaritzburg High Court Acting



OFF TO AUCTIONEERS: One of the Rolls-Royce Phantoms seized.

Judge Nkosinathi Chili, follows an investigation by the Hawks into allegations that Shauwn, as the sole member of Zikhulise Cleaning Maintenance and Transport CC, had submitted false documents to obtain Construction Industry Development Board gradings, that were then used to obtain tenders from the Department of Public Works valued at more than R140 million.

The court order authorises the restraint of property to that value, including their houses, 62 vehicles, household goods and money in

“
Are they taking their cars again?
”

their bank accounts.

If they are convicted, the property can be forfeited to the state.

The order was granted secretly “in chambers” last week, but the couple got wind of it and S'bu was

waiting, freshly showered, at their monogrammed gate to greet Asset Forfeiture Unit investigators, who arrived with armed police, at 6am.

Shauwn left for work soon afterwards. S'bu stayed until the towing began.

The home consists of two sea-view properties that have been merged as one, with one half as the garage for the vehicles.

Investigators, who went inside to draw up an inventory of assets, said there were rows upon rows of shelves of women's shoes spread over two rooms and “more television sets than Dion Wired”.

Court-appointed curator Trevor White – who is tasked with finding the couple's known assets, restraining them and ensuring they are kept safe – confirmed that only the luxury cars were seized yesterday, and the couple had been left with two vehicles.

They can continue to live in their home and use their household goods, but cannot dispose of them.

Vehicles used in the two businesses, Zikhulise Cleaning and Zikhulise Auto Restorers CC, would also not be seized.

Asset Forfeiture Unit investigator Akbar Ally, who conducted an

investigation into their assets, said the couple, married in community of property, had two bonds on the R20 million Addison Road property, one for R5.2m and another a suretyship of R7m in favour of Sars.

Shauwn also owned another property in Cowies Hill, worth R1.4m.

Ally said most of the luxury vehicles were “freehold”, with no money owing on them.

The Ferrari, he said, was worth about R1.8m, two Rolls-Royce Phantoms were worth R6m and R4.8m, a Porsche Cayenne R860 000, a Maserati R950 000 and two Lamborghinis (which have recently been sold) were worth about R2.2m each.

The Mpisanes also have two armour-plated BMWs and two Hummers.

While it was recently reported that S'bu had become the “face of Bentley” in KZN, it is understood this car was on loan.

The order also covers a property in Briardene owned by Zikhulise Cleaning and the Mpisanes' interests in Zikhulise Auto Restorers.

Ally estimates the value of assets restrained by the order to be about R50m.

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