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'Car collector' socialite's trial date



BLINGED OUT: Shauwn Mpisane, who faces fraud charges, usually arrives at the court in designer wear. PICTURE: GALLO IMAGES

DURBAN businesswoman and socialite Mabongi Flora Junior "Shauwn" Mpisane, who is accused of interfering with a state witness, will stand trial in September.

Magistrate Stanley Gumede set the matter down for the Pinetown Regional Court from September 9 to September 13.

Mpisane, who always arrives at court with bodyguards, designer sunglasses and bright, high-heeled shoes, has been charged with corruption, defeating the ends of justice and seven counts of fraud.

She was initially charged with corruption and defeating the ends of justice but yesterday prosecutor Meera Naidu told the court seven charges of fraud had been added.

Mpisane allegedly tried to persuade a state witness to alter evidence in a tax matter

for which she will stand trial in May.

In that matter, Mpisane is accused of having inflated invoices to reduce her tax burden, and of understating the amount of value added tax payable to the South African Revenue Service.

She faces another trial in the Durban Commercial Crimes Court on 53 charges of fraud, forgery and uttering.

She allegedly submitted forged documents to obtain Construction Industry Development Board gradings which were then used to win Public Works Department tenders worth R140m for her company Zikhulise Cleaning Maintenance and Transport CC, of which she is the sole member.

Her appearance in the Commercial Crimes Court last week was preceded by a joint raid

by the Hawks and the Asset Forfeiture Unit on February 6. Hawks' spokesperson Capt Paul Ramaloko said at the time that assets worth R140m were being attached.

This amount was subsequently reduced to R70m.

The National Prosecuting Authority said in a statement later that day that luxury cars worth about R22m had been seized. These included a Rolls Royce Phantom, a Rolls Royce Ghost, a Maserati, a Ferrari Scaglietti, a Porsche Cayenne Turbo, a Panamera Turbo, two armoured BMW 5 series cars, and two Hummers, the NPA said in a statement.

According to that statement, the KwaZulu-Natal High Court had granted the Asset Forfeiture Unit an order authorising it to freeze and seize R140m in property. - Sap