

Merrivale woman accused of tender fraud

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A MERRIVALE businesswoman stands accused of bribing her way to securing contracts worth more than R7 million from the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Public Works (DPW).

The money was to be used to repair schools and flats.

Nkosingiphile Bongiwe Scott (50) is in line for a lengthy trial next year, where investigators from the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) are expected to testify.

She was arrested in June last year and is out on R5 000 bail.

She allegedly committed fraud, corruption and bribery to score a total of over R7,3 million for working on three projects related to upgrading flats in Ngwelezane, and repairs to Siwelile Primary School in KwaNxamalala, Pietermaritzburg, and Hlangabeza High School in Kranskop.

These projects were conducted between 2007 and 2010.

Scott made a fleeting appearance at the Durban Specialised Commercial Crimes Court this week. Prosecutor Sara Parak told the court there would be eight to 10 witnesses in the case.

Her company, Maqamu Construction CC, based in Durban, is also accused in the matter which was adjourned for April next year.

The state alleged that Scott and her company orchestrated a payment of R5 000 to the bank account of the mother of an official at the DPW.

The official, Minesh Pema, then allegedly accepted Scott's tender applications despite "well knowing it to be false".

Pema allegedly allowed her to be awarded the three tenders despite her company not having the required grading, which is based on a company's track record and expertise.

Pema is not, however, an accused in this case.

Scott allegedly submitted "inaccurate and misleading tender documentation" in her applications for the projects. This related to her financial statements for 2006 to 2008 which allegedly fraudulently represented her company as being eligible for those tenders.

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