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# MEC quits amidst charges

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Political pressure for clean governance has seen Motshidisi Agnes Koloi (52) resign as the MEC for Social Development amidst charges of corruption.

Her resignation is seen as abiding with the resolution of her party, the ANC, that members facing criminal charges voluntarily step aside when it comes to both the party and government programmes.

This is part of resolutions ruling party members took at its organisational renewal commission at the 55th national elective conference.

Thus Koloi becomes the first Free State casualty of the resolution. Her resignation follows her indictment along with co-accused, Serake Joseph Leeuw (62) and Vusimuzi Rajuili (54).

However, there is still unclarity about the situation of the two men.

Leeuw serves as political advisor at the trouble-ridden Matjhabeng Municipality, having previously served as executive mayor.

Rajuili, a public servant, is the chief director for the housing programme imple-

mentation at the provincial Department of Human Settlement, led by Ketso Makume as MEC.

Premier Mxolisi Dukwana announced on 18 October Koloi's resignation as member of the executive council.

The corruption matter relates to allegations of defrauding the Moqhaka Municipality of R150 000 in 2017.

Koloi, together with Leeuw and Rajuili, appeared in the Kroonstad Magistrates' Court on 13 October after their arrest by the Hawks' Serious Corruption Investigation team regarding the alleged crime. Charges against them include fraud, money laundering, and contravention of the Municipal Management Act.

The money was allegedly swindled from Moqhaka's coffers for sound systems to be used during a memorial lecture on the deceased former president Nelson Mandela. Koloi was the executive mayor of Moqhaka



**Motshidisi Agnes Koloi**

in the period the alleged crime was committed.

Probing by the Hawks reveal the event never took place.

"It is alleged that the trio worked in cahoots to take R150 000 under the pretext that it would be used

for a sound system during a Nelson Mandela memorial lecture. This event never took place despite money being paid," stated Lt. Col Zweli Mohobeleli, provincial spokesperson for the Hawks.

Rajuili and Koloi were released on bail of R10 000 each, while Leeuw was granted bail of R5 000.

Mohobeleli said part of their bail conditions were that they must not contact state witnesses, directly or indirectly, and they must not interfere with the investigations.

He said the matter was postponed to 4 December for copies of the docket.

Opposition political parties such as ActionSA called for Koloi's resignation immediately after the news broke

about her arrest.

Sello Dithebe, spokesperson for Dukwana, said the premier had further stressed the importance of the rule of law.

"The Free State government will continue to collaborate with our criminal justice system to turn the tide against malfeasance and corruption, whenever it occurs, by whosoever it is committed," said Dithebe.

He said Dukwana had appointed Thabo Meeko as interim MEC for Social Development. The latter is currently the MEC for Small Business and Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.

Koloi previously served as the MEC for Public Works, Infrastructure and Human Settlements.

She is a qualified educator holding two diplomas: a Primary Teacher's Diploma and a diploma in Education Management.

According to her profile, she also completed a Municipal Finance Management Programme before being elected as mayor of the Moqhaka Municipality, which administers Kroonstad, Renovaal, Steynsrus, Vierfontein and Viljoenskroon.