

Asset Forfeiture Unit granted R583m restraint order

The High Court in Gauteng has granted the National Prosecuting Authority's Asset Forfeiture Unit (NPA AFU) an order to restrain some R583.8m in assets belonging to employees of former Eskom contractor Asea Brown Boveri (ABB) and six other interested parties.



Image source: Sergii Ghatiuk – 123RF.com

At the height of state capture, the Swiss company itself was allegedly irregularly awarded a R2.2bn control and instrumentation (C&I) contract at Eskom's Kusile Power Station in 2015 after allegedly colluding with Eskom officials.

It has since repaid some R2.5bn back into state coffers in reparations to South Africa.

NPA Investigating Directorate spokesperson, Sindisiwe Seboka, explained that former ABB South Africa (ZAABB) employees – Mohammed Essop Moodheen and Vernon Pillay, their wives Raeesa Moodheen and Aradhna Pillay, Eskom subcontractor Impulse International (Pty) Ltd (in liquidation) and Indiwize Construction – are facing charges of corruption, money laundering, fraud, forgery and uttering.

“The offences were allegedly committed in relation to contract prices in 2016 and 2017 between ZAABB, as a subcontractor of Eskom, and Impulse. It is alleged that the contract was unlawfully concluded and that the contract price was inflated.

“Some ZAABB employees were allegedly prepared to look the other way and bend the rules. ZAABB’s success in winning the C&I tender has brought about a scheme involving primarily certain employees of ABB, the Leago Group through its chairman Thabo Mokwena and Matshela Koko of Eskom.



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“When the alleged relationship between Koko and Mokwena soured, a new scheme was devised involving Impulse. Koketso, Koko’s stepdaughter, was appointed as a shareholder of Impulse and served as its director from 31 March 2016 to 6 October 2016,” Seboka said.

Honing in on the allegations against the former ZAAB employees, Seboka said the two held senior positions at ZAAB “where they could abuse their positions in favour of Impulse”.

“[They] both played a role in the extraordinary approval decisions and the manipulation of procurement and governance processes to the advantage of Impulse, Impulse’s appointment, and the payment of excessive rates. In return for these favours, Moodheen, his wife Raesa, Pillay and his wife Aradhna received gratification from Impulse, which was laundered through Indiwize.

“Impulse and Indiwize had the same director, namely, the late Pragasan Pather. These gratifications consisted of cash and motor vehicles. The motor vehicles were registered in the names of Raesa and Aradhna to hide the proceeds of the crimes they have been charged with, namely, corruption, money laundering and fraud,” she said.

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