



SPECIAL TRIBUNAL

EST: ACT 74 OF 1996

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SPECIAL TRIBUNAL ORDERS SIU TO PROBE R30 MILLION NORTH WEST HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS

The Special Tribunal of South Africa has ordered the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) to fast track and complete its investigations into allegations of financial irregularities estimated at around R30 million against former North West Health Head of Department, Dr Andrew Thabo Lekalakala, within 60 days.

Judge Thina Siwendu issued the directive as she granted the order restraining and interdicting both the Government Employee Pension Fund (GEPF) and the Government Pensions Administration Agency (GPAA) from paying out the R2 million pension benefits to Dr Lekalakala on Friday.

The SIU had approached the Special Tribunal for an order authorizing the halting of the Dr Lekalakala's pension benefits, pending the outcome of its investigations into several allegations of financial irregularities, estimated at about R30 million, which occurred during his tenure as HOD. Dr Lekalakala has since been dismissed from his employment.

In handing down judgment on Friday afternoon in the virtual zoom hearing, Judge Siwendu ordered the SIU to procure the extension of its powers in terms of the Proclamation within 30 days, or earlier. The extended proclamation will enable the SIU to probe further details of financial irregularities incurred in several other contracts in the Department (of Health).

Furthermore, the SIU has been ordered to institute action proceedings within 20 days of the completion of the investigation. The SIU, in their pleadings, had pointed out that the investigations into financial irregularities against Dr Lekalakala were at an advanced stage and that should he get his pension money, the State would suffer irreparable harm in a financial sense.

In the event of the failure by the SIU to comply with the orders, Dr Lekalakala may approach the Special Tribunal on the same papers for a re-consideration of the orders, Judge Siwendu ruled.

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