

Two in the dock for fraud, illegal land sales

The Hawks in Newcastle have arrested two suspects in Vryheid for rental fraud and illegal land sales amounting to about R4 million.



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Busisiwe Mthethwa (53) - the widow of the late chief Jabulani Mdlalose of Othaka tribal community and her accomplice Phathakahle Khumalo (70), allegedly defrauded the Othaka Community Trust.

According to the Hawks, during 2007, the Othaka community claimed and won portions of land situated in the Abaqulusi area. A Community Trust Fund was formed the same year to oversee their business affairs.

Subsequently, Othaka community, represented by Khumalo and the late chief Mdlalose, entered into lease agreements with farmers, who previously owned the same land. The proceeds thereof were paid into the Community Trust Fund.

The two accused allegedly collected rental income from the farmers and used the money for their own benefits.

They also sold some portions of land to the public and allegedly pocketed the profits.

On Tuesday, Khumalo and Mthethwa were charged with fraud and appeared in the Vryheid Magistrate's Court on Wednesday.

Khumalo was granted R30,000 bail, while Mthethwa was granted R20,000 bail. The case has been postponed to 2 March pending further investigations.

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