



EFF CALLS FOR THE ARREST OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICE OFFICERS INVOLVED IN SMUGGLING A CELLPHONE TO HILLARY GARDEE MURDER ACCUSED PHILEMON LUKHELE

Saturday, 28 May 2022

The EFF calls for the swift arrest of all correctional service officers and any member of society involved in the smuggling of illegal contraband to the kidnapping, murder and rape accused Philemon Lukhele.

In a statement issued reactively by the Department of Correctional Services, the Department confirmed that Lukhele had been found to be in possession of a cell phone on the 24th of May 2022. It is unclear how long he has had this cell phone for, while in prison and what nefarious reason he has used it for, which would likely compromise the case against him.

The fact that Lukhele had this cell phone, is nothing but a clear indication that the state is complicit, and is actively aiding and abetting a detained criminal, in order for him to subvert justice. The fact that it has taken overwhelming public pressure for the Department to issue a statement three-days after this phone was found, reveals nothing but a concerted effort to cover up the corruption that characterises our prison system.

Of more concern, are the reports that the phone Lukhele had while in prison, was bought and smuggled through correctional service officials to him, by a member of the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA). The NYDA purports to be a youth development agency, which is in actual fact established through an act of Parliament for that purpose, yet has no verifiable developmental program for youth in South Africa.

It has recently been under immense scrutiny for being utilised as a cadre deployment agency of the ruling party, through which they sustain patronage.

Lukhele undoubtedly used his political connections in the ruling party and influence in the province, which he has amassed as an employee of the legislature, to gain access to privileges that make a mockery of our justice system and the pain of the Gardee family.

The EFF calls for the immediate investigation and sanctions on all those involved, not only through a pretentious internal disciplinary proceeding ran by a compromised Department, but through public prosecution and ultimately arrest.

Corruption in correctional facilities, fatally undermines the character of these institutions as places that should ensure that those who break the law are consequenced and rehabilitated.

Lukhele clearly has an undue influence across the legislative, correctional and investigative institutions in Mpumalanga, and the decisive move to place him in a maximum security prison, must be followed by harsh consequences for those he bought his privileges from.

All those found to have made calls to, and received calls from this contraband phone, as well as those who received and sent WhatsApp and sms texts, including the legal team of accused, should answer to these nefarious activities which constitute a defeating of the ends of justice.

ISSUED BY THE ECONOMIC FREEDOM FIGHTERS

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