



STATEMENT READ BY THE ACTING HEAD OF THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATING UNIT DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE THE INVESTIGATION OUTCOMES OF THE HOME AFFAIRS INVESTIGATION

23 February 2026

Members of the media,

Honourable Minister of Home Affairs,

Valued South Africans participating in this press conference through online channels and other platforms,

Good morning. I extend my gratitude for honouring our invitation to attend this event.

The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) has uncovered a disturbing reality: South Africa's immigration system has been treated as a marketplace, where permits and visas were sold to the highest bidder. Officials entrusted with safeguarding the integrity of the Department of Home Affairs instead turned their positions into profit-making schemes, while external actors, including Prophet Shepherd Bushiri, Mr Kudakwashe Mpofo, and Nigerian rapper Prince Daniel Obioma (also known as 3GAR), exploited influence, fabricated documentation, and manipulated systemic weaknesses to secure fraudulent residence permits.

The investigation reveals that the country's borders were not protected by law but auctioned off through corruption. South Africa was being sold one permit at a time.

The investigation into the affairs of Home Affairs was authorised by President Cyril Ramaphosa under Proclamation 154 of 2024. An interim report outlining the outcomes of our investigation has been submitted to the President, and we are now making the findings publicly available.



May 2024 Search and Seizure and Asylum fraud revelation

A whistleblower brought forward to the SIU allegations that foreign nationals enter South Africa, fraudulently obtain asylum seeker permits, and later use them to apply for permanent residence and ultimately citizenship. The SIU received information that these foreign nationals collude with syndicates involving corrupt Home Affairs officials to secure permits without merit, as permits are issued upon application without assessing the asylum claim. Holders can remain in the country even if their application is rejected by exhausting appeal rights up to the Constitutional Court, regardless of the merits of their application.

To investigate, the SIU obtained a Special Tribunal order and, with the assistance of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks), searched five Refugee Reception Offices, seizing laptops,

desktops, cell phones, external drives, and files; 237 items were imaged for cyber forensic analysis. Cell phone analysis revealed communication between officials and foreign nationals, with payments via E-Wallet ranging from R500 to R3,000, facilitating the unlawful issuing of permits and visas to unqualified individuals.

Payments were made through various methods: cash hidden in application forms, with office doors closed to avoid cameras; E-Wallet deposits using non-RICA-registered or fraudulently RICA-registered numbers; asylum seekers sending E-Wallet payments to themselves and providing OTPs to officials; and in-kind payments, such as covering officials' private rent or services. Officials used dummy phones to conceal transactions and communication.

Officials are Selling Citizenship to Fund a Luxurious Life: The Nefarious Syndicate by the Adjudicators.

Nefarious syndicate is a coordinated group of department officials responsible for the lawful processing, adjudication, and receipt of visa applications. However, they have engaged in behaviour suggesting systemic corruption and illicit enrichment, in violation of their official duties. The SIU can reveal that, so far, we have uncovered that four officials who earn less than R25 000 per month have received a total of R16,313,327.00 in direct deposits.

Evidence indicates that certain members of this group have acquired significant assets that are grossly disproportionate to their legal income. This includes the cash purchase of multiple properties and the construction of high-value residential developments. Some members have developed private properties with extensive infrastructure, such as large-scale solar installations and spacious parking lots, suggesting access to capital inconsistent with their official salaries.

The SIU's investigation shows that certain officials turned the permit system into a marketplace. Their modus operandi was simple: applications were sent via WhatsApp for expedited approval, and

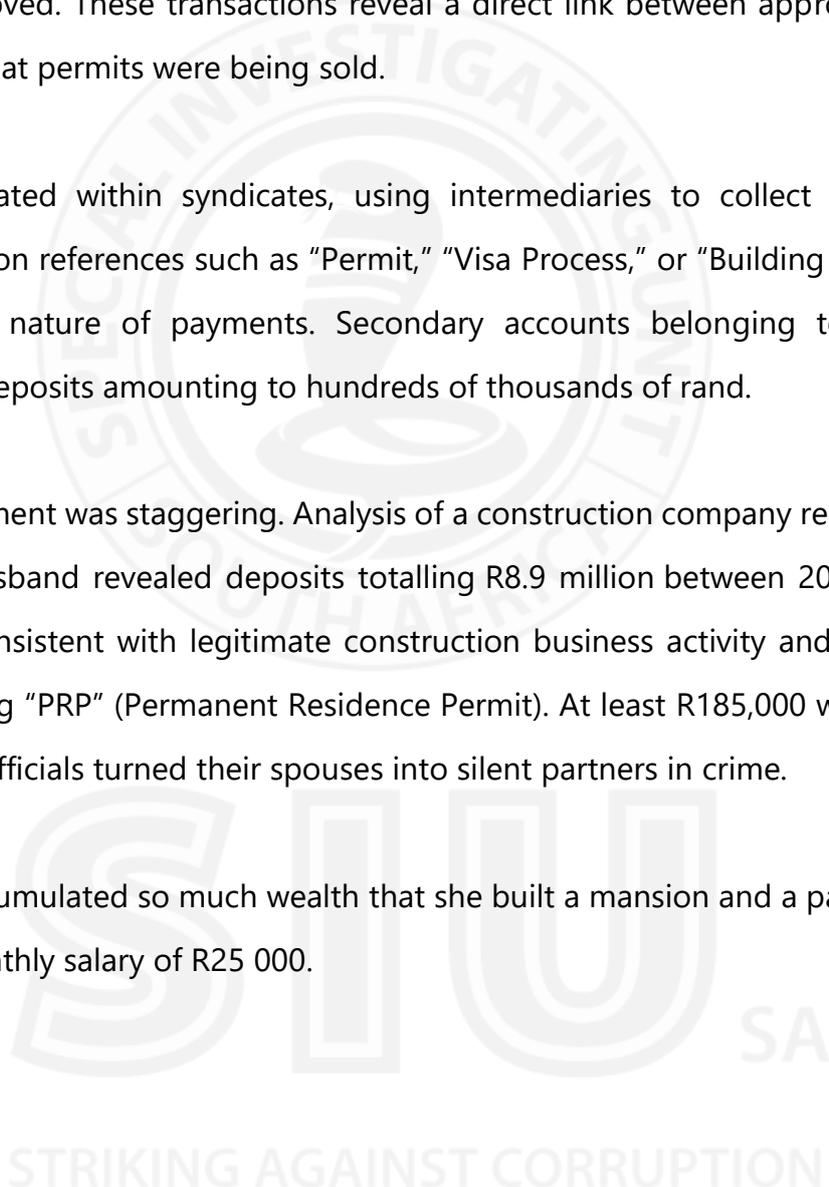
once approved, money flowed almost immediately. Payments were not made directly to officials but funnelled through accounts held by their spouses, deliberately disguising the bribes.

In one case, a permit was approved on 20 December, and by 21 December, R3,000 had been deposited into the spouse's account. Another transaction saw R6,000 transferred days after two permits were approved. These transactions reveal a direct link between approvals and payments, leaving no doubt that permits were being sold.

Officials also operated within syndicates, using intermediaries to collect funds from foreign nationals. Transaction references such as "Permit," "Visa Process," or "Building Material" were used to mask the true nature of payments. Secondary accounts belonging to spouses received unexplained cash deposits amounting to hundreds of thousands of rand.

The scale of enrichment was staggering. Analysis of a construction company registered in the name of one official's husband revealed deposits totalling R8.9 million between 2020 and 2023. These deposits were inconsistent with legitimate construction business activity and included payments explicitly referencing "PRP" (Permanent Residence Permit). At least R185,000 was directly linked to PRP applications. Officials turned their spouses into silent partners in crime.

Another official accumulated so much wealth that she built a mansion and a paved road leading to her home on a monthly salary of R25 000.

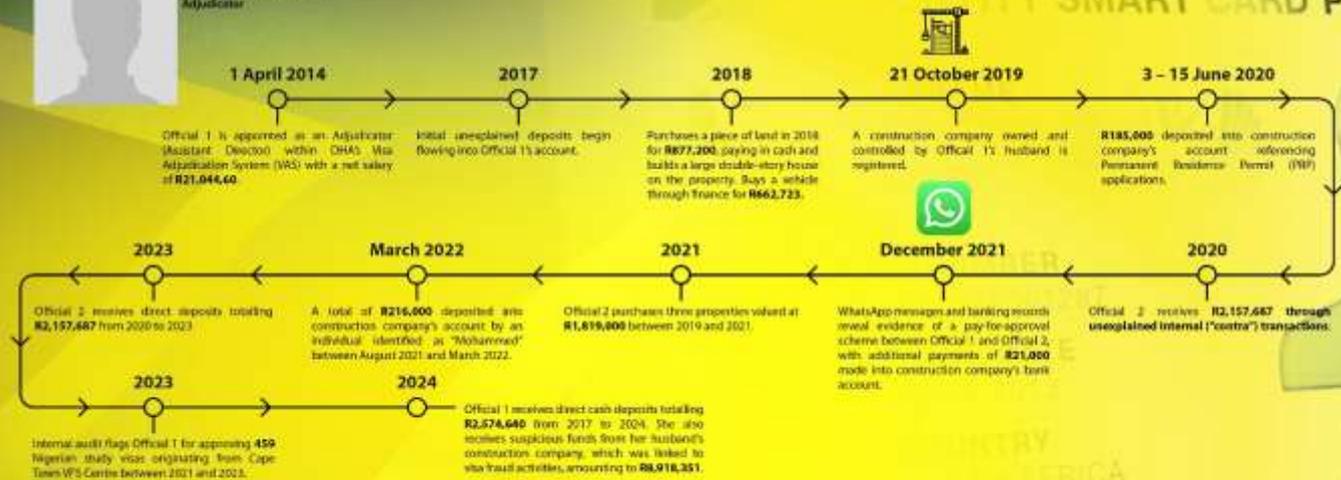


Home Affairs Investigation Officials (1/3)



Official 1 & Official 2
Adjudicator

Internal Corruption Network – Visa Adjudication System (VAS)



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Home Affairs Investigation Officials (2/3)



Official 3
Adjudicator



1 September 2013

Official 3 is appointed as an Adjudicator at the DHA.



9 June 2021

Indian national registers company after entering South Africa on a visitor's visa. This is before he obtains valid long-term visa authorisation.



9 December 2021

Official 2 begins transferring funds to Indian national's account.

we will sort each other. ✓



On the same day, Official 2 sends a WhatsApp message to Official 3 requesting approval of four visa applications, stating "we will sort each other."

January 2022

More than 15 direct payments are made from Indian national's account to bank accounts linked to or controlled by Official 3, clearly reflecting her name between December 2021 and January 2022.



12 January 2022

Official 2 transfers R102,000 to Indian national's account in more than 15 transactions, all using the reference "Building material" from 9 December 2021.

20 December 2021

A visa is issued to Indian national, valid until December 2024.

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Home Affairs Investigation Officials (3/3)



Official 4
Administrator

1 March 2013

Official 4 is appointed as a Senior Administrative Officer. His role includes adjudicating all categories of permit applications, granting her significant authority over immigration decisions.

2020 - 2023

Official 4 approves 426 study visas. Of 227 verified applications, 152 (67%) are found to be supported by fraudulent documentation. While employed on a Level 8* government salary, she contracts a mansion, raising concerns about disproportionate assets related to declared income.

31 October 2023

Official 4 resigns from the DHA shortly before the full scope of the alleged misconduct becomes apparent.

2024

A foreign national answers the domestic worker's phone claiming marital relationship.

Official 4 is linked to a domestic worker, whose banking analysis reveals that she received R1,806,654.26 between 2021 and 2023 in suspicious transactions during the investigation period.

Receives direct deposits of R2,430,699.00 during the period 2021 to 2024.

Government salary level 8
Level 8: R397 116 per annum.

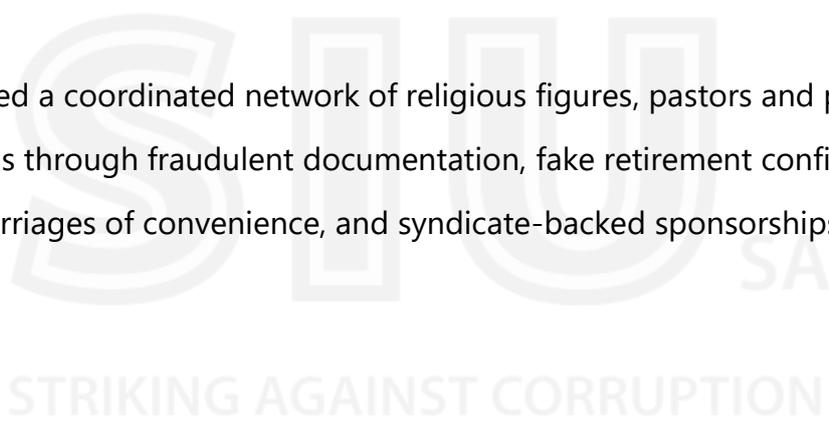
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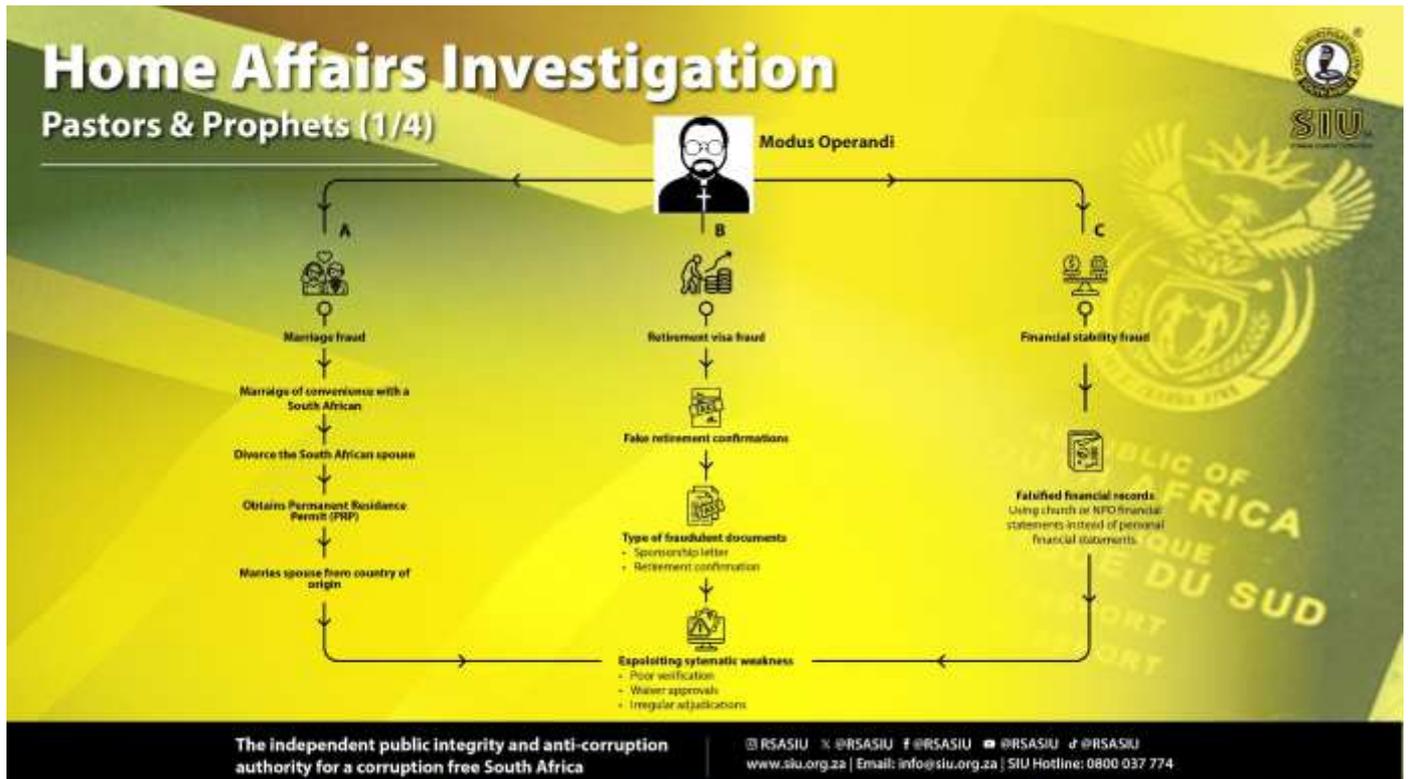
The SIU has also traced financial gains exceeding R181 million associated with beneficiaries of fraudulent Visa applications, which were underpinned by fake documentation.

Faith as a Gateway

The SIU has identified a coordinated network of religious figures, pastors and prophets, exploiting immigration systems through fraudulent documentation, fake retirement confirmation, falsified financial means, marriages of convenience, and syndicate-backed sponsorships faking financial



stability.



Prophet Shepherd Bushiri

The SIU's investigation into Prophet Shepherd Bushiri illustrates how external actors exploited the same weaknesses. Bushiri leveraged his influence, church networks, and fabricated documentation to secure a fraudulent immigration status.

His Permanent Residence Permit (PRP) was approved by an adjudicator who was a member of his church, ECG Ministries, which is a clear conflict of interest. Bushiri's application was supported by a fraudulent letter of financial independence, signed by a Chartered Accountant (CA) who admitted he was paid merely for his signature.

Bushiri also claimed proof of an aircraft purchase as evidence of financial independence. Investigations revealed that USD 1.2 million in cash was paid from his Non-Profit Company at Lanseria Airport. This raised serious concerns about money laundering and misuse of religious donations.

Church members played a central role in facilitating fraudulent applications. Associates drafted and submitted documentation, while donations were rerouted into personal accounts under the guise of "TITHE" or "Seed." Transactions linked his ministry's account to private companies, with payments disguised as "Crossover T-shirts."

The SIU further found that Bushiri held directorships in 14 companies and owned multiple properties in Pretoria. Our investigators found that "religious donations were converted into bricks, mortar, and corporate shares," highlighting how faith-based contributions were laundered into personal wealth.

Home Affairs Investigation
Pastors & Prophets (2/4)

Bushiri's Modus Operandi

2015

- SIU investigation revealed that Bushiri applied for renewal of a holiday visa in 2015.
- No record of prior visas in the system, already showing irregularities in immigration history.

Between 2016 - 2018

- Applied for Permanent Residence Permit (PRP) under Section 27(1) of the Immigration Act (requires proof of financial independence).
- Submitted a fraudulent financial independence letter.
- Signed by a Chartered Accountant, who later admitted he did not draft or verify it. He was paid R200 by a Nigerian national, just to sign the letter.
- The PRP was approved by a Home Affairs Adjudicator, who is later identified as a member of Bushiri's church.
- Supporting bank statements came from Bushiri's church non-profit company (NPC) accounts, not personal investment accounts — a direct misrepresentation.
- Acquired four properties, purchased between 2018 and 2019, for a total of R30,260,715.

2021

- Financial Intelligence Centre (FIC) flagged suspicious banking activity.
- Over R1 million in round-number cash deposits in just two months.
- Received "tithe amounts" along with suspicious round figures totalling R7,888,915.20.
- These accounts were the same ones misrepresented in the PRP application, showing continuity in the scheme.

Aircraft Transaction (2019 - 2020)

- Purchased an aircraft for USD \$1.2 million (R30 million) in cash.
- Claimed the funds came from his NPC, raising suspicions of money laundering and misuse of church donations.

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Pastor Timothy Omotoso

Pastor Timothy Omotoso's modus operandi was fundamentally built on fraud and misrepresentation to gain entry into, and subsequent residence in, South Africa. His initial entry was secured through a fraudulently obtained suspicious work permit, issued in a country where he was not a citizen, based on an unauthorised directive. This pattern of deception continued as he consistently provided conflicting information about his travel history and residency, submitted affidavits claiming lost

documents to avoid producing verified credentials, and used the initial fraudulent permit to support subsequent, more permanent, immigration applications.

As his status was repeatedly questioned, his method evolved to exploit administrative and procedural vulnerabilities within Home Affairs. When his visa renewal was denied for noncompliance with regulations, he sought to bypass these requirements by petitioning for a ministerial waiver. The investigation revealed that this waiver was unlawfully granted by an official without the necessary delegated authority, highlighting a strategy of leveraging administrative gaps to override lawful rejections and perpetuate his stay in the country.

Mpofu Investigation: Fraudulent PRP and Employment

The SIU investigated Mr Kudakwashe Mpofu following whistleblower allegations in 2023. Evidence confirmed that Mpofu obtained a fraudulent Permanent Residence Permit (PRP) in 2018 through an agent, paying R3,000. The document was riddled with irregularities: incorrect fonts, misspelt stamps, and reference numbers that did not exist in DHA records.

Despite the fraudulent PRP, Mpofu used it to secure high-paying positions at the North-West Development Corporation (NWDC). He was employed as an Asset Manager, earning R900,000 per annum, and later promoted to Acting CFO and then to CFO, earning R1.6 million per annum. He also used fraudulent visas and exemption certificates to extend his stay and employment, despite being ineligible under the Immigration Act.

Mpofu's fraudulent documents enabled him to obtain vehicle finance for a Land Rover Sport, a Ford Ranger, and a BMW 3 Series. He also manipulated Traffic Registration Numbers to secure licenses.

The SIU referred Mpofu's matter to the National Prosecuting Authority, resulting in convictions at the Mmabatho Regional Court. He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment under correctional supervision, with an additional suspended sentence for fraud.

Mpofu's modus operandi included exploiting deficiencies in the DHA system, using agents to shift responsibility, abusing litigation to delay accountability, and taking advantage of weak interdepartmental verification processes.

Home Affairs Investigation Foreign Nationals (1/2)

Kudakwashe Mpofu
Zimbabwean national. He was given a three-year prison sentence for fraud.

Fraudulently Acquired Benefits

The SIU investigation confirmed that Mpofu intentionally used fraudulent documents to secure significant benefits to which he was not entitled, including:

- The SIU investigated a fraudulent Permanent Residence Permit (PRP) held by Mpofu in line with Proclamation No. 154 of 2024.
- The SIU investigation uncovered a pattern of fraudulent activity by Mpofu. It was established that after initially entering South Africa on a valid study visa, Mpofu remained in the country and worked illegally after his visa had expired.
- The investigation found that Mpofu had a fraudulent Permanent Residence Permit, which he admitted he had purchased for **R3000** from an entity known as MRM Trading Enterprise and Investment, which has no link to the Department of Home Affairs.
- The SIU uncovered that Mpofu possessed a portfolio of other fraudulent documents, including:
 - A fraudulent Critical/Exceptional Skills Visa.
 - A fraudulent Work Permit.
 - A fraudulent Exemption Certificate, purportedly issued in 1996, when Mpofu was only five years old, rendering the document materially impossible and false.
- Employment at the North West Development Corporation:
 - As an Assets Manager from 01 May 2021 to 01 May 2023, earning **R900,000 per annum**.
 - As Chief Financial Officer from 01 June 2023, with a contract entitling him to an annual remuneration of **R1,632,257**.
- Issuance of a Traffic Register Number (TRN) at the Mmabatho Driving Licence Testing Centre, which he used to obtain a learner's and driver's license.
- Acquisition of vehicle finance and the purchase of several luxury vehicles, including a **Land Rover Sport**, a **BMW 3 Series**, and a **Ford Ranger**.

On 12 November 2023, Mpofu was given a three-year prison sentence for fraud and another five-year suspended sentence for fraud following a criminal referral to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) by the SIU.

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The McLaren Investigation: Nigerian National and Unexplained Re-entry into the Country

The SIU also investigated a Nigerian national linked to a high-profile McLaren crash in Cape Town. One individual, Mr Prince Daniel Obioma, overstayed his visitor's visa in 2023, remained illegally in South Africa until his departure, and later re-entered the country without a record. Despite his unlawful status, he was identified in the McLaren accident in March 2025. His unexplained re-entry

highlights serious failures in border management and movement control systems.

Home Affairs Investigation
Foreign Nationals (2/2)

Investigations Revealed

The Department of Transport revealed that the driver was a Nigerian national with a Traffic Register Number (TRN).

The SIU approached the DHA Counter Corruption to assist in determining the legal status of the foreign national.

SIU investigation found that on 20 December 2022 Nigerian rapper entered South Africa on a three-month visitor's visa.

McLaren Accident
2 March 2025

- A R3 million McLaren S70S coupe crashes into a wall in Sea Point, Cape Town.
- Images of the injured driver sitting on the road circulate widely on social media and news platforms.
- The injured driver of the McLaren is identified as the Nigerian musician. However, according to the Data Movement Control System (DMCS), there is no record of the individual re-entering South Africa.

Timeline:

- 16 January 2023:** Investigation found that he applied for and obtained the TRN using fake documents.
- 13 March 2023:** He applied for a study visa and application was rejected due to applying with fraudulent visa issued in Lagos.
- 19 Mar 2023:** Visa expired, rapper overstay.
- 5 May 2023:** The rapper departed South Africa, two months after the expiry of the visitor's visa.
- 23 October 2024:** The rapper buys the vehicle with cash from an agent who submitted fraudulent documents to support his visa application.
- 5 May 2025:** Criminal national submitted documenting visa overstay, illegal presence, and unexplained re-entry into South Africa.

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Investigation into Identity Fraud and DNA Manipulation

Based on the findings of the SIU, in conjunction with Interpol, a significant scheme of identity fraud has been uncovered, primarily involving foreign nationals who obtain South African passports to commit crimes abroad or seek refugee status elsewhere. The investigation revealed a specific modus operandi in which these individuals collude with departmental officials to gain unauthorised access to Home Affairs' offices.

Once inside, they fraudulently use the fingerprints of unsuspecting South African citizens while substituting the photograph on the application with that of the foreign national. In response to these findings, the SIU has proposed systematic recommendations to bolster security. We advise that, while the Department is implementing its biometric system, it should enforce stricter controls on passport photographs. Furthermore, the SIU recommends strengthening physical access control

to departmental offices to ensure that all individuals entering Home Affairs facilities can be positively identified, thereby preventing such internal collusion.

In a parallel investigation, the SIU uncovered evidence of DNA sample swapping and manipulation, a scheme designed to favour foreign nationals in their applications for Permanent Residence Permits (PRPs). This practice exploits the requirement for DNA testing, conducted by the National Health Laboratories Services, which is a prerequisite for certain visa categories. The SIU has found prima facie evidence that these biological results are being tampered with to benefit foreign applicants. Although this specific manipulation may not fall strictly under the Department of Home Affairs' direct operational control, the SIU has formally alerted the Department to this observation to ensure inter-agency awareness and cooperation.

Compounding these issues of fraud is the systemic abuse of the retirement visa category, which the SIU attributes to a lack of clear departmental guidelines for its adjudication. The investigation revealed that this regulatory gap directly leads to manipulation and fraud, particularly because the visa type has no age restriction, making it susceptible to widespread abuse. A core part of the problem lies in the fact that while applicants are required to prove a monthly income of approximately R37,000 to obtain the visa, the Department failed to monitor compliance with this financial requirement after the permit has been issued. This lack of post-issuance oversight creates an environment where the visa's conditions can be easily circumvented, undermining the integrity of the immigration system.

Impact analysis

The visa issued in a corrupt and fraudulent manner underscores the complex, interconnected challenges posed by migration into South Africa, which demand a coordinated and strategic whole-of-government response. These challenges span multiple sectors, including real estate, transport, banking, religious services, healthcare, infrastructure, education, and fiscal policy, each presenting unique impacts and resulting issues that require urgent and comprehensive intervention. All relevant

departments must collaborate effectively to address these sector-specific impacts, such as urban overcrowding, labour tensions, tax revenue loss, social liability risks, resource strain, and border security threats, through integrated planning, resource allocation, and policy development. Failure to adopt a cohesive approach risks exacerbating existing problems and undermining national stability and development objectives.

Based on the SIU investigation outcomes, the following **systematic recommendations** are made:

- The Department should strengthen its contract management. The Department should consider the enforcement of an ethical culture and provide ethical training to its employees.
- The Department should consider vetting of all employees.
- The Department should consider system integration on all its processes, including those of other government departments linked to the Department of Home Affairs.
- The system integration should take into account the interim findings of the SIU and the observations thereto.
- The Department should consider developing a step-by-step guideline on how verification should be conducted.
- The Department should consider strengthening its verification process before the issuance of visas.
- The Department should consider having quality assurance before the issuance of visas. The Department should consider system integration between the Department and the Department of Labour.
- The Department should consider enforcing compliance with its prescriptions by the company to issue a business visa to report to the department upon termination or cancellation of the visa.

Summary of Outcomes



The SIU's investigation paints a disturbing picture of systemic corruption within the Department of Home Affairs. Officials enriched themselves by unlawfully issuing permits, using spouses as conduits to launder bribes. Syndicates operated with precision, exploiting weaknesses in verification and monitoring. At the same time, external factors such as Prophet Shepherd Bushiri, Mr Kudakwashe Mpfu, and Nigerian nationals linked to the McLaren case leveraged influence, fabricated documentation, and misused networks to secure fraudulent immigration status.

The findings make one thing clear: South Africa's immigration system was treated as a commodity. Permits and visas were sold, traded, and laundered. These findings show that corruption in the visa system is not incidental; it is organised, deliberate, and devastating to public trust. Integrity is betrayed.

I thank you.