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**MEDIA STATEMENT  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
23 AUGUST 2023**

**SIU WELCOMES SENTENCING OF SIX MEN LINKED TO THE MURDER OF BABITA DEOKARAN**

The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) welcomes the sentencing of six men responsible for the murder of Babita Deokaran, Acting Chief Financial Officer in the Gauteng Department of Health.

On 22 August 2023, the High Court of South Africa: Gauteng Local Division, Johannesburg sentenced the accused to a heavy sentence ranging from six to 22 years imprisonment following a plea and sentence agreement with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA).

Deokaran was killed outside her home in Johannesburg on this day two years ago, after flagging irregularities relating to suppliers and service providers that were conducting business with Tembisa Hospital, resulting in payments of approximately R850 million.

She was a noble public servant and worked with law enforcement agencies, especially the SIU, to stop the abuse of public funds by providing information on ongoing investigations in the health department.

As a senior official in the finance and supply chain management, she provided the SIU with information to assist with investigations relating to the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in the health department, and flagged maladministration, fraud and corruption related to the supply chain management processes at the Tembisa hospital.

The SIU investigation produced significant results and consequence management has been implemented. Several senior officials in the health department have faced disciplinary action and dismissed from employment, PPE contracts have been terminated and monies returned to the State.

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There are still several contracts that need to be adjudicated in the Special Tribunal like the refurbishment of the AngloGold Ashanti Mine Hospital for Covid-19 purposes.

Last week the health department announced that it has suspended six of the nine officials that were sighted in the SIU Report on Tembisa Hospital, while others left the hospital before action could be taken against them. The SIU will conduct further investigation into the alleged corruption, maladministration, fraud, and malpractices related to the supply chain management processes at the hospital.

The SIU supports and hails the efforts by South African Police Service in particular the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations (Hawks) and the NPA in the further investigation to trace the mastermind behind the murder of Babita Deokaran.

**END.**

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