



MEDIA STATEMENT

To all media houses

22 October 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEC MAKAMU CALLS FOR SWIFT ACTION AGAINST ‘BOGUS’ COGHSTA OFFICIALS OPERATING IN THE MOPANI AND VHEMBE DISTRICTS

The MEC for the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs, Mr Basikopo Makamu, is calling on law enforcement agencies to swiftly deal with ‘BOGUS’ departmental officials operating in the Mopani and Vhembe Districts. The department has been alerted to a syndicate that is robbing unsuspecting Headmen and Headwomen by posing as Traditional Affairs Chief Director and the Head of Department.

A person who is only known as Mr Fannie Michael Mhlongo, claiming to be coming from Hlaneki village is allegedly calling Headmen/women around Mopani and Vhembe Districts respectively, asking them to give him money so that he can facilitate salary increases form them or even promoting them to Senior Traditional Leaders.

“We do not have a Chief Director at Traditional Affairs in the name of Mr Michael Mhlongo, coming from Hlaneki village, and our HOD is Dr Malahlela and not a male person for that matter. I still reiterate that Headmen/Women in our Districts should not give any person money to have their salaries raised or promoted to be Senior Traditional Leaders. There is a Traditional Affairs Branch within the CoGHSTA department that works on the appointment of Traditional Leaders.”

The MEC has reiterated that it is a duty of Royal families to discuss the succession processes, thereafter, send necessary information to the Office of the Premier after all the genealogical processes shall have been followed for recognition purposes. He says government only recognizes what the Royal Family has submitted, not the other way round.

The criminality related to fake departmental officials surfaced between 2024 and early 2025, in the same Districts of Mopani and Vhembe where people were extorting money from the Headmen/Women. However this 'Bogus' officials temporarily vanished after the department took steps, including reporting the matter to the police. The MEC remains deeply concerned these level of criminality which shows no respect for the Institution of Traditional Leadership and the rule of law.

"We are confident that our law enforcement agencies have the necessary tools to bring the perpetrators of this barbaric acts, to book. Their days are numbered. We will, working with the police, leave no stone unturned in ensuring that the law takes its course," added the MEC.

The department urges any person information relating to the activities of these scammers, to report them to the South African Police Service or the nearest district offices of CoGHSTA, located as follows:

Vhembe: Old Parliament building, Thohoyandou

Mopani: Old Parliament building, Giyani

Sekhukhune: Old Parliament building, Lebowakgomo

Capricorn: 12-20 Industrial, Polokwane

Waterberg: 87 Thabo Mbeki Street, Bosveld Building, Mokopane

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Issued by the Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs

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