



correctional services

Department:
Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

5 February 2026

DCS Contemplates Suspension of Official Following Escape of Offender Thulani Gcaleka from Sevontein Correctional Centre

The Department of Correctional Services has contemplated an official for suspension following an escape of offender Thulani Gcaleka from Sevontein Correctional Centre, under the Pietermaritzburg Management Area, on 5 February 2026.

Offender Thulani Gcaleka is serving a life sentence for serious offences, including Attempted Murder, Attempted Rape, Rape, Common Robbery, and Housebreaking with the intent to commit an offence. A preliminary report indicates that the offender was part of a cleaning work team assigned to duties at the prison farm at the time of the escape.

An internal investigation has been instituted to establish the full circumstances surrounding the incident. The Department will act without hesitation against any form of security breach or deviation from prescribed Standard Operating Procedures. The outcome of the investigation will guide the necessary disciplinary action and corrective measures to be undertaken in line with the Correctional Services Act.

The re-arrest of the escapee remains a priority. Anyone who may spot him or has information regarding his whereabouts is urged to immediately report this to the nearest police station or correctional facility. A photograph of the escapee is attached to assist with identification.

Necessary resources have been mobilised to ensure the swift apprehension of the offender.

ENDS

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Offender Thulani Gcaleka