

ZUMA REGIME INSENSITIVE

Denise Williams
PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma's government was insensitive towards the workers, the poor and the homeless by spending more than R200-million to upgrade his home in Nkandla, KwaZulu-Natal.

This is according to Cosatu, which has called for action against those who approved the expenditure, including political leaders. Yesterday Cosatu said while it was happy with Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi's assurance that

Cosatu slates R206m cost on Zuma's home

"there is no evidence that public money was spent to build the private residence of the president or that any house belonging to the president was built with public money", but was shocked that the minister confirmed that R71-million had been spent on security upgrades.

Cosatu said it was also shocked that a total of R206-

million of public money was spent on the project.

"For the government to spend such a grotesque amount on any one person is shocking and insensitive to the workers, the poor and the homeless," Cosatu spokesman Patrick Craven said.

Nkandla should also not be treated as a priority over the needs of every other rural commu-

nity, he said.

Cosatu's response comes in the wake of the government's confirmation that R206-million had been spent on Zuma's homestead.

Nxesi also admitted irregularities in the supply chain management processes had involved "many" officials.

He said the full report would not be made public because of security concerns for the president.

"The amounts the minister now concedes were

spent vindicate our asking the public protector and auditor-general to investigate them," Craven said.

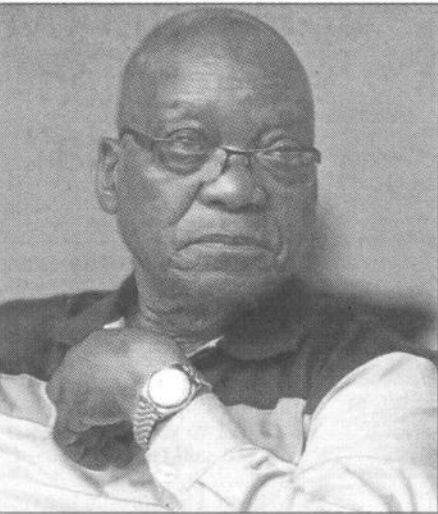
Public Protector Thuli Madonsela is expected to release her findings at the end of March.

Meanwhile, the DA has resorted to invoking the Protection of Access to Information Act in a bid to force the government to reveal the Nkandla report.

DA parliamentary leader Lindiwe Mazibuko said the application was submitted to the department of public works yesterday.



PATRICK CRAVEN



CENTRE OF ROW: President Jacob Zuma
PHOTO: TEBOGO LETSIE