

OPINION

The Times

They huff and they puff but they won't escape Nkandla

THE R206-million Nkandla debacle will not go away. It will continue to haunt President Jacob Zuma and his party until the real culprits behind this shameless looting are exposed and dealt with.

It does not help for Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi to shout and make a show of losing his temper as he tries to convince South Africans that no taxpayers' money was used to "upgrade" Zuma's Nkandla compound. No amount of spin from loyal ANC members and government officials will conceal the fact that state resources have been looted under the guise of providing security for the head of state.

Zuma is at present entitled to three state houses, which have all recently been renovated. That is why the millions that have been spent on his private home defy logic.

Cosatu hit the nail on the head yesterday when it said that for the government to spend such a "grotesque

amount of public money on any one person is shocking and grossly insensitive to the workers, the poor and the homeless".

Nxesi should understand that every cent spent by the state comes from our pockets and, as long as we pay taxes, we are entitled to know how our money is spent.

We agree with Cosatu's demand that the names of service providers who benefited from the R206-million refurbishment of Zuma's Nkandla home be made public.

Cosatu went further and said that the names of the directors and shareholders of all the companies involved in this scandal should also be exposed so that it can be determined whether politicians or civil servants have benefited from the deal.

It is high time that we broaden the focus from Zuma and also demand to be told who were the key players behind this shady deal.

South Africans should put pressure on the government and the ANC to revise the ministerial handbook that they use as a shield in looting our resources.

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