



# Opulent lives of world presidents

## A look into what the state spends on Zuma and family

BIANCA CAPAZORIO

**C**ONTROVERSY still rages over R206 million of taxpayers' money being spent on upgrades at President Jacob Zuma's Nkandla homestead, but just how much does the president cost the state?

As president, Zuma earns R2 622 561 a year. The state also pays 17 percent of his R2.6m salary in pension fund contributions (about R445 000) and two-thirds of the president's medical aid contributions to the Parmed Medical Aid Scheme.

According to the scheme's 2013 rates, the main member contribution is R3 845 a month and there is an additional contribution of R3 845 a month for every adult dependent and R994 for every minor dependent. Assuming Zuma and his four wives are all on the scheme and no minor children are included, his total annual contributions would be R230 700, of which the state would pay R153 800.

Zuma has three official residences, excluding the Nkandla home, which is a private property.

These residences – Mahlamba Ndlopfu in Pretoria, Dr John L Dube House in Durban and Genadendal in Cape Town – have all had upgrades in recent years. The cost of running these households totalled millions in 2009/10, the last time figures were made public. Then, the cost of running the Pretoria home was R2.7m a year and Genadendal cost R944 000. Zuma spent little time at King's House that year because it was being renovated.

These costs did not include the salaries of staff at the three homes.

The Presidency has previously said Zuma's four wives "pay their own living or household expenses, be it food, mortgages, lights, water and so forth. Nothing is paid for by the state in the four households of the spouses. They live in private homes."

However, there is a spousal support budget aimed at enabling the wives to "meet the expectations related to the nature of the office of the president". The spousal support office falls under the Office of the President and its budget is not included as an individual item in the annual budget. In 2010/11 the spousal support budget was R15m. It is unknown what it is now.

"Support services to the president", as detailed in the 2011/2012 Presidency budget, totalled R38m, although there was no breakdown on what this includes.

The president's security is provided by the SAPS's VIP security team. According to the SAPS annual report, this unit "provides for the protection of the president, deputy president, former presidents, and their spouses, and other identified dignitaries while in transit".

This unit had a R695m budget in 2011/12, but not all of this would have been spent on the president.

In response to a parliamentary question, then defence minister Lindiwe Sisulu told Parliament last year that Zuma had taken 286 flights with the SA Air Force's VIP Squadron 21 and on board SAAF charters since 2009. These cost over R140m.