

# R9m POLICE STATION IS VANDALISED

## Officials pass buck over empty building

Patience Bambalele

**A R9-MILLION building for police offices has been stripped bare.**

The building in Saulsville, Pretoria, was completed in 2009 and has been standing empty since, except for a short spell in 2010 during the Fifa Soccer World Cup.

When Sowetan visited the SAPS building, it had been stripped of all its copper wiring, door handles, taps, basins, sinks and air-conditioners, among others.

The building had 25 offices and four toilets when construction was completed.

Peter Mashigo of Domalupa Mmamphaka JV, who constructed the building for the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa), said police were to be stationed at the Saulsville offices to monitor trains and the station in the area.

"The police occupied the building for a while in 2010, but they vacated it because it was [apparently] not handed over to them officially," Mashigo said.

He also said there was a generator worth more than R700 000 on the premises, but that it had not been serviced in four years.

SAPS regional spokeswoman Katlego Mogale referred all queries about the building to the Department of Public Works.

But the spokesman for the department, Lunga Mahlangu, said: "The query does not fall within the behest of Public Works."

He referred all questions to Prasa. Prasa spokesman Moffat Mofokeng said the SAPS should have just moved in when the building was ready because Prasa does not do official handovers.

Mashigo estimated that the damage to the building could amount to more than R1-million.

Mashigo also claimed that Prasa owed him R250 000 in a "retention



fee", which Prasa allegedly holds for a year once the building has been completed. He said he was also asked early last year to provide security for the premises.

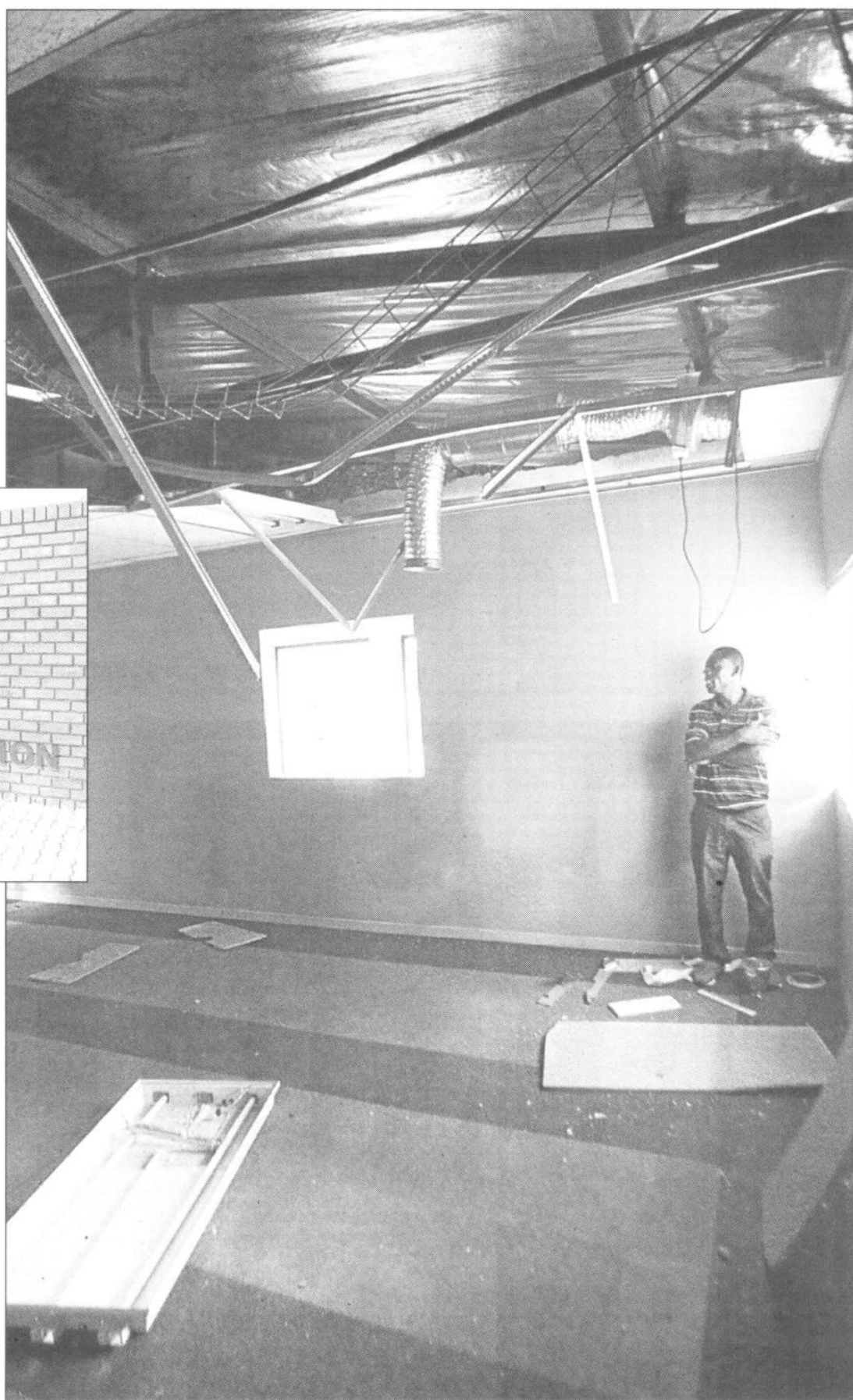
"I was supposed to get my money in 2010, but they are ignoring me," he said.

"They also asked me to provide security to look after the building as it was unoccupied. They have not paid me for those services since February last year. They owe me around R300 000 [for security]."

About Mashigo's alleged non-payment, Mofokeng said: "I would have to refer to the contract to understand if his retention was due to him or not. But I promise that he would be paid."

Mashigo has since received an e-mail, seen by Sowetan, from Prasa general manager of Strategic Portfolio Project Management George Chauke promising payments of R117 000 and R143 000 within seven days from February 1.

Mofokeng would not say whether Prasa would compensate Mashigo for his security services or not. — bambalelep@sowetan.co.za



**MONEY DOWN THE DRAIN:** Peter Mashigo was asked by Prasa to build a police station in Saulsville, Pretoria. The offices are yet to be occupied since they were completed in 2009. PHOTO: VELI NHLAPO