

Cosatu questions Nkandla proclamation



The upgraded Nkandla homestead in KwaZulu-Natal, which allegedly cost more than R200 million to upgrade. Picture: City Press.

Stephen Grootes | 2 days ago

JOHANNESBURG -Cosatu said on Monday it was concerned at the time it's taking the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) to begin its probe into government's spending on President Jacob Zuma's Nkandla home when there is clearly prima facie evidence of wrongdoing.

The SIU confirmed it has not yet started its probe despite Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi saying in January that he would ask them to investigate what he said was money spent only on security upgrades.

Nxesi admitted that over R200 million was spent on the upgrade, but the SIU said it needed a Presidential proclamation to begin its investigating.

Cosatu's Patrick Craven said Zuma has no choice but to issue a proclamation mandating this investigation.

Craven said, "Given the clear evidence that there is something wrong which this minister has made absolutely clear."

Constitution organisation Council for the Advancement of South African Constitution (CASAC) Lawson Naidoo said that this was a clear conflict of interest for the President.

"It is an issue that he has on record that he has paid for all of the building work and the security infrastructure is an inherent contradiction."

He added that this was proof that a fully independent corruption fighting unit was needed.

Opposition parties have claimed that Zuma has simply used government money for his family.

OTHER PROBES

Meanwhile, It still remains unclear which state department is holding up the investigation into Nkandla.

Public Protector Thuli Madonsela's office said it plans to release a preliminary report on its investigation soon.

Her office confirmed that she was still awaiting crucial documents from government before she wraps up her investigation into the Presidential homestead.

Government has spent more than R200 million on consultants and security upgrades to Zuma's Nkandla homestead, using taxpayer's money.

The Public Protector is remaining mum on which department has been keeping crucial documents from investigators and also won't say which documents were still outstanding.

Both the Presidency and the Department of Public Works have been fingered as the culprits by various media houses.

The Presidency has refused to comment on these allegations.

Kgalalelo Masibi from the Public Protector's office said, "The investigation is at an advanced stage and the Public Protector hopes to release a provisional report soon."

Meanwhile, the Justice Department's Special Investigation Unit (SIU) has failed to start their own investigation into the matter.