

Zuma tells opposition his taxes 'are private'

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PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma yesterday drew a line in the sand against opposition political parties probing into his financial affairs.

In a written reply to questions from DA MPs on whether he declared any "fringe" benefits from upgrades made to his Nkandla home to the SARS, Zuma said his tax affairs were a private matter.

It was between himself and the taxman. "The issue of tax is a confidential matter between the South African Revenue Services and the taxpayer," Zuma said.

In a response to a second DA question on whether Zuma was considering the appointment of a commission of inquiry into the banking or financial services sector, Zuma said: "I am not considering appointing a commission of inquiry at the moment."

Responding to a Cope question on the update not to suspend national director of public prosecutions, Shaun Abraham, following Abraham's decision to withdraw charges against Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan, Zuma said he would stand by his decision.

"Having considered the submission received from the national director of

public prosecutions, I decided not to suspend the national director and his two colleagues and not hold an inquiry into his fitness to hold office." Responding to another Cope question on whether any formal steps had been taken by the Department of Public Works to close the loopholes in procurement policies following the Nkandla scandal, Zuma said progress on such matters had been made.

"As part of the overall turnaround strategy of the department, the department has conceded a detailed review of its business processes which resulted in extensive business processes re-engi-

neering to vastly improve the supply chain management (SCM) operations and procurement system.

"The revised SCM business process puts the department's SCM on a 7-year reform path began with a phase of correction of inefficiencies to stabilisation (2014-17) and ultimately to standardisation, integration and optimisation of the SCM business process.

"This will ensure the department's SCM is fully compliant with regulatory framework governing SCM and will also be able to meet its requirements effectively and efficiently," Zuma said.

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