

# Bloodbath!

● Pravin Gordhan axed from finance; replaced by Malusi Gigaba

● Nzimande, Patel, Davies, Mahlobo, Motsoaledi and Nxesi also get the chop

● Rand on the slide, over R13.40 — from R12.30 on Monday

QAANITAH HUNTER, GRAEME HOSKEN, KYLE COWAN AND NEO GOBA

FINANCE Minister Pravin Gordhan was the first casualty in the dramatic cabinet reshuffle that unfolded last night.

Malusi Gigaba, the former Home Affairs Minister, was appointed the new finance minister, while MP Sifiso Buthelezi was made his deputy in place of Mcebisi Jonas.

President Jacob Zuma wielded the axe with abandon, chopping what is thought to be at least nine ministers and six deputies.

At 11pm it was confirmed that Gordhan had been removed from his post as finance minister.

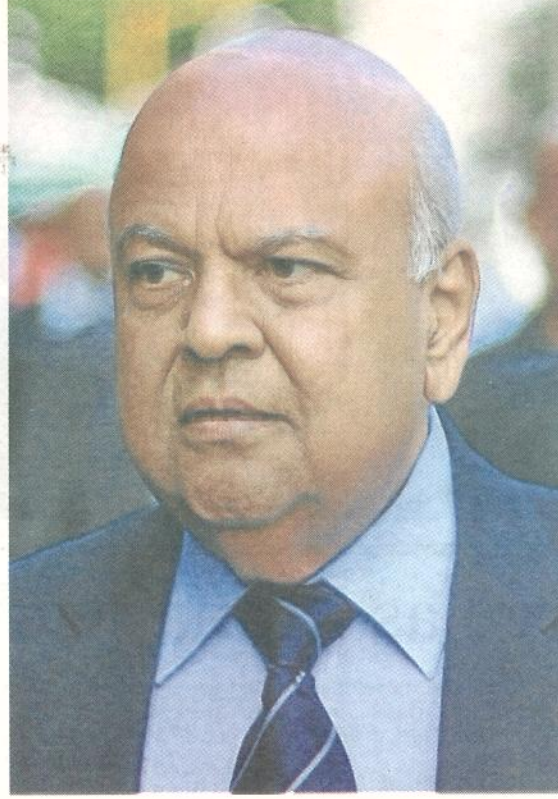
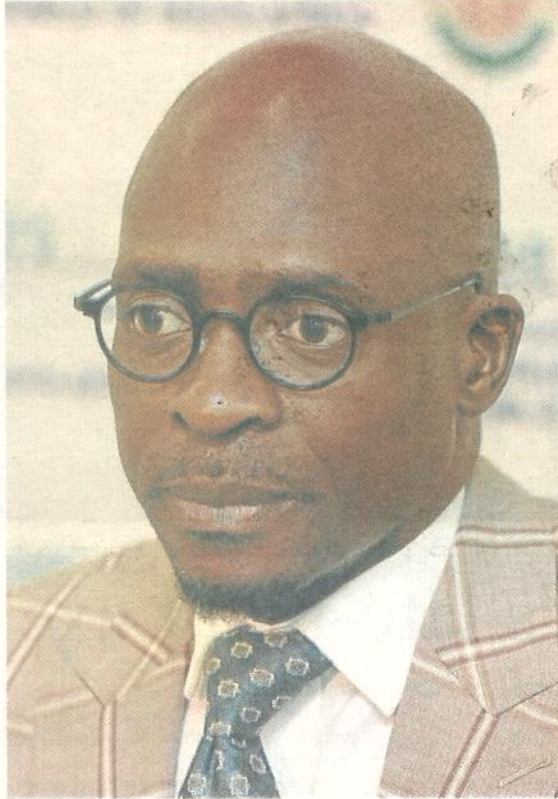
Other casualties were believed to be Economic Development Minister Ebrahim Patel, Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi, State Security Minister David Mahlobo, Higher Education Minister Blade Nzimande, Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi and Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies.

Zuma met ministers at his official residence Mahlambandlovu in Pretoria after earlier summoning his other top five ANC leaders at short notice at 6.30pm.

By 9.30pm he had delivered the news: A cabinet bloodbath was about to unfold.

As news of the reshuffle broke, the rand lost ground and by 11pm was trading at R13.40 to the dollar. On Monday the currency had hit a 20-month high of R12.30.

Analyst Ebrahim Fakir said: "The implication now depends on what those who threatened to walk out do. We will have to see what the ANC caucus does, but I suspect the president wouldn't have made this



IN AND OUT: Malusi Gigaba, left, moves into Pravin Gordhan's office today

decision unless [he had support].

"He must have caucused this with at least some of the top leadership of the ANC and got their support because, remember, one of their conditions was that he should not make Brian Molefe [finance minister].

"For me the real test is going to be: Will the rand rally and pick-up from the damage? I don't think we should fuel speculation to the

extent that this is the end of South Africa and we can't ever recover from here," said Fakir.

The reshuffle comes three days after Zuma told the ANC top five he wanted to get rid of Gordhan and his deputy Jonas.

He was armed with an intelligence report claiming Gordhan was conspiring with overseas investors to topple him.

His plan caused ructions with at

For me the real test is going to be: Will the rand rally and pick up from the damage?

least three members of the ANC's top six leaders refusing to support Gordhan's axing, reports said.

Earlier yesterday, reports emerged that Zuma was facing a rebellion within his party, with the Bloomberg news agency quoting sources as saying that about 12 cabinet ministers were considering resigning and then fighting for his removal.

Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa and some deputy ministers might also resign.

The "Operation Checkmate" intelligence report, which purports to show that Gordhan planned to meet UK and US figures who want to overthrow the government, has also been rubbished by opposition political parties.

EFF leader Julius Malema likened the report to the work of a "child in early childhood development classes".

The salvos against Zuma yesterday began with the SA Communist Party denouncing "growing abuse of state security organs and their meddling in daily political life".

The DA said it would push for a vote of no confidence in Zuma and the EFF filed papers in the Constitutional Court asking that parliament be ordered to take disciplinary action against Zuma for breaking his oath of office.

The Constitutional Court last year found that Zuma had failed to uphold, defend and respect the constitution in disregarding Public Protector Thuli Madonsela's findings on the refurbishment of his Nkandla home at taxpayers' ex-

● From Page 1