

Nkandla contract 'awarded illegally'

Nathi Olifant

THE process used to appoint a contractor to undertake mammoth upgrades to President Jacob Zuma's private Nkandla homestead was not fair, transparent, equitable or cost-effective, the Special Investigating Unit said yesterday.

This was revealed by investigator Christian Legwabe during the ongoing Department of Public Works disciplinary hearings in Durban.

He said the department had paid almost double on at least one element of the upgrade because of a wrongful contract award.

Legwabe was testifying in the disciplinary proceedings of Jayshree Pardesi, the Pretoria-based national director of key accounts management.

She is one of 10 Public Works officials accused of flouting tender processes that led to controversial architect Minenhle Makhanya's being appointed to lead the Nkandla upgrades project.

Yesterday, the hearing learnt that Pardesi was on a Public Works panel that contracted Moneymine Enterprises for the R246-million project.

Legwabe said the committee had used a negotiated strategy to procure Moneymine, and did not follow proper tender processes.

"The negotiated strategy was not fair, transparent, equitable and not [cost-effective].

"As a result, the department incurred irregular expenditure," he said. The R6.1-million awarded to Moneymine was twice what the department should have paid. – TimesLIVE