

## The Citizen

### **Bongo spent R147k at a luxury hotel so he can shower – report**

Gosebo Mathope

Bongo claimed he has not been allocated a ministerial residence and that he will pay the costs from his own pocket.

The water crisis in Cape Town resulted in authorities requesting all stakeholders – businesses in the tourism industry, residents and high water users to adhere to strict water restrictions to avoid 'Day Zero,' a plan that appear to have worked as the date has been pushed to June 2018.

One man who was not prepared to give up his showering privileges is allegedly minister of State Security Bongani Bongo who opted to book into the five-star Taj Mahal hotel in the Cape Town CBD for close to three weeks at an estimated cost of R147 000.

The Sunday Times is reporting that Bongo apparently checked into the hotel as he was unhappy about, among other things, the 90-second time limit for showers. The publication is reporting that guests at the hotel are asked to take 90-second showers, but are not penalised for failing to do so. Head of communications for the ministry of State Security Brian Dube told The Citizen that "the minister will not be able to speak on that matter, he is not taking media queries on those allegations."

It is reported that Bongo used the hotel as his base in Cape Town, with claims that his bodyguards spent time at the pricey hotel as he preferred to have them with him 24 hours. It is also alleged Bongo has been conducting government business from the hotel, meeting with ANC MPs and deputy ministers.

Table Mountain-facing standard suite at the hotel comes at hefty R4000 per night, while a presidential suite costs about R60 000 per night. It was also reported that a popular joke in Cape Town political circles is that "he [Bongo] didn't want to take a short bucket bath when he was in Cape Town – like everyone else."

Bongo is recorded as having admitted to the publication that he is staying at the hotel for R7000 per night and claimed he would be paying the bill himself. He also said he has had to use House no 38 at Pelican Park, a MPs village in Goodwood area of Cape Town, as the department of Public Works has failed to him an official ministerial residence five months into the job.

Department of Public Works head of communications Reggie Ngcobo said as he is in a meeting, he will answer the questions The Citizen sent him on the matter via email once the meeting he is attending is concluded.