

■ RENT

R14.8m to house Zondo Commission

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THE state has to date paid R14.8 million for the housing of the Zondo Commission of Inquiry into allegations of state capture at a building owned by media company Tiso Blackstar in Parktown, Joburg.

This was revealed by Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Patricia de Lille in a written response to a parliamentary question from the EFF's Mgcini Tshwaku.

Tshwaku had asked about the contract to accommodate the commission as well as the duration of the contract and amount paid to date.

In a written response, De Lille said R1 244 696 was paid monthly towards

the costs of rental of offices and an auditorium from Tiso Blackstar and Redefine Properties.

She said the lease agreement with Redefine Properties was signed on May 28 last year by the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure, and on June 14 last year by Redefine Properties.

De Lille also said the lease agreements with Tiso Blackstar were signed on May 28 last year by the department and July 31 last year by the media company.

"The lease agreement with Tiso Blackstar was signed for 12 months and has been extended for a further period of seven months.

"The lease agreement with Redefine was signed for a period of three

years," she said. The minister said monthly rental for offices at the Tiso Blackstar building was R72 846.52 and the rental of the media company's auditorium was R796 950.

De Lille added that the monthly rental of offices from Redefine Properties was R374 900.61. "The total amount paid to date is R14 837 975.97," she said in her written reply.

In January last year, former president Jacob Zuma appointed the commission as part of remedial action by former public protector Thuli Madonsela.

Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng appointed his deputy, Judge Raymond Zondo, as the chairperson of the commission.

However, the housing of the com-



DEPUTY Chief Justice Raymond Zondo chairs the judicial Commission of Inquiry into allegations of state capture. | KAREN SANDISON African News Agency (ANA)

mission at Hill on Empire, a building owned by Tiso Blackstar media group, has attracted criticism from some quarters, especially from the EFF.

Zondo has previously said the Tiso Blackstar building was chosen after an unsuccessful search for a suitable venue for the work of the commission.

"I just want to make it clear that this commission, public works and the department of justice did not just go for a privately owned building without exploring the possibility of saving costs by using a government venue," Zondo said last November when the criticism first surfaced.