

■ 'JOBS FOR COMRADES'

# Criminal charges filed against city manager

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CRIMINAL charges of corruption were laid against eThekweni Municipality's municipal manager Siphon Nzuza and other officials yesterday.

The charges were laid by the DA which accused the ruling party of a "jobs for comrades" scandal and for deliberately acting to restrict access to jobs relating to waste collection in uMlazi.

The party said it had laid criminal charges at uMlazi GG police station yesterday, and the corruption charge was laid in terms of the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act.

The party in a statement said Nzuza and the officials, including an ANC councillor, had violated the Act.

The decision by the municipality to stop outsourcing and take over waste removal functions in uMlazi came after contractors failed, repeatedly, to perform the function, leading to piles of uncollected rubbish all over the township. This was followed by the announcement at a council meeting that more than 300 people would be permanently employed by the municipality to collect waste in the uMlazi area.

The DA's spokesperson on Pub-

lic Works and Infrastructure, Patricia Kopane, alleged that at a meeting held in August, by Nzuza with an ANC councillor and city officials, there was a discussion about the recruitment process for the waste removal jobs.

Kopane said in a recording of the meeting, which is in their possession, an ANC councillor can be heard directing how the hiring process should be handled.

"In a recording, Nelly Nyanisa, former chief whip of the ANC caucus in eThekweni, can be heard addressing city manager, Siphon Nzuza, and the head of Durban Solid Waste (DSW) in eThekweni, Raymond Rampersad, on how the process of hiring in uMlazi should be handled. In the recording, Nyanisa suggests that councillors should drive recruitment for the project and it should only be open to the public when more people were required."

"The ANC sought to deliberately exclude members of the community from employment opportunities, by directly interfering with the recruitment process," said Kopane.

She alleged that, at a time when unemployment was high, ANC politicians were exposed for using their positions to reserve jobs for comrades.

She said that political interference in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the province had become endemic, adding that this had led to hundreds of deserving people being left without jobs because employment lists were filled with ghost workers, supplied by corrupt politicians.

"EPWP jobs, that were meant to provide relief to the unemployed, especially the youth, have now become scarce as a result of corrupt politicians, who are only concerned with lining their pockets. We will use every tool at our disposal to fight corruption that takes food away from the mouths of poor and unemployed South Africans," she said.

Nyanisa and Rampersad could not be reached for comment yesterday.

However, Nzuza admitted that he was part of the meeting, together with officials in the municipality. He said that the meeting was about explaining the recruitment processes and procedures of filling those posts.

"It was never about giving certain comrades jobs, that was never even discussed. I called the team from human resources department to come and explain how we undertook the recruitment process and what policies we follow," he said.