

■ THEFT

SIU on trail of raiders of state coffers

Intent on recovering millions of rands

SIYABONGA MKHWANAZI

siyabonga.mkhwanazi@inl.co.za

THE Special Investigating Unit (SIU) is gunning for individuals and companies that illegally pilfered millions of rand from the state coffers in various projects.

This is contained in an annual report tabled by the SIU in Parliament, which lists, among others, Minenhle Makhanya with a civil claim of R155 million.

Makhanya, who is former president Jacob Zuma's architect, entered a legal battle with the SIU after the release of the Nkandla report and the Constitutional Court judgment in 2016.

The report comes after the Special Tribunal formally began its business to hear cases brought by the SIU on civil claims.

The tribunal is chaired by Judge Gidfonia Mlindelwa Makhanya, who will be assisted by seven other judges.

The government set up the tribunal in order to fast-track civil claims against those who have illegally benefited from the state.

The report says the SIU is also suing for millions of rand in other projects in the Department of Public Works.

In the former Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services, now Communications and Digital Technologies, the SIU is suing for R25m.

In the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform the unit wants over R208m.

The lawsuit against Makhanya is not the only one by the SIU over Department of Public Works projects. There are several others where the unit is suing for millions.

The SIU also wants to recoup millions from individuals and companies related to the SABC.

Hlaudi Motsoeneng is being sued for R21m by the unit. In other SABC lawsuits they want to get back R85m



Hlaudi Motsoeneng

and another R62m.

In the Department of Water and Sanitation the SIU wants to recover R21m.

In relation to Eskom the unit wants to recoup R3.7 billion after a contract was set aside. Eskom has been in serious financial trouble and some of its contracts have been questioned.

Eskom sued McKinsey for R1bn and Trillian for R500m and the former paid back a portion of the money.

In regard to Life Esidimeni, the SIU recently won a lawsuit against two service providers in Gauteng and the unit will recover R600 000.

A total of 144 mental health patients died after they had to leave Life Esidimeni as revealed in the investigation conducted by the health ombudsman Malegapuru Makgoba.

Retired Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke conducted an inquiry with findings against senior officials and politicians. He also ordered the compensation of families for R1.2m each.

In the Amahlathi municipality, Greater Tubatse municipality and Msunduzi local municipality the lawsuits stand at millions.

In Msunduzi alone the SIU is suing for R500m, in Greater Tubatse R300m, in Amahlathi R92m and in Harry Gwala R2m.