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ANC mayor embroiled in assault against senior municipal official

De Beer-Mthombeni is untouchable, says Themba Mpindo

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A municipal employee who physically attacked a senior official at Ngwathe local municipality in Free State has allegedly confessed to the police that he was acting on Mayor Victoria De Beer-Mthombeni's instructions.

When the manager in charge of budget and expenditure, Themba Mpindo, arrived at work on Wednesday, an employee of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) assaulted him. Mpindo is also the former acting CFO at Ngwathe.

According to Mpindo, the suspect confessed to the police that he acted on instructions of the mayor. Police insiders, who cannot speak to the media corroborated the information.

De Beer-Mthombeni and her spokesperson Mbulelo Mtshilibe did not respond to the questions sent.

The opposition EFF has called for Cooperative Governance, and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) MEC Ketso Makume to investigate the incident.

Mpindo told *Sunday World* that the aggressive employee blocked him from entering the municipal building. He said the suspect attacked him and roughed him up for no



Mayor Victoria De Beer-Mthombeni

Themba Mpindo

apparent reason.

Immediately after the assault, Mpindo said he called the acting municipal manager, Teboho Manele, to notify him about the incident.

"I called the acting manager, Manele, alerting him to the incident. Since he was not present, he advised that I return home as he was away to deal with the situation. I rushed straight to the police to open a case against my attacker," said Mpindo.

Police later detained the accused, he said.

Insiders at the police alleged that the suspect confessed that he was acting on De Beer-Mthombeni's instructions to deal with Mpindo. "The suspect confessed after interroga-

tion that he was acting on the mayor's instructions to have the complainant dealt with," said a police insider.

A municipal insider claimed that many political opponents in the area feared De Beer-Mthombeni, also a regional chairperson of the ANC in Ngwathe's Fezile Dabi region, as she was seen to be connected and close to the governing party's provincial leadership.

"Victoria is untouchable, and whoever tries to mess with her is

dealt with. Remember the story of the official state vehicle that killed a person last year? That matter is no longer being entertained, and the deceased's family is still asking for answers, but nothing is forthcoming."

The person claimed that Mpindo was attacked because he asked uncomfortable questions when budgets needed to be released. "He hates corruption. He might have rubbed Victoria the wrong way; hence, he was attacked," said the ANC mole.

EFF provincial secretary Malfefane Msimanga condemned the attack on Mpindo. "As the EFF in Free State, we view in a serious light the issue of people who victimise officials who are trying to protect the public purse against the political

hyenas of this world.

"Yesterday (Wednesday), Themba Mpindo was manhandled by an EPWP worker, who later confessed to having been sent by the executive mayor of Ngwathe local municipality. It should be noted that the above happened in full view of security guards working for the municipality, but they could not protect Mpindo against this EPWP rascal. Msimanga said.

He said that Mpindo, as the manager of expenditure and budgeting, has been denied access to the municipality after refusing to sign documents from De Beer-Mthombeni that constituted an unlawful instruction.

"As EFF, we call on the MEC of Cogta to investigate the above issue and act in the best interest of the people of Ngwathe, not his comrades. Clearly, there are still those who continue to confuse the public purse with their personal money," said Msimanga.

Parys SAPS spokesperson Sergeant Josephine Rani confirmed that a case of assault has been registered after a 45-year-old had alleged to have been assaulted by one of the EPWP members.

"Unfortunately, the contents of the docket cannot be disclosed until the matter get its day in the court of law. The suspect was arrested and issued with a R500 fine which he is supposed to pay or failure to which, will have to appear before the Parys Magistrate Court on 5 February," said Rani.

“ I rushed to the police station and opened a case against my attacker