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Zondo Commission – Thamente Myeni kept no records of his company's business

Thamente Myeni, the son of former SAA chairperson and close associate of former president Jacob Zuma, Dudu Myeni, appeared before the commission of inquiry into state capture under subpoena on Monday. Myeni was meant to answer to some of the consultancy work linked to his company, Premier Attraction 1016, which has enjoyed numerous consulting contracts across the country, including government-based.

For the most part, however, Myeni recalled very little of the actual projects that he was asked on, furthermore telling evidence leader Advocate Kate Hofmeyr that he has not kept records of his company's dealings over the years, because he did not foresee a need in future for him to be questioned on the affairs of his company.

He did however, acknowledge the involvement of Premier Attraction in a 2015 assisted housing development project in the Mpumalanga town of Bethal. Although denying that his company was the lead developer, Myeni, did concede that a R2-million payment was made to Premier Attraction by another company, VNA Consulting, in relation to the project.

VNA director Vikash Narsai's version of events is that his company paid Premier Attraction the amount in the former's capacity as lead developers, while Myeni insisted that it was actually a handover fee to VNA when the latter took over the "top structure" management of the project.

In his affidavit to the commission – read by Hofmeyr - Narsai states that VNA was contracted on to the development project by Premier Attraction in early 2015, necessitating the payment, after the latter handed over reports on the development. Narsai has submitted documentation to the commission that he says supports his claim.

When probed on Narsai's version, Myeni said: "Mr Narsai is being dishonest."

Hofmeyr also asked Myeni about three payments totalling just over R3-million to a little known Richards Bay-based company, Isibonelo Construction, but this turned up very little from the media-shy businessman.

Isibonelo is owned by a man only known on the public records of the commission thus far as "Mr X". According to an affidavit he has submitted to the commission, Mr X said there were absolutely no business dealings between his company and Premier Attraction. Myeni, on the other hand, refuted this, saying because Premier Attraction has been in business with many companies over the years, he is unable to remember everyone of them by name or project type, but he sees no reason other than a business transaction to validate the transactions in question.

Mr X began testifying in-camera on Monday afternoon, citing a fear for his safety and that of his family as reason for applying to commission chairperson Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo for the added protection.

He is expected to continue with his testimony on Tuesday.

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