



STATEMENT F15/2021

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE MONITORING AND ADVOCACY OF GOVERNMENT PENSIONS (AMAGP)

Cape Town

13 October 2021

DO THE PUBLIC INVESTMENT CORPORATION (PIC) AND THE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES PENSION FUND (GEPF) INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE MPATI COMMISSION?

The 50,000 members of the Association for Monitoring and Advocacy of Government Pensions (AMAGP), along with some two million government employees and current civil service pensioners have been waiting for more than 18 months for any sign of the recommendations of the Mpati Commission being implemented.

The only information provided so far has been vague and evasive.

A new dimension has now been introduced by the PIC: Excuses for doing nothing.

AMAGP notes with concern - but with no surprise - newspaper reports quoting the CEO of the PIC on a decision to halt the investigation into the conduct of its former CEO, Dan Matjila, as instructed by the Mpati Commission. It cites as its reason for so doing the fact that Matjila is challenging the findings of the Mpati Commission through the courts.

The PIC is also delaying investigations regarding other staff members. One staff member, CFO Matshepo More, was suspended in March 2019 with full pay with an annual salary of R6,9 million . Another suspended employee, Chris Pholwane, is still receiving a salary of R3,76

million per year. Roy Rajdhar, a suspended executive who resigned in June 202, received a salary of R4.8 million while suspended.

We are talking about real money here, money belonging to the country's civil servants - not Monopoly money!

Why investigations into Matjila's disturbing conduct should be delayed is not clear.

Why not finalise the investigations and then wait for the result of court actions by Matjila? In the case of More the delay is ascribed to her having been asked to respond to several issues. If it is remembered that More was suspended in March 2019, the reason provided for this delay is really laughable. An employee being allowed to dictate to the employer?

Really?

What the PIC does not do, once again, is announce particulars of what progress, if any, is being made in complying with other Mpati recommendations.

To mention just a few:

- **72 - In the light of the above, the Commission recommends that the PIC must conduct a forensic review of all the processes involved in all transactions entered into with the Sekunjalo Group and to ensure that the PIC obtains company registration numbers of every entity in the Sekunjalo Group to be able to conduct a forensic investigation as to the flow of monies out of the group.**
- **74 - Steps must be taken to recover all monies with interest due to the PIC, especially where personal or other sureties was a precondition to approval of the investment.**
- **75 - The PIC must also determine the future role, if any, of the PIC in all of the transactions with the Sekunjalo Group, to protect the interests of the PIC and its client; and review all aspects of the transactions entered into with the Sekunjalo Group to determine whether any laws or regulations have been broken.**
- **76 - It is also recommended that the PIC reviews its internal processes, including its standard operating procedures,**

together with the DoA, to determine responsibility and culpability, and to consider whether there are grounds for disciplinary, criminal and/or civil legal action against any PIC employees or Board members, current or previous.

Nothing is said about progress on the above and also about progress in liquidating Sekunjalo Independent Media which is steadfastly refusing to repay the original 2013 loan to buy the Independent Media newspaper chain as Iqbal Survé is contractually obliged to do. Similarly, not a word is said about the AYO matter where funds are being drained by paying the salaries of staff members of the insolvent Independent Media company.

We trust that the PIC board has noted, as we have, the investigative journalism of the amaBhungane team which revealed that Iqbal Survé and Dan Matjila allegedly collaborated to structure the AYO contract in such way that it would be legally impossible to [recoup the money](#) invested in that company. Money belonging to pensioners and workers. **Is this not a matter for the Hawks and perhaps also the National Prosecuting Authority?**

What is the response of the Board of Trustees and the PIC to this? It is not as though the board was not forewarned. More than five years ago, James Myburgh of Politicsweb revealed that Iqbal Survé was making no effort to repay the PIC loan with which he had gained control of the Independent Media newspapers. **Five years ago and still no effort to recover the money!**

Has the PIC Board also noticed that nothing has come of Survé's claim more than three years ago that he would list Sagarmatha Technologies – the so-called 'African Unicorn' - on the stock exchange in New York and Hong Kong?

By seeking reasons to delay the finalisation of the Commission's recommendations the PIC apparently does not understand that the Stalingrad strategy is usually used by the respondent and not the complainant.

The PIC should find reasons to comply with the Mpati recommendations instead of seeking to evade its instructions.

And the arrogant, well-paid and Government-controlled Board of Trustees of the GEPP?

From them its silence as usual on matters of the utmost importance to the people whose interests they are supposed to protect.

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