



Politician denies accepting bribe of \$135,000 and a wig

Description

AFRICA : South African prosecutors announced on Monday their plan to pursue the country's parliamentary speaker, Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, over corruption allegations.

She is accused of accepting \$135,000 in bribes over a three-year period, and while serving as defense minister. The charges also include the taking of a wig as a bribe.

During a meeting in February 2019 at an international airport in South Africa, Mapisa-Nqakula allegedly received over \$15,000 and the wig. Prosecutors are also claiming that the politician probably solicited an additional bribe of \$105,000, which was not paid. The individual who allegedly offered the bribes was not identified.

Currently on leave from her position as speaker in South Africa's National Assembly, Mapisa-Nqakula has refuted all allegations of misconduct. She has also pledged to collaborate with the authorities.

Last week, evidence was removed during a search of her Johannesburg residence.

Accusations of accepting bribes have been leveled against Mapisa-Nqakula in the past, however, a parliamentary inquiry into the matter was discontinued in 2021. The allegations resurfaced last year, following revelations from a whistleblower, according to prosecutors.

She has not been detained or formally accused. Prosecutors addressed her assertions during a court hearing, where she argued that authorities had failed to adequately inform her of the allegations, or to adhere to proper investigative procedures.

Judge Sulet Potterill announced that she will issue a ruling on April 2 regarding Mapisa-Nqakula's request for a temporary injunction to prevent her arrest by the police.

Mapisa-Nqakula is additionally seeking access to documents detailing the evidence held by prosecutors against her. However, they have rejected the request, contending that the defendant is seeking preferential treatment.

The African National Congress party commented on Sunday about “Comrade Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula’s special leave from Parliament due to law enforcement actions and allegations against her.”

The party is preparing for the country’s national election on May 29.

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