

Ntlemeza still intent on going back to work

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Former head of the Hawks Berning Ntlemeza is still on leave and will approach the courts if he is stopped from returning to work next week, his lawyer Comfort Ngidi said on Tuesday, 18 April 2017.



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"He will go back to work on Monday. If we are obstructed we will go back to the court."

Ntlemeza is approaching the Supreme Court of Appeal in a bid to keep his job and is also refusing to vacate his office as instructed by newly appointed Police Minister Fikile Mbalula.

Ngidi accused Mbalula of not following proper procedure or labour relations law when he removed Ntlemeza.

Police ministry spokesman Vuyo Mhaga said the minister removed Ntlemeza on instruction from the court.

"It's not the minister's decision, it's the decision of the court. The job of the minister was to implement that decision."

Mhaga would not say how the ministry would handle the matter if Ntlemeza turned up for work next week.

"Let's deal with that when he arrives," he said.

Mbalula had appointed Ntlemeza's deputy, Lt-Gen Yolisa Matakata, as acting Hawks head as provided for in section 17 of the South African Police Service Act, Mhaga said.

The act stated that whenever the office of the national head of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation was vacant, or the head was unable to take up the appointment, the minister would appoint the national deputy head in an acting capacity as head of the unit.

As acting head, Matakata will have to take on the cases left on her predecessor's desk, which will include the investigation into state capture.

The Hawks are investigating cases linked to state capture opened by different political parties and individuals.

Other cases Matakata will have to oversee as head of the directorate include the investigation into the South African Revenue Service "rogue unit" and suspicious tenders at the Passenger Rail Agency of SA worth billions of rand.

Before her appointment, she was head of the Hawks in the Western Cape.

Matakata is a career police officer, who has 33 years of service, of which more than 12 years service was at senior management level.

She had held several crucial positions in the South African Police Service since she enlisted in 1995.

Matakata worked in crime intelligence for 15 years and was appointed head of the division in the Western Cape in 2008.

Source: Business Day

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