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THE POLITICAL WEEK AHEAD: Planned protest keeps Spear in spotlight

The ANC and its alliance partners are mobilising supporters to participate in a protest march on Tuesday morning to the Goodman Gallery

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THE uproar over the painting depicting President Jacob Zuma with his genitals exposed is set to continue dominating headlines this week (Cosatu).

The African National Congress (ANC) and its alliance partners are mobilising supporters to participate in a protest march tomorrow morning to the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg which displayed the controversial work by artist Brett Murray. The gallery removed the painting after it was defaced by protesters. Emotions are expected to run high during the march.

Mr Zuma will be in the spotlight on other fronts as well.

He is expected to take action on a damning report by the board of inquiry into the role played by suspended national police commissioner Bheki Cele in contracting R1,7bn worth of leases for police headquarters in Pretoria and Durban. The board recommended that Gen Cele be fired, but he rejected the findings and has vowed to take the matter to court.

Under close scrutiny will be the fate of suspended head of the police's crime intelligence unit, Richard Mdluli. There is also the possible removal of acting police commissioner Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi.

Mr Zuma and Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe together with Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Minister Collins Chabane and National Planning Minister Trevor Manuel will be in the National Assembly on Wednesday and Thursday to participate in the budget debate on the Presidency.

Measures to fight corruption and introduce greater accountability in the public service will be raised. So too will be the Presidency's bid to co-ordinate infrastructure planning across government and state-owned companies through the presidential infrastructure co-ordinating commission. Opposition parties could also question the cost of support for Mr Zuma and his family of wives and children, which has escalated over the past few years.

The Presidency is expected to release its mid-term review, which is an assessment of the performance of government against targets.

Members of Parliament will also discuss Parliament's own budget vote tomorrow.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions' (Cosatu's) central executive committee meets for three days from today.

It will finalise the federation's position on crucial political questions ahead of its national congress in September, including whether or not Cosatu's top leaders should sit on the ANC's national executive committee as ex officio members.

E-tolling, labour brokers, education, youth unemployment, climate change, the energy crisis, retirement funds and national health insurance (NHI) are among the issues to be discussed.

The Financial and Fiscal Commission will table its recommendations for 2013-2014 in Parliament today.

Its report focuses on a number of issues impacting on government's fiscal policy and the way budgets are spent by the different spheres.

Committee meetings of interest scheduled for the week include tomorrow's progress with its turnaround plan.

The ad hoc committee on the Protection of State Information Bill will be briefed by the State Security Agency on proposed amendments to the bill. The Democratic Alliance meanwhile, has a number of press conferences lined up.

Today it will be on the party's proposals to protect children from sexual offences; tomorrow on its views on the government's labour bills. It will tackle harbour management on Friday.

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