

By Aug 28, 2008

What was an expensive state-of-the-art laptop belonging to the office of the deputy minister of home affairs in Pretoria doing in Durban?

That was what electronics expert, Ari Danikas, who is also a police reservist with the organised crime unit, wondered after a man brought the laptop into his city shop, saying he did not have a charger and wanted it repaired.

Danikas told the man to return later to collect it and then did some detective work to find out who actually owned the laptop, worth about R20 000.

He discovered that the laptop (a tablet PC) contained the CV of the deputy minister, Malusi Gigaba, the former president of the ANC Youth League, and several of his speeches, his work schedule and photographs.

He also found the contact number of someone in the deputy minister's office and believing that the laptop was stolen, telephoned to say that it was safe with him, and that he was prepared to arrest the suspect when he returned to collect the laptop.

"I wanted the case number, but was told that the laptop had been reported lost, not stolen, so there was no case number," said Danikas.

However, he was then faxed a letter from Thami Msomi, the head of the office of the deputy minister, who confirmed that the computer belonged to the department and was allocated to the office of the deputy minister to be used by a staff member then employed by the office.

"I had taken down the name of the suspect and even spoke to deputy minister Gigaba, who told me that he knew the man and was very upset about it," said Danikas.

Gigaba and Msomi told Danikas that he should arrest the suspect when he returned.

"But the man never returned to get the laptop," Danikas said.

Msomi, who was in Durban the next day, collected the laptop from Danikas.

Msomi said the department would investigate the matter.

"The person (who went to Danikas's shop) never worked for the department. I do not want to speculate. Due processes will be followed," Msomi said. - Daily News Reporter

1010w6u, msomii said. - Daily news reporter

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