

Sandton Cops Attack Gupta - Charges against New Age publisher dropped

Billionaire businessman and owner of the New Age newspaper Atul Gupta burst into tears of relief after an expected criminal case against him was dropped at short notice, *reports Sipho Masondo for The Herald*.

Gupta, the older of two brothers closely aligned to President Jacob Zuma, had already arrived at the Randburg Magistrate's Court when he was told a case involving alleged obstruction of justice would not proceed.

Gupta was arrested after he allegedly refused to let police search his car when he and his bodyguard, Wikus Priesloo, were stopped in Johannesburg on Saturday.

Gupta reportedly threatened the two police officers involved that a single call to National Police Commissioner Bheki Cele could get them fired, also claiming he was a victim of xenophobia.

The officers – named as Constable Aubrey Mlotshwa and a Constable Mangena – formally charged Gupta at Sandton police station.

Obviously unaware that the case had been dropped, Gupta arrived at the court yesterday in two luxurious BMWs and a Range Rover, flanked by friends, family, bodyguards and legal representatives.

State prosecutor Advocate Annemarie Smith said the “case was not placed on the court roll, because there is no case”.

An emotional Gupta said later: “I felt mentally broken.” He sobbed, wiping the tears off with a handkerchief as a friend comforted him.

Gupta's lawyer, Cliff Alexander, said Gupta had done nothing wrong. “Cellphone records can prove that no call was made to either Cele or Mr (Jacob) Zuma. He (Gupta) attempted to call 10111 to ascertain if the police were indeed police as they were not acting like police.

“They had no search warrant or reasonable suspicion to stop Gupta.” Alexander said Gupta was “treated to xenophobia by the police”.

“They harassed Mr Gupta and went as far as telling him to go back to India. He was unlawfully arrested.”

Read the [full story here](#).

Read the Daily Maverick's analysis of Atul Gupta and The New Age: [As The New Age enters the world, Atul Gupta enters new controversy](#)