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Guptas, Duduzane Zuma and others seek Zondo's permission to cross-examine witnesses

Lawyers for the Gupta family and Duduzane Zuma are at the moment preparing final applications through which they seek permission to cross-examine witnesses who have testified in the commission of inquiry into state capture. Proceedings were adjourned on Monday afternoon, with chairperson Raymond Zondo announcing that the matter of applications may be heard on Wednesday, depending on discussions between the legal teams of those who are implicated and that of the commission.

Ajay and Rajesh Gupta in particular have applied to cross-examine former deputy finance minister Mcebisi Jonas and former ANC MP Vytjie Mentor. Besides Gupta and his brother Rajesh, others who are asking Zondo for the opportunity to test the veracity of witness testimonies include Duduzane Zuma; Fana Hlongwane; former public enterprises minister Lynne Brown; former presidential chief of staff Lakela Kaunda; Advocate Mandla Mtolo; and Major-General Zinhle Mnonopi of the Hawks.

It was Jonas who started the ball rolling in the first week of the commission's public hearings. He told his account of an incident in 2015 in which Ajay Gupta made an alleged offer of R600-million for Jonas to accept the position of minister of finance, which was at the time occupied by Nhlanhla Nene. Jonas filed an affidavit with the South African Police Service, only for the Hawks to draft their own statement, presented to him by Mnonopi and which he was expected to sign.

Former ANC MP Vytjie Mentor testified that Ajay Gupta offered her the position of public enterprises minister in return for her commitment to abolishing a South African Airways route between Johannesburg and Mumbai in India. When she refused, the post was then given to current home affairs minister Malusi Gigaba, after a cabinet reshuffle by former president Jacob Zuma.

She also implicated Mtolo and Mnonopi in the drafting of a false statement.

Former government spokesperson and CEO of the government communications information system, Themba Maseko, further implicated the Guptas in his testimony. According to him, Ajay wanted to take over the media-buying budget of government departments and redirect it to the Gupta-owned *New Age* newspaper.

In addressing the matter of the applications, Zondo said the legal representatives of the people implicated may meet with the commission's legal team between Monday afternoon and Tuesday, in order to make a submission for him on what the procedure will be.

Useful links:

[Zondo Commission](#) website

[Government Communication and Information System](#) (GCIS)

South African Police Service - [Hawks](#)