



12 August 2020

Zondo commission – no-show Gordhan earns harsh words from chairperson

The chairperson of the commission of inquiry into state capture, Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, had harsh words for public enterprises minister Pravin Gordhan on Wednesday as he was a no-show for his cross-examination by former Sars commissioner Tom Moyane.

Zondo expressed that he was “not happy” about the development.

Gordhan cited Cabinet commitments as his reason for not being available. He is represented by the Office of the State Attorney, which moved an application to postpone the cross-examination to 31 August, subject to the availability of all parties involved.

“Cabinet on its own cannot be more important than him appearing before this commission. There would need to be something more,” said Zondo. “This commission has limited time to finish its work. If everybody is going to say I have work commitments, I cannot appear, then we are not going to finish.”

Cabinet work, he added, was the same as any other work in this context.

Zondo further noted that in an engagement with President Cyril Ramaphosa, the latter made an undertaking to make sure that members of his Cabinet would be freed if there was a need for them to avail themselves for the commission.

“Maybe the solution is to make sure that summonses are issued against everyone who is supposed to appear before the commission. I am not happy but I will postpone it to a date that I will fix.”

Mfesane Sebotho, appearing for Moyane, did not oppose the application, expressing that they are happy to be guided by the commission on a suitable date for the appearance.

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