

Was Brian Molefe's testimony at Zondo inquiry interrupted to protect Ramphosa?

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(https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/state-capture/2442083/was-brian-molefes-testimony-at-zondo-inquiry-interrupted-to-protect-ramphosa/) Former Eskom CEO, Brian Molefe at the Commission of Inquiry Into Allegations of State Capture on 15 January 2021. Picture: Neil McCartney

The former Eskom CEO's lawyer says it is strange that his client is being summoned to give evidence on Transnet while his testimony on Eskom-related matters remains incomplete.

Former Eskom chief executive officer (CEO) Brian Molefe's lawyers have written a letter to the Commission of Inquiry Into Allegations of State Capture (https://citizen.co.za/category/news/south-africa/state-capture/) requesting it to allow him to finish his testimony on Eskom-related matters, before giving evidence on his tenure as Transnet CEO.

This after Molefe's testimony was disrupted in January (https://citizen.co.za/news/covid-19/2420615/brian-molefes-testimony-cut-short-as-zondo-has-to-isolate/) when a staff member on the commission tested positive for Covid-19.

The commission had since sent him a summons to appear before Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo from 8 to 12 March 2021 to answer questions about Transnet.

On Wednesday, Molefe's lawyer – Mpho Molefe – said they had given the commission until this coming Friday, 19 February 2021, to respond to their request or they would take legal action.

"Up to so far we have not received anything indicating that he will be allowed to continue with his Eskom-related evidence," Molefe said in an interview with Power FM.

"If he is not given a chance to complete his evidence, we will certainly take the commission on review."

ALSO READ: Ramaphosa unaware of alleged Hawks probe into Brian Molefe's Eskom claims (https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/politics/2436512/ramaphosa-unaware-of-alleged-hawks-probe-into-brian-molefes-eskom-claims/)

In his testimony to the inquiry in January, Molefe implicated President Cyril Ramaphosa (https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/state-capture/2420405/revolting-brian-molefe-throws-ramaphosa-glencore-under-the-bus-at-zondo-commission/) in state capture.

He claimed that mining company Glencore made Ramaphosa the chairperson of its then partly owned Optimum Coal Mine in 2012 due to his political influence, in a bid to assist the company in its dealings with Eskom.

Ramaphosa has rubbished Molefe's claims as false (https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/politics/2436512/ramaphosa-unaware-of-alleged-hawks-probe-into-brian-molefes-eskom-claims/) and said he would tell his side of the story when he appears at the commission sometime this year (https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/state-capture/2411574/ramaphosa-will-testify-at-state-capture-commission-says-zondo/).

But Ramaphosa's detractors suspect Molefe's testimony was interrupted on purpose to protect Ramaphosa and Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan (https://citizen.co.za/business/2435956/pravin-gordhan-has-totally-mismanaged-saas-business-rescue-process-says-numsa/) from being implicated in wrongdoing at Eskom.

Molefe's lawyer said it was strange and did not make sense why his client was being summoned to give evidence on Transnet while his testimony on Eskom-related matters remained incomplete.

"It will be very difficult for me to say there is an agenda to stop him. All that I can say is it's indeed very weird and it doesn't make sense that he was stopped in the middle of his testimony. He should be allowed to continue with his testimony before going to any other issues."

He said if Molefe was not allowed to complete his testimony, it would be unfair and prejudicial to his client.

"I think this will confuse members of the public and it will also be prejudicial to my client for him to leave one story uncompleted and go to the next one. I don't think that it is fair," he said.

"For the sake of fairness he should be allowed to continue, and the issues that he raised are very sensitive and have a lot of public interest in them."

READ NEXT: 'Revolting' – Brian Molefe throws Ramaphosa, Glencore under the bus at Zondo commission (https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/state-capture/2420405/revolting-brian-molefe-throws-ramaphosa-glencore-under-the-bus-at-zondo-commission/)

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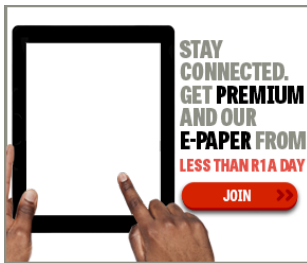
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