

JSC now has four names for position at top court

The Judicial Service Commission will finally be able to conduct interviews for a single position in the Constitutional Court now that it has a list of four candidates to be interviewed next month.

The constitution says that the commission must prepare a list of nominees with three more names than the number of appointments to be made, and submit the short list the president.

In March, the commission was unable to short-list candidates for interviews that were set for last month because it received an insufficient number of appropriate nominations. This raised questions as to why so few people would make themselves available for what should be SA's most sought-after judicial job.

The four candidates - Supreme Court of Appeal judges Robert Nugent, Mandisa Maya and Lebotsang "Ronnie" Bosielo, and North Gauteng High Court Judge Raymond Zondo - will face the commission to contest the vacancy.

Judges Maya and Zondo were interviewed in 2009 when the commission sought to fill four vacancies created when then chief justice Pius Langa and justices Albie Sachs, Yvonne Mokgoro and Kate O'Regan retired, but were not on the short list of candidates presented to President Jacob Zuma.

Judge Nugent, who has been at the Supreme Court of Appeal since 2002, withdrew his name from the list of candidates in 2009 when there was controversy surrounding the nomination of Western Cape High Court Judge President John Hlophe for the position in the court.

Judge Bosielo, who was appointed a Supreme Court of Appeal judge in 2009, is the only first-time applicant.

Judge Nugent is the most experienced of the candidates as he was senior counsel from 1978 to 1991 before becoming judge of the South Gauteng High Court.

Judge Maya, appointed to the Supreme Court of Appeal in 2006, is also a strong contender as she is the only female candidate for the post in a court which is the least gender-representative.

Two of the judges are currently acting in the Constitutional Court - Judge Zondo since October and Judge Maya since January. Judge Zondo was appointed by Zuma after the retirement of former chief justice Sandile Ngcobo. Justice Maya is standing in for Deputy Chief Justice Dikgang Moseneke, who is on leave until May 31.

Judge Bosielo was admitted as an advocate in 1998 after being an attorney in the 1980s.

He became a judge of the North Gauteng High Court from 2001 before being appointed to the Supreme Court of Appeal.

He was also acting judge president of the Namibia High Court in 2001 and acting judge president of the Northern Cape High Court between 2007 and 2008.

The commission said on Friday that it would in due course inform the candidates of the time and venue for the interviews.

Source: *Business Day* via I-Net Bridge

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