

Zondo update: Singh pleads ignorance, Gigaba calls Mngoma a liar

 By [Valencia Talane](#)

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The Zondo Commission yesterday heard testimony from Anoj Singh, who pleaded ignorance of the Guptas' role in Transnet tender looting, and the Gigaba saga, which started earlier this week, continued...



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Singh pleads ignorance of Guptas' role in Transnet locos tender looting

Salim Essa may have garnered a massive 21% stake in Transnet's R54-billion procurement for 1,064 locomotives in 2014, but former GCFO Anoj Singh says he was none the wiser, and was not aware of the looting that happened on behalf of the Gupta enterprise. Singh returned before the state capture commission on Thursday.

Commission chairperson Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo wanted to know whether Singh was duped into allowing Essa's Regiments Capital to take part in every aspect of the multi-billion rand project, or was merely incompetent and could not see what was happening.

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Gigaba takes the stand

Valencia Talane 25 May 2021



I never discussed government business with Guptas

Former cabinet minister Malusi Gigaba says he never discussed business with the Guptas while he was minister, as the executive is barred from doing so, and is sworn to secrecy on government matters. He returned before the state capture commission on Thursday evening.

“You know, the instances I would remember would be when we’re having those TNA SABC programmes, because then I would usually be the main centre of attraction and there would have been specific programmes that I would have spoken about,” said Gigaba in response to a question by commission chairperson Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo. He had asked whether the Guptas had themselves tried to discuss business with Gigaba, given that his version was that he never did.

“They would use those issues, but not to solicit a tender from me. I am also quite a stubborn person when it comes to certain things, and if anybody tries to raise things of that nature I would tell them that this doesn’t belong within my purview.”

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Mngoma is a liar of note, Gigaba tells Zondo

The battle of the exes continued before the state capture commission on Thursday evening as it heard more of the evidence of former cabinet minister Malusi Gigaba.

He told the commission that his estranged wife Noma Mngoma had a history of embellishing information that can be traced to beyond the start of their relationship in 2009. For that reason, her testimony before the commission will have to be taken with a pinch of salt.

Gigaba denied that he ever discussed work issues with Mngoma while he was minister, and that her testimony that he shared details of a work relationship with the Gupta family, appointments and dismissals of executives in state-owned entities while he was minister of public enterprises, and the receipt of inappropriate gifts and favours, is untrue.

Mngoma lied to him when they first met about coming from a wealthy family and being an IT executive who studied at Vega University, he told the commission. She continued with the lies into their marriage. To that extent, the first time Gigaba learned that it was former SAA chairperson Dudu Myeni who facilitated the couple’s pre-wedding trip to Mauritius in 2011, was when Mngoma revealed it to the commission. He had thought all along that she paid for it.

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Gigaba vs Gigaba gets the go-ahead from Zondo

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Gigaba admits flaws in Molefe appointment as Transnet CEO

The appointment of Brian Molefe as GCEO of Transnet in early 2011, though he was not the board's preferred candidate, came under the spotlight at the state capture commission on Thursday evening. Former minister of public enterprises Malusi Gigaba took the stand once again.

Gigaba admitted that the regulations governing the process of appointment of CEOs of state-owned entities may be flawed in that they do not accommodate a rigorous process where the shareholder minister interrogates recommendations brought forward by the board.

Molefe had scored second while Dr Mandla Gantsho, currently the CEO of Africa Rising Capital, had the best score. Gigaba was asked if this detail reached his office, where the memorandum recommending the best three candidates was to be presented to Cabinet for approval, as is standard practice. He told the commission that he did not recall this being presented to Cabinet, which was told any of the three – Molefe, Gantsho and Pepi Silinga – could be selected.

Commission chairperson Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo questioned the rationale behind a cabinet memo recommending three candidates, in circumstances where the scores they achieved through the board's evaluation process are not taken into account. If the minister of public enterprises ends up appointing a preferred Cabinet candidate who isn't preferred by the board, that could lead to problems ahead, especially if Cabinet is not apprised of the board's preference.

[Read the full report here \[PDF\]](#)

These articles were originally published on [Corruption Watch](#).

ABOUT VALENCIA TALANE

Valencia Talane is a senior journalist and editor with Corruption Watch in Johannesburg. Talane has followed the hearings of the state capture commission since their commencement in August 2018 with a view to documenting evidence shared therein.

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