

State capture inquiry adjourned after lawyers drop out



Deputy chief justice Raymond Zondo heads the Commission of Inquiry into State Capture. Picture: Karen Sandison/African News Agency (ANA).

Johannesburg - The Zondo Commission of Inquiry into State capture was adjourned on Monday as head of Free State Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Peter Mbana Thabethe did not have a legal team.

The commission's advocate Leah Gcabashe told the commission that there was an email received from Thabethe's lawyers stating that they will no longer be representing him.

Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, who chairs the commission, said commission did not offer any special legal representatives in such cases and each person should make their own arrangements.

According to media reports, Thabethe had last month battled to account on how Estina, a Gupta-linked company, was chosen as a local partner for the Free State Vrede Dairy farm even though the company lacked experience.

The commission listened to SABC-related testimony from acting CEO of the SA Bureau of Standards (SABS) Garth Strachan on Friday.

On Thursday, former SABC COO Hlaudi Motsoeneng completed his testimony. During his earlier testimonies, Motsoeneng denied making irregular appointments while he held a

powerful position at the public broadcaster and refused to apologise for having close links with the controversial Gupta family.

Motsoeneng told the commission that he had planned to “capture” the family.

The Independent Media recently reported that Public Works and Infrastructure Minister Patrica de Lille said R14.8 million has been paid to a media company and property group for the housing of the Zondo commission of inquiry.