



JUDGES MATTER

Judicial Service Commission interviews

06 April 2017.

Eastern Cape Division of the High Court

Interview of Ms V Reddy

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CJ M. Mogoeng: I apologise to you that we've kept you waiting for too long.

Ms V. Reddy: Correct. It's okay.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Thank you.

Ms V. Reddy: It's understandable.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Thank you so much for understanding. Where is home? Where were you born and bred?

Ms V. Reddy: Kwazulu Natal.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Where in Kwazulu Natal?

Ms V. Reddy: Durban.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Okay. In particular?

Ms V. Reddy: Pinetown.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Pinetown. And what is the first job you did?

Ms V. Reddy: Candidate Attorney.

CJ M. Mogoeng: And thereafter?

Ms V. Reddy: I started with the Department of Justice as a Prosecutor.

CJ M. Mogoeng: District Court? Regional Court?

Ms V. Reddy: District Court, as well as Regional Court.

CJ M. Mogoeng: All in all your experience as a Prosecutor?

Ms V. Reddy: Five years.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Five years. Thereafter?

Ms V. Reddy: I became a Magistrate – a District Court Magistrate in Germiston...

CJ M. Mogoeng: Yes.

Ms V. Reddy: - for 10 years and thereafter Regional Court Port Elizabeth for 10 years as well.

CJ M. Mogoeng: So, your judicial experience spans a period of 20 years?

Ms V. Reddy: 26 years.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Sorry?

Ms V. Reddy: 26 years.

CJ M. Mogoeng: 26 years.

Ms V. Reddy: 26 yes.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Okay and where are you now?

Ms V. Reddy: I'm presently in Port Elizabeth as a Regional Court Magistrate.

CJ M. Mogoeng: As a Regional Court Magistrate.

Ms V. Reddy: Magistrate, yes.

CJ M. Mogoeng: And you write judgments regularly?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Now your acting stint, correct me if I'm wrong, I'm just – I'm not looking, I'm just speaking from memory now. It seems to have been one month, four days, 12 days. Am I mistaken?

Ms V. Reddy: It was a seven week stint that I had in the High Court and thereafter it was the criminal matter that could not be finalised due to part heard by other Judges with the same legal representatives.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Yes.

Ms V. Reddy: That was the problem. So, the matter was finalised last year in July.

CJ M. Mogoeng: So, it's a total of six weeks?

Ms V. Reddy: It's about... Ja.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Seven or six weeks.

Ms V. Reddy: Seven weeks, besides the time that I went back. You're looking at about 10 weeks.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Yes.

Ms V. Reddy: 10 weeks.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Now I know civil jurisdiction was introduced in the Regional Court quite recently.

Ms V. Reddy: Yes.

CJ M. Mogoeng: When you went to act, did you already have enough of that experience or not quite?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes, I had a fair amount of experience.

CJ M. Mogoeng: For how long had you been doing civil work?

Ms V. Reddy: It was – in 2003 I was selected for the – there were 25 Magistrates or persons selected for the Canadian – the bridging course for Judges. So I had to attend the District Court Civil Section, as well as the High Court Civil Litigation.

CJ M. Mogoeng: For how long were you exposed to that programme?

Ms V. Reddy: I think it was two months at the time and then the Canadians finally added – they had no money, so the Magistrate couldn't proceed as to us acting in the High Court or shadowing a Judge as such.

CJ M. Mogoeng: In Canada?

Ms V. Reddy: No, here. Down – it was with Justice College.

CJ M. Mogoeng: All in all for how long did you put...?

Ms V. Reddy: That was two – it was two sessions. It came to about six months.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Six months.

Ms V. Reddy: Six months. Three months there, three months at the
(indistinct) [0:03:43].

CJ M. Mogoeng: Where did you shadow a Judge?

Ms V. Reddy: No, they couldn't proceed with that step, because funding has been finished. That's what they advised us, so they didn't proceed with that aspect.

CJ M. Mogoeng: So, you observed, but did not yourself do civil trials.

Ms V. Reddy: That's right.

CJ M. Mogoeng: - conduct civil trials.

Ms V. Reddy: No.

CJ M. Mogoeng: And have you written many judgments during your 10 year service as a Regional Court Magistrate?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes.

CJ M. Mogoeng: So, is it fair to assume that that has helped you to sharpen your judgment writing skills?

Ms V. Reddy: Oh definitely.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Yes. Was it a struggle or was it just a smooth transition from sitting as a Regional Court Magistrate and then sitting as a High Court Judge?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes, I didn't encounter difficulties as such, because I did the criminal matter that I had to do, similar to what I do in the Regional Court and I had one civil matter to do as well.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Yes.

Ms V. Reddy: – a detailed one and I also did appeals and sat in all those things.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Do you consider that six, seven week acting stint to be satisfactory as a person who did not appear in the High Court fairly regularly, in fact who did not appear in the High Court at all?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes, I was able to do the work.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Yes.

Ms V. Reddy: That's important. It was my experience and expertise that allowed me to preside in the matters in the High Court.

CJ M. Mogoeng: So, you are here precisely because you are satisfied with the High Court exposure you have had?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes, I am.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Yes. Thank you very much. JP?

JP J. Shongwe: Thank you, CJ. You were acting where?

Ms V. Reddy: Port Elizabeth, as well as Grahamstown.

JP J. Shongwe: Where were you before that?

Ms V. Reddy: No.

JP J. Shongwe: You're in the Regional Court?

Ms V. Reddy: I'm in the Regional Court in Port Elizabeth.

JP J. Shongwe: In Port Elizabeth. So, you're taken on for the whole term?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes, for seven weeks.

JP J. Shongwe: Seven weeks?

Ms V. Reddy: Seven weeks.

JP J. Shongwe: Now, you say seven weeks is enough for you to gain the necessary experience to find your way to becoming a Judge?

Ms V. Reddy: I was able to do the work, so I mean...

JP J. Shongwe: Doing the work, what does that mean?

Ms V. Reddy: I was able to do the criminal trials, the civil trials, as well as do the appeals. I was able to understand and I worked with a few of the Judges as well.

JP J. Shongwe: Ja, but at High Court level? Or you're doing what you're doing in the Regional Court?

Ms V. Reddy: The criminal and the civil work with this.

JP J. Shongwe: Did you hand down any judgments?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes, two.

JP J. Shongwe: Two? What were they about?

Ms V. Reddy: The criminal trial was murder, robberies, two Accused.

JP J. Shongwe: You wrote a judgment?

Ms V. Reddy: I wrote the judgment. I have attached it there.

JP J. Shongwe: Here?

Ms V. Reddy: Yes.

JP J. Shongwe: This is stapled. And then? Another one?

Ms V. Reddy: And the other one was a civil with a special plea and prescription. That has not been attached, but I had advised the Clerk to attach it.

JP J. Shongwe: Did you see the comments by the Eastern Cape Society of Advocates?

Ms V. Reddy: No, I had not received that one.

JP J. Shongwe: They say: "It appears from the Applicant's application that she does mainly criminal law and her exposure to civil litigation is very limited. The Applicant is furthermore (indistinct) [0:07:57] none of which indicates that she has handed down any judgments in civil matters in the High Court."

Ms V. Reddy: Yes, I did enclose it to the Clerk and told her to put it on, because I responded to that comment. I did respond to that comment. I had enclosed the civil judgment that I did in the High Court. I don't know why it's not in the folder.

JP J. Shongwe: Now, let me ask you a final question.

Ms V. Reddy: Okay.

JP J. Shongwe: Consider it final from me.

Ms V. Reddy: Okay.

JP J. Shongwe: Do you think you're ready for this thing you apply?

Ms V. Reddy: I think I am.

JP J. Shongwe: Okay. Thank you, CJ.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Thank you Judge President. Premier?

Prem P. Masualle: Thank you very much, Chair – CJ. I'm covered by this.

CJ M. Mogoeng: Thank you very much, Premier. Thank you very much, Advocate Reddy. You're excused.

Ms V. Reddy: Thank you.