



PRESS RELEASE (No. 1 of 2016)

ADDITIONAL CHARGES AGAINST VILIKESA SOKO ASSAILANTS

The Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Christopher Pryde, (DPP) has decided to file additional charges against police and military officers involved in the Vilikesa Soko death in custody matter following a review of the case.

Manasa Talala, Seruvi Caqusau, Kelevi Sewatu, Penaia Drauna, Filise Vere, Viliame Vereivalu, Jona Davonu, Pita Matairavula and Senitiki Natakasavu will now also face the following additional charges:

1. Attempted rape of Senijeli Boila
2. Sexual Assault of Senijeli Boila
3. Sexual Assault of Vilikesa Soko

Due to the serious nature of the additional counts and concerns regarding possible interference in the prosecution case the DPP has also decided to make an application to the court to revoke the bail for all accused persons.

Mr Pryde said, "The application to have the court revoke bail was based on the additional counts making the overall criminality more serious. I am also extremely concerned that a number of these accused officers have been reinstated to the Police Force after they had been suspended as this represents a real risk of interference with the State's case.

It is unacceptable for police officers charged with indictable offences to remain active in their positions whilst the matter is proceeding through the courts. Not only is there potential to prejudice the State's case but having police officers charged with offences such as perverting

the course of justice has the effect of tainting any investigation with which they may be involved or associated.

Consequently, I now have no choice but to seek to have these officer's bail revoked so that they may be remanded in custody for the duration of the proceedings in order to protect the integrity of the prosecution case."

Copy of the Amended Information is attached.

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5 February 2016

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is an independent office established under section 117 of the 2013 Fijian Constitution. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is motivated by the principle that it is in the interests of justice that the guilty be brought to justice and the innocent are not wrongly convicted.
