



## ODPP MEDIA UPDATE

### **Former Businessman and former Opposition MP sentenced in sedition case**

A former businessman Jagath Karunaratne and former Opposition Member of Parliament Mosese Bulitavu were handed down custodial sentences this morning (26.04.18) by the Suva Magistrates' Court.

Jagath Karunaratne and Mosese Bulitavu were charged with one count each of sedition contrary to section 67 (1) (a) and 66 (1) (i) of the Crimes Act.

It was alleged that Karunaratne and Bulitavu together with others spray painted words in different places between Suva and Nausori in 2011 with the seditious intention of bringing into hatred or contempt or excite disaffection against the government of Fiji.

The two were found guilty and convicted accordingly by Resident Magistrate (RM) Deepika Prakash.

RM Prakash selected a starting point of 3 years and added 6 months to both Jagath Karunaratne and Mosese Bulitavu's sentence before deducting 12 months for their mitigation.

She further deducted 14 days and 17 days from Jagath Karunaratne and Mosese Bulitavu's sentence respectively for the time spent in custody.

In totality, she sentenced Jagath Karunaratne to 2 years 5 months and 16 days imprisonment with a non-parole period of 18 months while Mosese Bulitavu was sentenced to 2 years 5 months and 13 days imprisonment with a non-parole period of 18 months.

The two are to serve their sentences effective from today after their application for bail pending appeal and suspension of the execution of the sentence before appeal was refused.

**-End-**

***NB:** A copy of the judgment together with the sentence has been uploaded to the ODPP website*