



## ODPP MEDIA UPDATE

### **Supreme Court increases sentencing tariff for Child Rape**

Last month, the Supreme Court in **State v Gordon Aitcheson** increased the sentence of convicted child rapist Gordon Aitcheson from 16 years imprisonment to 17 years, 9 months' imprisonment with a non-parole period of 16 years in what it described as a rape campaign by the accused.

Aitcheson had appealed to have his original sentence of 16 years imprisonment reduced however after the State filed additional material showing an increase in the prevalence of child rape in Fiji, the court agreed the sentence required an enhancement.

Aitcheson had earlier been convicted of raping and indecently assaulting his two biological daughters in their home and the increased sentence was "to represent the denunciation of the courts in the strongest terms."

The court also agreed with the State that it was necessary to review the previous tariff of 10 to 16 years for child rape offences established in **State v Raj**.

The court concluded that the current tariff for child rape offences in Fiji is now 11 to 20 years imprisonment. The court also said that the tariff could be exceeded in particularly heinous cases such as that in **State v Isoa Rainima** earlier in the year where a 23-year sentence was imposed by the High Court.

**-End-**

*NB: A copy of the judgment has been uploaded to the ODPP website.*