



ODPP MEDIA UPDATE

Custodial sentences for former PM and suspended COMPOL

The former Prime Minister, Voreqe Bainimarama and suspended Commissioner of Police, Sitiveni Qiliho were handed a custodial sentence after the State's appeal was upheld by the Acting Chief Justice this morning (09.05.24).

The former PM was handed a sentence of 1 year imprisonment while the suspended COMPOL received 2 years imprisonment.

Voreqe Bainimarama was charged with one count of attempted to pervert the course of justice and Sitiveni Qiliho was charged with one count of abuse of office. The former PM and the suspended COMPOL were found not guilty and acquitted accordingly by Resident Magistrate Seini Puamau at the Suva Magistrates Court on 12 October 2023. The State had filed an appeal against their acquittal where the Acting Chief Justice, Salesi Temo then overturned the Magistrate's decision and found the two guilty as charged. The matter was then sent back to the Magistrates' Court for sentencing.

In sentencing the duo, Magistrate Puamau announced that both their convictions would not be registered. The former PM was granted an absolute discharge while the suspended COMPOL received a conditional discharge with a fine of \$1500 on 28 March 2024 by the Suva Magistrates Court following which the State had filed an appeal and challenged the discharge for a custodial sentence.

The Acting Chief Justice quashed the Magistrate Court's sentence and pronounced the custodial sentences respectively.

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