

# Second money laundering case adjourned

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The second case involving money laundering in Vanuatu has been adjourned to March 26<sup>th</sup>, after the defense counsel and his clients failed to turn up in court.

A warrant of arrest has been issued by Justice Oliver Saksak to arrest Namataku Kalsaria Maipeza after he was supposed to have his case heard for 'Voire Dire' before the main trial started.

Both Charles Sumbe and Maipeza were charged with 29 counts of money related offences. Mr Sumbe was reported to be facing 25 counts of money laundering contrary to section 11 of the Proceeds of Crimes Act and Accessory after the fact of theft contrary to sections 34 (1) and 125 of the Penal Code while Maipeza is facing 4 counts of Money laundering contrary to section 11 of the Proceeds of Crime.

Public Prosecutor made the submissions according to section 160 of the Criminal Procedure Code whereby the accused person be notified by charge of complaint against him and asked whether he denies the truth of the charge.

The prosecution office said that the information pleads that the accuse persons in between February 2 to 11 February 2016, were engaged in transactions involving money that they ought to have reasonably known to be proceeds of crime.

They said that Mr Sumbe who works as the assistant Mnager at the Capital FM 107 in Vanuatu allegedly withdrew up to VT320,000 and sent them to a man by the name Garry Johnson who claims to be the Director of Human Resources of Lina Interiors company in London.

The State alleged that Mr Sumbe was offered a job to work for them as their agent in Vanuatu to receive customers' payments and send it to them.

They said that in return he would receive 7 per cent of all transactions in which he agreed.

The Prosecution claimed that on February 2, 2016 Mr Sumbe received VT80,000 in his ANZ Bank account and was transferred by a client. They said that another 80, 000 was transferred out from the same victim's bank account on February 3, 2016.

Court affidavits showed that he withdrew VT100, 000 and VT 40, 000 respectively on the same day.

The court heard that on February 4, 2016, Mr Sumbe received VT80,000 from the same victim again and VT60, 000 from another victim.

The Prosecution alleged that this went on for some times and Mr Sumbe attempted to send the money overseas without success before he transferred VT500, 000 to Maipeza's Bred Bank account and on February 9, 2016.

"Maipeza on the other hand has had prior Facebook communication with a man by the name of Drake Stephens Keith who also claims to be the Director of the same company Mr Sumbe knew about," they said.

The prosecution alleged that Maipeza agreed with a deal with them before withdrawing the money and sent to Khuma Ohja and Mizanur Rahman via Western Union to Malaysia.

Upon interview Maipeza and Sumbe admitted the allegation to the police but later pleaded not guilty in Supreme Court.

They were supposed to challenge their admission in March 26.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court changed its ruling on Nishai Tusavaka Marango's money laundering case when it revisited the case this week.

Last week, Justice David Chetwynd convicted Mrs Marango with nine counts of money laundering and acquitted her on eight counts but this week, the Supreme Court vacated its earlier decision and convicted her with the initial 16 counts she was charged with.

She is yet to be sentenced on a date be set.