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SUSPENDED SENTENCE FOR BLACKMAIL

Ambae man demanded money from pregnant girlfriend and threatened to publish nude photographs of her on Facebook if she does not comply

By Richard M. Nanua

A MAN FROM AMBAE WAS GIVEN a suspended sentence after he pleaded guilty to three counts of extortion.

The man was handed 13 months imprisonment suspended for two years, after he sent text messages to his pregnant girlfriend demanding a sum of money and threatening to publish nude photographs of her on Facebook if she does not comply.

The total sum extorted from the girlfriend was Vt23,000. The matter was reported to the police after he demanded Vt50,000.

Justice Daniel Fatiaki made a residue order for the defendant to pay back Vt23,000 he took from the victim in full by September 15, 2018 or a monthly installment of Vt5,750.

In the Victim Impact Assessment report, the victim said the threats started when he impregnated her.

At the time she was unable to concentrate at school and was anxious about being a burden to her parents.

Justice Fatiaki said in his

sentence that the man was texting his girlfriend who was a student at the time to send him Vt50,000 or else he will post her nude pictures Facebook.

He also threatened to send the pictures to her teacher.

The judge said the defendant and the victim were in a relationship for four months when the offence occurred.

At the time the man persuaded her to send him nude photographs of herself to his mobile phone for his personal enjoyment when he was away in Santo

Justice Fatiaki said the victim naively responded to his request and sent him the pictures but soon he started asking for money.

He said that at first, the man asked the victim to buy some phone credit. Later on, he demanded cash transfer via Western Union.

After he was arrested, he admitted his actions and revealed that he took Vt10,000 outside the Vila Police Station from the victim and a similar amount later at her home in Port Vila.

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Opening of Malapoa College extension project today

The Vt1.2 billion Malapoa College extension project funded by the People's Republic of China will be officially handed over to the Vanuatu Government this afternoon. It is the largest education project supported by the Chinese government in the South Pacific. **Story Inside**

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LOCAL NEWS

Man spared jail after blackmailing girlfriend

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He admitted he asked for Vt50,000.

The defendant claimed he demanded the amount after learning that his girlfriend was watching porn movies with some boys at school but claimed that he already deleted the pictures at the time.

He said he is deeply sorry for what he has done and attempted to perform a custom reconciliation twice without success.

Ironically, the defendant stood tall after criticisms and stated in his pre-sentence report that he wanted to resume his friendship with the victim and settle with her in the future despite his actions.

The judge said that even though the man has given a suspended sentence but he is mindful that he won't be able to be accepted back for the RSE Scheme for the near future after three successful years in that program.

In the end, the court ordered a supervision for the defendant for 12 months with a special condition that he won't use or access any phone to go online.

He was warned that any breach will result in the activation of the 2-year suspended sentence.