

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU**  
*(Criminal Jurisdiction)*

**Criminal**  
**Case No. 22/1462 SC/CRML**

**PUBLIC PROSECUTOR**

**v**

**ALICK CHEVAL  
BILLY KARA**

*Date:* 16 December 2022  
*Before:* Justice V.M. Trief  
*In Attendance:* Public Prosecutor – Ms L. Lunabek  
Defendant – Ms A. Sarisets

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**SENTENCE**

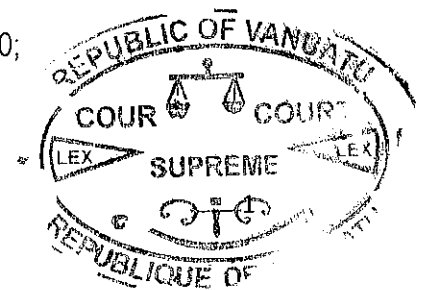
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A. Introduction

1. The Defendants Alick Cheval and Billy Kara pleaded guilty to one charge each of unlawful entry and theft. They are convicted on their own pleas and the admitted facts.

B. Facts

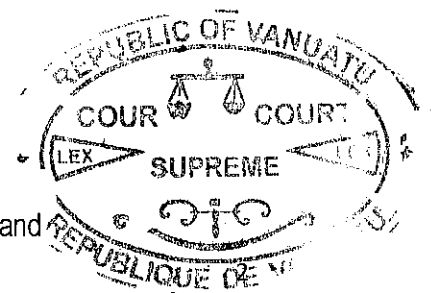
2. On various occasions between 5-12 February 2022, Mr Cheval, Mr Kara and two other Defendants Yan Namatak and Marcel Tom entered Christopher Bartlett's house at Malapoa Estate with intent to commit an offence (Charge 1). Mr Bartlett was away on Santo for work. He returned to Vila on 13 February 2022.
3. Other Defendants Joshua Kiliter and Mathias Maki joined the other Defendants and between the 6 of them, they took and carried away items worth over VT460,000 including the following (Charge 2):
  - a. HP laptop Spectre 360 – VT170,000;
  - b. Bose Bluetooth Sound Link and black speaker – VT38,000;
  - c. Bose Bluetooth Sound Touch 10 Speaker white – VT45,000;
  - d. Spy Glass Binoculars Swiss Army – VT12,900;



- e. 5 diving masks – VT17,000;
  - f. Husqvana grass cutter – VT78,000;
  - g. Stihl chainsaw (small) – VT40,000;
  - h. Brown towel (large) – VT6,000;
  - i. Canon Pixma M62560 printer – VT7,500;
  - j. 3 bush knives – VT6,000;
  - k. 5 boat flares – VT5,000;
  - l. Crowbar – VT5,000;
  - m. Underwater camera – VT10,000;
  - n. Hair clippers black (Twelveling hard plastic box case) – VT7,500;
  - o. 2 white double plugs – VT1,000;
  - p. 1 20metre yellow extension cable – VT3,000;
  - q. 1 5meter white extension cable – VT1,000;
  - r. Small black torch with alarm panic button – VT4,000;
  - s. 5 t-shirts and 5 short trousers – VT10,000; and
  - t. Tinned food, pens, mushrooms, vegetables, tomatoes – VT2,000.
4. Subsequently, items including the Bose speakers, 3 diving masks, Stihl chainsaw, the Canon printer, double plugs, black torch, towel and 2 boat flares (worth VT150,000) were recovered and returned to Mr Bartlett.

C. Sentence Start Point

- 5. The sentence start point is assessed having regard to the maximum sentences available, and the mitigating and aggravating factors of the offending.
- 6. The maximum sentences prescribed in the *Penal Code* [CAP. 135] are:
  - a. Unlawful entry of residential dwelling – 20 years imprisonment (subs. 143(1)); and
  - b. Theft – 12 years imprisonment (s. 125(a)).
- 7. The mitigating factor is that some of the stolen goods were returned to Mr Bartlett.
- 8. The offending is aggravated by:
  - The offending occurred at night time;
  - There was some planning involved;
  - The repeat nature of the offending over a short time span; and



- The loss suffered with no prospect of reparation or return of the bulk of the stolen property.
9. The factors set out above require a global sentence start point of 4 years 6 months imprisonment.

D. Mitigation

10. The Defendants pleaded guilty at the first opportunity. Accordingly, one third is deducted from the sentence start points.
11. Mr Cheval is 19 years old. He lives with his widowed mother. He has no previous convictions. He expressed his remorse for the offending to the pre-sentence report writer. He is currently working at Ah Pow Bakery. He has good community support from his chief and family. A further 6 months is deducted for Mr Cheval's personal factors including his youth and immaturity.
12. Mr Kara is 17 years old. He lives with his mother and stepfather. He has no previous convictions. He is willing to perform custom reconciliation ceremony with the complainant. Mr Kara's goal is to complete his education (Year 10) to have a better future. He has good community support from his chief and family. A further 8 months is deducted for Mr Kara's personal factors including his youth and immaturity.

E. End Sentence

13. Taking all matters into account, the end sentences imposed concurrently are as follows:

a. Alick Cheval:

- |                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| i. Unlawful entry (Charge 1) | 2 years 6 months imprisonment; and |
| ii. Theft (Charge 2)         | 2 years imprisonment.              |

b. Billy Kara:

- |                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| i. Unlawful entry (Charge 1) | 2 years 4 months imprisonment; and |
| ii. Theft (Charge 2)         | 2 years imprisonment.              |

F. Suspension of Sentence

14. The offending was serious. On the other hand, Mr Cheval and Mr Kara's prompt guilty pleas, lack of previous convictions, family and community support, and youth and immaturity count in favour of suspension of sentence. Mr Kara has hopes to complete his education. I consider their chances of rehabilitation are better served by keeping them out of custody therefore suspend their sentences for 2 years. I trust that they will make the most of the opportunity given them to ensure that they do not ever offend again.
15. They are warned that if they offend again within the next 2 years, they will need to serve the sentences imposed today in addition to any other penalty that may be imposed on them for the further offending.



16. In addition, Mr Cheval and Mr Kara are ordered to each complete 40 hours of community work.

17. The Defendants have 14 days to appeal.

**DATED at Port Vila this 16<sup>th</sup> day of December 2022  
BY THE COURT**

*VM Trief*  
Justice Viran Molisa Trief

The seal of the Supreme Court of Vanuatu is circular. It features a central scale of justice. The words "REPUBLIC OF VANUATU" are written along the top inner edge, and "REPUBLIQUE DE VANUATU" along the bottom inner edge. The words "COUR" and "COURT" are positioned on either side of the scale, and "SUPREME" is centered below it. The word "LEX" appears in two small boxes on the left and right sides of the scale.