

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

Criminal
Case No. 25/1596 SC/CRML

BETWEEN: Public Prosecutor

AND: Marque Worbu Renren
Defendant

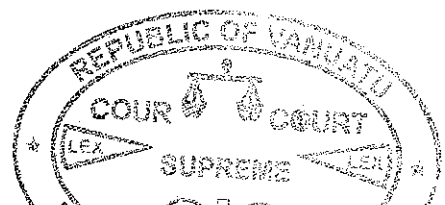
Coram: Justice Dudley Aru
Counsel: Ms. S. Lagon for the Public Prosecutor
Ms. L. Bakokoto for the Defendant

SENTENCE

1. The defendant Marque Worbu Renren was initially charged with one count of threats to kill contrary to s 115 of the Penal Code [CAP 135] (Count 1) and 2 counts of domestic violence contrary to s 4 (1) a) of the Family Protection Act No 28 of 2008 (Count 2 and 3). He pleaded guilty to the domestic violence charges and pleaded not guilty to the threats to kill charge. The matter was then set down for trial on that charge. That trial was vacated as the charge was later nollied by the prosecution.
2. The maximum penalty for domestic violence is a fine not exceeding VT 100,000 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or both.
3. The defendant now appears for sentencing on the two charges of domestic violence. He is convicted on his guilty pleas and the following agreed facts.
4. The victim is the defendant's de facto partner. They have been living together in a de facto relationship for 4 years. The victim has a 3-year-old son named Ben Toame from a previous relationship with a former partner. Since living with the defendant, they have a 1year old daughter. They all live a Tebakor, Manples area.
5. On the morning of 20 April 2025, at the Au Bon Marche Manples market, the defendant met the victim. He confronted her as to why she left their house and went to Tagabe without informing him and leaving the children behind. Being furious he punched the victim on her face eye and fore head (Count 2). The defendant then told her they had to return to the house to see the children. They then started walking back to their house at Tebakor area. The victim was scared and crying. She followed the defendant back to their house. When they reached the house, the defendant told the victim to go and cook some food. She was about to wash some rice when the defendant still angry came towards her with a piece of wood and hit her on the right hand. (Count 3). The defendant then gave her bus fare and told her to go back to Tagabe and bring back all her belongings. The victim instead left the house and went to the Lycee area to see some of her relatives.



6. The victim later reported the matter to the Police.
7. On 20 April 2025 the victim was also taken to the Vila Central Hospital for medical examination. The medical report revealed that the victim sustained:
 - Frontal region bruising
 - Right infra orbital bruising
 - Left intra orbital bruising
 - Right shoulder pain and swelling
8. The medical report also stated that the victim was likely subjected to multiple blunt force/facial trauma.
9. When assessing the likely starting point of sentence, I take into account the maximum sentence available which is a fine not exceeding VT100,000 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or both. Next, I need to consider whether there are any aggravating factors or mitigating factors of the offending. The following factors are the aggravating factors of the offending:
 - The acts of domestic violence was unprovoked
 - There is a breach of trust
 - The offending occurred in the home where the victim should feel safe and be protected
 - The offending occurred in the presence of young children
 - A weapon was used
 - The offending was repeated
 - The nature of the injuries suffered are very serious
10. There are no mitigating factors of the offending.
11. The prosecution and defence in their submissions referred to a number of cases for comparison which I have considered. The factual circumstances of this current case differ from the cases referred to. The offending in this case is nevertheless very serious as reflected by the aggravating factors of the defendant's offending.
12. The starting point of sentence on each charge is 2 years imprisonment. The total concurrent starting point of sentence is 2 years imprisonment.
13. The defendant pleaded guilty to the charges at the first available opportunity as a sign of remorse therefore the sentence start point is discounted by 27%.
14. A pre-sentence report was filed on behalf of Mr Renren by his Probation Officer. The report states that he is 32 years old and he is a first-time offender. He was living in a de facto relationship with the victim before the incident. He now resides with his relatives. He completed his education at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology with a certificate as an electrician. He was employed in the construction sector as an electrician for over 3 years and has been with Switi Company Ltd since 2018. He is the breadwinner and supports his family's needs with his income.
15. Taking these personal factors into account I allow a deduction of 5 months from the sentence start point. A further 5 months is deducted from the sentence start point to reflect time spent in pre custody from 22 April to 6 July 2025 being roughly 75 days which is equivalent to 150 days or 5 months in custody.



16. The Probation Officer also reports that the defendant performed a custom reconciliation with the victim by giving VT15,000. The victim was not able to be reached to confirm her acceptance although the defendant's chief confirms the victim accepted the reconciliation. A further 2 months is deducted from the sentence start point to reflect the custom reconciliation.
17. The defendant is sentenced to a concurrent end sentence of 6 months imprisonment. The sentence is suspended for a period of 2 years. The sentence will be reactivated to be served in custody if the defendant reoffends during the period of his suspended sentence. In addition, the defendant will perform 100 hours of community work. I also order supervision for a period of 6 months for the defendant to undertake rehabilitation in relation to his offending.
18. The defendant has 14 days to appeal if he is not satisfied with the decision.

**DATED at Port Vila this 22nd day of October, 2025
BY THE COURT**

**Dudley Aru
Judge**

