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## Man spent five years too long in prison

10th July, 2020



An administration error in the prisons system in Samoa resulted in a man being incarcerated for five years longer than he was sentenced to serve. Sio Agafili, 45, should have been released from prison in December 2015 after serving

two concurrent jail terms. In November 2008, Mr Agafili was convicted of burglary and theft and sentenced to seven years in prison. A month later he was found guilty of other misdemeanours and slapped with a five-year sentence. The default procedure in Samoa's criminal justice system is that a convict with two sentences must serve them concurrently and not consecutively. The error was spotted recently by a judge when Mr Agafili appeared in court on another charge.

In an interview with the Samoa Observer newspaper, Agafili described his anguish at spending too long behind bars. He said: "It's broken me into a million pieces. No one told me when my jail term would end. I lost count of the days. I don't remember much about when I should be out. I just know I had to serve my time behind bars." Mr Agafili's lawyer Muriel Lui spoke to reporters about the injustice suffered by her client. She said: "He's been imprisoned unlawfully. I've heard of other cases of a similar nature. This is not the first of this type." She added: "His right to liberty has definitely been breached." Ms Lui said that she would be seeking compensation for her client.

Sources: [rnz.co.nz](http://rnz.co.nz) / [theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com) / [samoaoobserver.ws](http://samoaoobserver.ws)

## Writing

Prison is not a good punishment. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

error / incarcerated / sentence / jail / burglary / theft / guilty / criminal / judge / interview / anguish / count / behind bars / lawyer / reporters / nature / compensation

## True / False

- a) A man was put in prison in Samoa for the wrong reason. T / F
- b) The man should have been released from prison earlier this year. T / F
- c) The man was found guilty of burglary and theft. T / F
- d) In Samoa, two prison sentences must be served one after the other. T / F
- e) The man said he spent a long time in front of bars. T / F
- f) The man said he lost count of the days he spent in prison. T / F
- g) A lawyer said it is the first time she has heard of unlawful imprisonment. T / F
- h) The lawyer will try to get compensation for her client. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <b>error</b>         | a. freedom        |
| 2. <b>incarcerated</b>  | b. wrongdoing     |
| 3. <b>released</b>      | c. pain           |
| 4. <b>misdemeanours</b> | d. set free       |
| 5. <b>concurrently</b>  | e. unfairness     |
| 6. <b>anguish</b>       | f. mistake        |
| 7. <b>injustice</b>     | g. damages        |
| 8. <b>cases</b>         | h. simultaneously |
| 9. <b>liberty</b>       | i. imprisoned     |
| 10. <b>compensation</b> | j. examples       |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of prisons?
- b) How would you feel about going to prison?
- c) Do you think prison is the best way to punish people?
- d) How would you feel if you were the man in this story?
- e) What should be the punishment for burglary?
- f) What do you think of your country's criminal justice system?
- g) Should two prison sentences be served consecutively?
- h) What advice do you have for Mr Agafili?

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(Answer these questions)

1.What's another word for imprisoned?

2.What's this man's name?

How old is he?

3.Why was the man in prison too long?

4.What crime was the man convicted of?

What was the original prison sentence?

What happened a month later?

5.What does concurrently mean?

Consecutively?

6.What did the man say about his jail term?

7.What was the lawyer's name?

8.What advice would you give this man?

9.What do you think would be the worst thing about being in prison?

Conv. 6-12

임태양

조원희

장현주

조이현

조성빈