

Comoros jails Muslim leader over booze bribe bid

MORONI, COMOROS: The Comoros has jailed one of the Indian Ocean archipelago's top Muslim clerics for attempting to bribe a government official into lifting a ban on alcohol, judicial sources said on Tuesday, 3 January 2012.

Said Abdallah Rifki, secretary general at the office of the mufti (the highest Sunni Muslim authority), was found guilty of attempting to bribe an interior ministry official.

During the first hearing on December 26, the chief prosecutor said Rifki admitted his aim was to have a ban on alcohol sales - for which he had publicly campaigned - lifted for the benefit of a local retailer.

"There is no question we will appeal," one of the cleric's lawyers, Harmia Ahmed, told AFP.

Rifki, who was also slapped with a 2 000-euro fine (\$2 600), is the second highest religious official in the conservative island state.

Source: AFP via Inet-Bridge