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Transsexual: I was treated like a hardcore criminal

Soon Li Tsin, Aug 10, 07



A transsexual arrested by Malacca Religious Affairs Department (Jaim) enforcement officers on July 31 claimed that she was treated like a serious criminal.

Previously, *malaysiakini* [reported](#) how Ramli Mohd Noor, 44, had to be sent to the hospital for an operation after she was allegedly assaulted by Jaim officials.

Ramli, who is known as Ayu, said she was out with her friends along Jalan Tun Ali, Malacca, when two men sporting motorcycle helmets started hitting her.

“Without saying a word, they started hitting me. They gripped my neck, punched my face and my stomach.

“They pinned me down and handcuffed me before saying they were Jaim officers. Then they dragged me to a van with three other officers inside,” she said when contacted today.

Ayu was arrested under Section 72 of the Malacca Syariah Offences Enactment for being a ‘man dressing up as women in a public space’, which is punishable with a RM1,000 fine, a six-month jail sentence or both.

'I was in pain'

Ayu said she felt sharp abdominal pains when she was taken to the police station before being brought to the Jaim office to give up her belongings.

“I kept telling the officers that I was in immense pain and that I had hernia but all they did was laugh and make fun of me. They didn’t believe me.

“By then, I was already crouching and holding my stomach. I couldn’t take it any longer so I pulled my skirt down and showed them the swelling,” she related.

Ayu, who hails from Kuala Lumpur, was then taken to the Malacca General Hospital and had an emergency abdominal hernia operation the next day.

“They had dragged me to the hospital while I was still cuffed and everybody was looking at me. It was so humiliating,” she explained.

It has been 10 days since her hernia operation and Ayu is now back in Kuala Lumpur. She has lodged a police report against Jaim and contacted PT, an NGO that works with transsexuals.

Expressing her relief, she said: “I am thankful this is all over. I am glad I had friends who alerted Nisha (a transsexual social worker with PT) about the incident and she had taken care of all the relevant procedures back in Malacca.”

However, life had yet to resume back to normal for Ayu who said she has difficulty getting up from bed and has trouble sleeping.

“Things are not the same. I haven’t been sleeping well. The incident has caused me a lot of anxiety and I’m scared that the religious officers will come after me again,” she said.



Legal action

According to Ayu - who is contemplating legal action against Jaim - she has not been charged and is currently out on police bail.

She added that during her arrest, she had asked the enforcement officers why they had not identified themselves before arresting her.

“The officer said that if she identified herself (as a Jaim officer), I would’ve run away. How can he assume that I would run away? They should not be treating people this way,” he asserted.

Contacted after the incident last week, Jaim enforcement chief Rahimin Bani had denied the assault claims and said Ayu was sent to the hospital because “she was sick.”

He then countered Nisha’s allegation by asking her to produce the photos and to make a police report.

There are estimated 20,000 to 30,000 transsexuals in Malaysia.

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