

Appeals court upholds death sentence on Thai woman

Posted on 26 October 2016 - 08:24pm

Last updated on 26 October 2016 - 09:28pm



PUTRAJAYA: The Court of Appeal has upheld the death sentence on a Thai woman who was convicted of trafficking cocaine in 80 capsules by swallowing and inserting them into her private part.

In dismissing Chonmanee Laphathanawat's appeal against her conviction and death penalty, Justice Datuk Wira Mohtarudin Baki, who led a three-man panel, ruled that evidence against her was strong and overwhelming.

"The court find that your appeal did not have merits. Your conviction is safe. Conviction and death sentence is affirmed," he said.

Chonmanee, 31, from Thai province of Rayong, was found guilty and sentenced to death by the Penang High Court last year for trafficking in 689.10 grammes of cocaine at the Penang General Hospital between Feb 13, 2013 and Feb 16, 2013.

According to the facts of the case, Chonmanee was arrested at the Penang International Airport at 5.10pm on Feb 13, 2013 after she was spotted behaving suspiciously at the arrival hall. She had flown to Singapore via Barcelona and on arrival in Singapore, took a flight to Penang where she was arrested.

Chonmanee looked uneasy and was seen walking slowly as if she was holding back something. She was then sent to the Penang Hospital for an examination when she told them she had "consumed something".

Seventy eight oval-shaped pieces wrapped in plastic were recovered from her excrement over four days and another two capsules, from her private part.

In her defence, Chonmanee told the High Court that she accepted an offer by her friend named Bord to collect diamonds from Brazil to be brought to Thailand and was promised payment of 70,000 Thai Bhat.

She said in Sao Paolo, Brazil, Bord's friend and another man came to a house where she was placed and they blindfolded and forced her to swallow round shaped objects and all the objects over four hours after she was threatened that she would be killed if she did not comply.

She said she was then given four pills to swallow and felt drowsy and fell asleep and when she gained consciousness, the two men proceeded to insert something in her private part. She said she was told by a dark-skinned man that the round objects which she had swallowed were diamonds.

Chonmanee was represented by lawyer Mohd Ismail Mohamad while deputy public prosecutor Hanim Mohd Rashid appeared for the prosecution. — *Bernama*