

Indian businessman to face the gallows for trafficking drugs

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Mohammed Idrees Contractor, 57, (R) is accompanied by a policeman at the High Court, Kuala Lumpur, July 27, 2016. — Bernama

SHAH ALAM: An Indian businessman was sentenced to death by the High Court here today after it found him guilty of trafficking in 3993.7g of Ketamine at the KL International Airport (KLIA), Sepang four years ago.

Judge Datuk Ghazali Cha ordered the sentence after finding that the 57-year-old Mohammed Idrees Contractor's defence was a mere denial and fictitious.

The accused was alleged to have committed the offence at the Passenger Inspection Branch 1, International Arrival Hall, Main Terminal Building KLIA at around 7.30am on Dec 23, 2012. The drug was found in his three suitcases.

He was charged under Section 39B(1)(a) of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952 and sentenced under Section 39B(2) of the Act, which carries the mandatory death sentence upon conviction.

In his judgement, Justice Ghazali said the accused had, in his defence, said that the three suitcases were given by his business partner, identified as Ali @ Selva, who asked for a favour from the accused to carry them to Malaysia.

However, Justice Ghazali said the failure of the accused to call Ali to testify had turned the defence of the accused into a hearsay statement.

"The reasons given by the accused were merely fictitious. Although the second witness for the defence had said that she saw Ali hand over the suitcases to the accused, she is the younger sister of the accused and thus was an interested party.

"I also concur with the defence that the accused is a frequent traveller. He was supposed to 'smell' the act by Ali but he (the accused) did not even bother to check the bags which were at his home for about three days.

"Thus, the accused was aware that the drug was hidden in the suitcases to be trafficked into Malaysia," he said.

"The accused is also a highly educated person and he is supposed to be aware. Instead, he chose to 'shut his eyes' on the presence of the drug," he added.

A total of nine prosecution witnesses and two from the defence were called to testify throughout the trial.

The Royal Malaysian Customs deputy public prosecutor Zuraidah Zakaria appeared for the prosecution while the accused was represented by counsel Wan Azwan Aiman Wan Fakhruddin. —
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