

Two sentenced to death for drug trafficking

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SHAH ALAM (Sept 13, 2013): A 40-year-old German businessman and a metal scrap yard worker aged 25 were sentenced to death by hanging today for separate drug offences.

Shah Alam High Court judge Noor Azian Shaari sentenced businessman Bebou Bouraima to the gallows after he was found guilty of trafficking in 1.5 kg of methamphetamine at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) on Jan 22, 2011.

She also handed the same sentence to L. Patmanathan who was found guilty of trafficking in 2.8 kg of cannabis at the Sungai Buloh Hospital parking area on March 27, 2012.

The sentence against Bouraima was handed down after the defence failed to raise reasonable doubts in the prosecution's case mounted under Section 39B (1)(a) of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952.

Justice Noor Azian said the defence put forth by Bouraima was unreasonable, after he claimed that the bag containing the methamphetamine had been given by a man called Babu whom he met for only five days in Damascus, Syria.

According to the defence, Bouraima said Babu had asked him to give the bag to Masi, purportedly a woman friend of the accused in Malaysia.

Although the defence claimed that Masi existed and had visited Bouraima while he was under detention, the drugs were in his possession and custody, Justice Noor Azian said.

She also noted that Bouraima had told the court that he had entered Malaysia four times, including the day of his arrest, but she wondered how the accused, with a monthly income of 1,500 Euros (RM6,525), could afford to make multiple trips to Malaysia while supporting a wife and four adopted children.

Bouraima became agitated after hearing the sentence, telling the court that it was not fair, as several policemen tried to calm him down before bringing him out of the courtroom.

The prosecution was represented by deputy public prosecutor Mohd Asyraf Mohd Kamal while Bouraima was represented by lawyer Karpal Singh.

In Pathmanathan's case, Noor Azian said the defence relied on testimony from the accused's wife and mother-in-law which the court found had contradictions.

She also said the accused's contention that he was bringing his child and mother-in-law to the hospital to seek treatment was illogical as he never helped to carry the two individuals into the hospital but instead left everything to his wife.

Patmanathan, who faced the same charge, was found having a plastic bag which contained three slabs of the drugs. Deputy public prosecutor Khairunnisa Hazwani Omar prosecuted while the accused was represented by counsel Tharamjit Singh. – *Bernama*