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Five years behind bars for woman who allowed daughter to be sexually abused

KUCHING: A 52-year-old woman was sentenced to five-year imprisonment by the Sessions Court here yesterday for allowing her teenage daughter to be sexually abused by her 77-year-old grand-uncle and failing to lodge a police report despite having knowledge about the incident.

Judge Noorhisham Mohd Jaafar imposed the sentence after the woman pleaded guilty to an offence framed under Section 31(1)(b) of the Child Act 2001.

The court ordered her jail term to take effect from the date of her arrest, on Oct 21 this year. Noorhisham also ordered her to undergo rehabilitative counselling throughout her imprisonment period under Section 26(1) of the Sexual Offences Against Children Act (SOACA) 2017.

The judge further ordered her to be placed under police supervision for two years under Section 27(1) of the same Act.

According to the charge, the woman had allowed her daughter to be sexually abused at a house in Padawan on Oct 11 this year.

Based on the facts of the case, the incident occurred when the 77-year-old grand-uncle visited the house to collect fertiliser and asked the girl for assistance. The teenager was home alone when the man allegedly groped her breasts and private parts before kissing her on the mouth.

She tried to push him away, but was unsuccessful. The man also told her to keep the incident a secret.

The following day, the victim attended school as usual, but a friend noticed she was crying and informed the school counsellor.

The counsellor subsequently contacted the victim's parents and arranged a meeting to discuss the incident.

However, the parents decided against lodging a police report after discussing the matter, as they did not want to pursue the case as it involved a family member and also due to fear of being blamed by other relatives.

In a separate proceeding before Noorhisham, the girl's grand-uncle pleaded not guilty to a charge of physically sexually assaulting her.

He was charged under Section 14(a) of SOACA 2017, read together with Section 16(1) of the same Act. The court denied him bail and fixed this Dec 11 for case management.

Meanwhile, the girl's father, who was also charged under Section 31(1)(b) of the Child Act 2001 in connection with the same offence, pleaded not guilty before Sessions Court Judge Musli Ab Hamid. Musli also denied him bail and fixed Dec 14 for case management.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Muhammad Afiq Safly Nor Kazly prosecuted all three cases, while none of three individuals were represented by counsel.