

Sexual assault on boy: Warden gets 15 years in prison, caning

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KUCHING: A warden teacher at a boarding school here was sentenced to 15 years in prison and 10 strokes of the cane by the Sessions Court here on the Thursday, on the charge of him sexually assaulting a 16-year-old male student.

Judge Musli Abdul Hamid delivered the sentence after the prosecution succeeded in establishing a prima facie case at the end of the trial.

Musli then ordered the prison sentence to take effect from Oct 2 this year and further directed that the accused, age 42, must undergo counselling while in jail.

He would also be placed under police supervision for three years after completing his prison term, said the judge.

The accused, who had served as a teacher for 15 years, was charged under Section 14(a) of the Sexual Offences Against Children Act (SOACA) 2017, read together with Section 14 of the same Act, which provides for



The accused being escorted out of the courtroom.

imprisonment of up to 20 years in prison and whipping, upon conviction.

Based on the charge sheet, the offence was committed at the warden's residence on the second floor of the boys' dormitory at a boarding school here, at around 6.30am on Oct 28, 2022.

It is understood that the accused touched the victim's private parts when the latter came to the warden's residence

seeking help as he was suffering from a high fever.

In delivering the verdict, the court held that the victim's delay in lodging a police report on Nov 18, 2023, and being called to testify in court on Oct 24 last year, was reasonable and based on valid grounds.

"This was because the victim felt embarrassed to come forward and was worried that it would affect his preparations for the

upcoming SPM (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia) examination.

"If he had made a police report earlier, the victim feared that it would disrupt his preparations for the important examination," said the court.

Moreover, there was no evidence showing that the accused was not within the school compound, even though he claimed that he was not on duty at the time of the incident.

During the proceedings, Deputy Public Prosecutor Asmawi Nur Haqim Mokhtar urged the court to impose a deterrent sentence on the accused, considering the trauma suffered by the victim.

He also highlighted the accused's responsibility as a warden teacher, who should have been protecting the victim and ensuring his safety, as well as the need for him to uphold integrity as an educator.

However, defence counsel Steven Beti requested a lighter sentence on grounds that the accused had fully rendered his cooperation throughout the trial, and had served as a teacher for 15 years.