

Technician to sue Penang cops over 'assault'

MalaysiaKini.com

February 13, 2012

Susan Loone

A man who claimed that 20 police personnel had beaten him up after the Thaipusam festival in Penang last week, is to sue the police force for assault.

Lawyer S Raveentharan (right in photo) said he has been instructed by the parents of technician S Morale, 30, to initiate the suit.

He is waiting for Morale's medical report, which will be ready in two weeks, before filing the case in court.

Raveentharan, who is also the Batu Uban PKR assemblyperson, said Morale had not been involved in any form of aggression during the incident at 2am last Thursday.

"According to his report, it was the police who were violent. They whacked him using a mineral bottle full of water, in the back alley of Penang Road, until he fainted," the lawyer said.

"We want to know, what is his crime? We would understand if the police had acted that way in a serious arrestable crime, but this is not even a minor arrestable crime. Drinking beer is not a crime unless you disrupt public order."

Asked if his client could identify the personnel involved, he said there were several witnesses, including Morale's younger brother Rajee and an independent observer.

Morale, accompanied by his father K Shanmugam (right), lodged a police report in Jalan Pattani today, saying he had sustained injuries on his head and body, bled during urination and was treated at the Penang Hospital. He also lost his gold chain, which cost about RM3,000, during the scuffle.

He was also detained under Section 186 of the Penal Code for obstructing a police personnel in the performance of duty.

"I want the police to investigate those who were working on that shift and those who were on duty when I was detained," he said.

"Do they have the power to physically abuse civilians? What was my crime? Is drinking beer a crime?"

Last Friday, Penang police chief Ayub Yaacob had said he would appoint independent investigation officers to look into the incident.

Police "undemocratic"

Kebun Bunga PKR assemblyperson Jason Ong was furious that he and Raveentharan were stopped from holding a press conference within the compound of the police station today.

"There is no such law that we cannot hold a press briefing here. If the police want to change the law, they must first seek the changes in Parliament. The police are undemocratic ... they are supposed to be public servants," Ong said.

He asked if Morale had breached any law or harmed anyone, for him to have been subjected to such "abusive acts" by the police.

"We really need to set up the independent commission to probe police indiscipline and misconduct because such abuses have to stop," he added.

Suaram representative Ong Jin Cheng said that Morale's release on police bail two days earlier than scheduled could be considered a "success".

He urged the families or victims of police abuse to lodge reports.

"It has proven to be more effective when victims or their families are pro-active ...they must be brave (enough) to (lodge a report) to get better response from the police," he added.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
<http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/189017>