

## **DCM II's ex-aide gets discharge over alleged assault**

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**By Susan Loone**

Deputy Chief Minister II P Ramasamy's former special assistant has been given a discharge not amounting to an acquittal over an alleged assault against a female employee of the Chief Minister's Office in 2011.

Satees Muniandy, 28, who has been newly minted as a Seberang Perai (MPSP) municipal councillor, expressed relief when the order was read out at the magistrate's court in George Town today.

Satees was dismissed from his duties at the DCM's office after the woman, D Bhanaveswary, lodged a police report over the matter although he had vehemently denied the act, which supposedly took place at the Esplanade on Dec 19, 2011.

Satees Muniandy second from right Today at 9.30am, magistrate Sri Pracha Nanthini read out the order in front of Satees (second from right), his lawyer Pamela Vijayrani, and deputy public prosecutor Edward Chan.

"I had a promising career, working with the DCM II when the police report was lodged against me on Dec 19, two years ago," he said when met outside the court.

"After that, I was asked to resign. I was also subjected to humiliation by political rivals," lamented Satees, who is also the Batu Kawan DAP Socialist Youth branch chief.

Satees said towards the end of last year, he was shocked to know that the prosecution unit had proffered a charge against him under section 323 of the Penal Code, one year after the report had been lodged.

However, he expressed thanks to God and his lawyer that he had finally been given a discharge.

"I shall now put this case behind me and carry out my duties as an MPSP councillor diligently for the benefits of the people, the state government and the party," he vowed.

On whether he would counter-sue Bhanaveswary for defamation, Satees said he would seek advice from his lawyer on his next course of action.

Bhanaveswary, who was then a staff member of Buletin Mutiara (Tamil section) - the state's fortnightly newspaper, was not present in court today.

The next year after the incident, Bhanaveswary resigned from her job.

'Woman has retracted police report'

Meanwhile, Pamela said that the 27-year old woman had retracted her police report, adding that Bhanaveswary withdrew the report against Satees "without any coercion or inducement".

"She also apologised to Satees in writing, by way of a statutory declaration, for causing embarrassment and hardship to him and his family," said Pamela.

"We wrote to the Head of the Prosecution Unit to have the charge against our client discontinued, in accordance with section 254(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code," she added.

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