

Reports by HANIS ZAINAL, CLARISSA CHUNG, FARIK ZOLKEPLI and JOSEPH KAOS Jr

# Foul play involved in Adib's death

## Coroner's Court ruling states that fireman's death was due to criminal act

**SHAH ALAM:** The death of fireman Muhammad Adib Mohd Kassim was due to a criminal act committed by two or more unidentified persons, the Coroner's Court has ruled.

Sessions Court judge Rofiah Mohamad, who sat as coroner for the inquest, highlighted the lack of action by the police and Federal Reserve Unit at the scene of the incident on Nov 27, last year as having contributed to the death of the fireman.

"The blunt chest trauma (on Adib) is not self-inflicted or (caused by) an accident but was due to a criminal act by two or more persons unknown," she said in her long-awaited judgment.

Rofiah concluded that the blunt chest trauma injuries sustained by Adib were not self-inflicted nor caused by an accident during the riot outside the Seafeld Sri Maha Mariamman Temple in Subang Jaya.

Adib, 24, became critically injured after he and his team members from the Subang Jaya fire station responded to an emergency call at the temple where a riot was taking place.

The fireman was taken to SJMC after he was found injured before being transferred to the National Heart Institute (IJN) for further treatment. He died at IJN on Dec 17.

Rofiah said it was "unfortunate" that the two FRU platoons stationed near the temple did not act to stop the ongoing commotion.

"The Subang Jaya OCPD (Asst



**Good outcome:** Mohd Asraf (centre) with his family members and officials leaving the court after Adib's hearing in Shah Alam.

Comm Mohammad Azlin Sadari) was not contactable. The field officer (DSP Mohamad Nasir Drahman, who was the first witness at the inquest) saw the chaos and violence but did nothing," she said.

The coroner said her verdict was made after scrutinising exhibits presented during the inquest and statements given by 30 witnesses summoned over the 41-day inquest which began on Feb 11.

Rofiah said that based on these, she decided to reject the theory presented by the 24th witness (Dr Ahmad Hafizam Hasmi) and accept the theory of the 29th witness (Dr Shahrom Abd Wahid).

"I believe what happened was that he was pulled from the Emergency Medical Rescue Services

(EMRS) van he was in by those who were acting violently and had malicious intentions," she said.

Retired pathologist Dr Shahrom had during the inquest theorised that Adib could have been forcefully pulled out from the EMRS van while several persons were kicking the door of the van at the same time, resulting in his fatal injuries.

Dr Ahmad Hafizam, who had conducted the autopsy on Adib, theorised that the fireman's injuries were inconsistent with assault.

The coroner said the lack of defensive wounds on the fireman could be due to him already being incapacitated when he was out of the EMRS van.

This, she said, was consistent with Dr Shahrom's theory that Adib

had already suffered fatal injuries by then.

Rofiah said that in making her judgment, she considered statements from two other witnesses at the scene, bystanders S. Suresh and Mohd Hafizan Nordin.

Suresh in his statement said that as he was approaching Adib, he was pushed and fell on the fireman, with his body covering half of Adib's body. "At that time, he also felt a kick on his shoulder. It is clear that the kick was meant for Adib but accidentally hit Suresh instead," she said.

"Hafizan, meanwhile, was warned against going nearer to the temple by a well-meaning Indian lady.

"Usually, when someone with good intentions is warning some-

one, it can be summarised that she knew that someone had been beaten up," she said.

After delivering her verdict, Rofiah said it was now up to the Inspector-General of Police and Attorney-General to decide on the next course of action.

"According to my findings and verdict, I instruct the Inspector-General and Attorney General to conduct an investigation, and prosecution if needed according to the Criminal Procedure Code," she said.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Faten Hadni Khairuddin acted as handling officer for the inquest while the Housing and Local Government Ministry and Fire and Rescue Department were represented by senior federal counsels Suzana Atan, Mazlifah Ayob and Fadzilatul Isma Ahmad Rafiqah, and federal counsel Afiq Zainal Abidin.

Lawyers representing Adib's family included Syazlin Mansor and Mohd Kamaruzaman A. Wahab.

Also present in court were Adib's family members who included his brother Mohd Ashraf and fiancée Nurul Najihah Mohd Radzi.

Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin, Subang Jaya Fire Station chief Syed Shahril Anuar Syed Sulaiman and Adib's fellow firemen from the station were also present.

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## Police to investigate Adib's death further

**ARAU:** Police will investigate and identify those involved in causing the death of fireman Muhammad Adib Mohd Kassim following the coroner's verdict, says the Inspector-General of Police.

Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Bador pledged to hold discussions with his officers in Bukit Aman on further action by the police, which would include calling up those who had been detained.

"Prior to the inquest, we found that we did not have enough evidence for prosecution.

"However, we will re-look the matter following the verdict," he told reporters after launching the Police Innovation Day yesterday.

Abdul Hamid said police would also ascertain if standard operating procedures (SOP) were adhered to in controlling the riot on the night fireman Muhammad Adib Mohd Kassim got hurt.

The IGP called on all parties to accept the

coroner's decision and warned everyone against rioting or holding demonstrations.

"I am sure it won't come to that, but we are prepared for any eventuality. The court's decision has been made so all should accept it. There is no need to march or riot," he said.

In Shah Alam, Selangor police chief Comm Datuk Noor Azam Jamaludin said there would be further investigations into Adib's death.

"We abide by the decision. Based on the statements gathered prior to the inquest, we will check whether there is a need to call some people back," he told reporters at the Selangor police headquarters.

Bukit Aman CID director Comm Datuk Huzir Mohamed said criminal investigations into the death of Adib was never closed.

Commenting on the coroner's findings that Adib's death was caused by two or more unknown persons, he said the investigations were still ongoing.

## Do not turn it into a racial issue, says Zuraida

**SHAH ALAM:** Malaysians should remain calm and not turn the Coroner Court's findings on Muhammad Adib Mohd Kassim into a racial issue, says Housing and Local Government Minister Zuraida Kamaruddin.

"I hope Malaysians can accept this decision and not politicise it. Do not bring in religious and racial issues. This was an issue of a civil servant who died on duty," she told reporters at the Shah Alam Court Complex yesterday.

Zuraida said her ministry and the Fire and Rescue Department had used a "wide range of channels", to ensure Muhammad Adib and his family's interests were properly protected.

She added that she has met Muhammad Adib's brother Muhammad Asyraf and aunt at the court and planned to meet Adib's father

Mohd Kassim Abdul Hamid.

Fire and Rescue Department director-general Datuk Mohammad Hamdan Wahid said he is thankful the inquest was conducted justly.

"Muhammad Adib is a symbol of loyalty, commitment, sacrifice and dedication to all civil servants. He is a constant reminder for civil servants to carry out their duties responsibly and with integrity," he said.

Peninsular Malaysia Fire and Rescue Department Employees Union president Zainal Abidin Nong Chik also said that he was grateful and satisfied with the verdict.

"I am thankful to Allah for giving us this decision for Muhammad Adib's family, which has sided in our favour," he said.