



False Rape Allegation: HK woman gets 18 months

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Bangkok, June 25: The Hong Kong woman who wreaked havoc with her fabricated rape story was yesterday found guilty of making false charges and sentenced to three years in jail. The sentence was cut by half because she confessed to all the charges.

"Defendant So Leong-ying has caused so much damage to Thailand's reputation so as not to warrant a suspended sentence," the Criminal Court ruled in rejecting further leniency.

So's lawyer Chaisak Onpradit said she also apologised to all Thai people, especially Thongbai Umahia, the tuk-tuk driver taken into custody briefly following her false claim that he raped her.

He said So admitted she had done everything out of a lack of conscience, and asked for forgiveness. So also vowed to behave, after serving her time, Chaisak said.

So, who claimed to be a freelance reporter on holiday, had tried to "grab publicity, recklessly disregarding the enormity of her rape story" and its effects on law enforcement and innocent bystanders, the court said

The court reprimanded her for allowing her imagination to run wild in weaving a story of sexual assault that never happened.

"The defendant deliberately told police she was gang-raped by four men, including a tuk tuk driver. She later identified driver Thongbai Umahia, who was later proven innocent, as one of her assailants in the line-up, maliciously framing him with a false charge," the verdict said.

"The defendant outlined in sordid detail how she was repeatedly raped and sodomised by Thongbai and his accomplices. She also

claimed that she was robbed of Bt6,000 cash and a mobile phone worth Bt10,000.

"After police confronted her with evidence of the bogus rape and robbery, the defendant admitted to making up the story in the hope of attracting publicity to her name," it added.

The court noted that So's guilty plea was entered only after her lies were exposed. It found her guilty of three counts of filing false charges relating to the bogus rape, of framing Thongbai for sexual violations that did not occur, and of perjury.

- The Nation -

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