Man with psychotic disorder gets 2 years' jail for slashing stranger in Chua Chu Kang





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BY LOW YOUJIN

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An off-duty policeman carrying a hoe that he borrowed from a nearby construction site confronting Neo Hong Wei (right in photos).

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His lawyers said that he wanted to apologise to the victim

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SINGAPORE — A 23-year-old was on Wednesday (May 12) jailed two years for slashing a woman with a kitchen knife in Chua Chu Kang in broad daylight last year.

District Judge May Mesenas also ordered Neo Hong Wei, who has a psychotic disorder, to undergo treatment at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) upon his release.

His jail sentence was backdated to the date of his remand on Sept 30 last year.

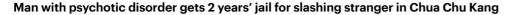
Neo <u>pleaded guilty</u> on March 23 to voluntarily causing hurt to a 27-year-old woman with a dangerous weapon.

TODAY previously reported that Neo had not been taking his medication for psychotic disorder for three days when he thought of attacking someone so that he would feel happy and not have to live his life in misery.

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On Wednesday, Neo said in mitigation that while he had hurt the victim, he bore no hatred towards her.

An IMH psychiatrist earlier found that Neo had a psychotic disorder and possibly suffered from schizophrenia, a serious mental disorder that results in distorted thinking.

The precise nature of his psychotic mental illness, however, remains unconfirmed. Even so, he was able to distinguish right from wrong, the psychiatrist said.

District Judge Mesenas told Neo that she hopes he would take his medication and treatment seriously, so that he can be released into the community safely.

THE CASE

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The incident happened around noon on Sept 29 last year, when Neo came across his victim at an open-air car park near Block 412 Choa Chu Kang Avenue 3.

She had been walking towards Lot One Shoppers' Mall when Neo approached her and brandished a kitchen knife with a 17cm-long blade.

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She managed to get up after a while and fled, screaming for help as Neo pursued her.

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An off-duty police officer, who was at home nearby, heard her screams and saw Neo chasing her.

He rushed downstairs immediately and eventually subdued Neo.

The victim, who was taken to the National University Hospital, suffered many cuts and abrasions over her body and scalp.

Neo's lawyers Josephus Tan and Cory Wong, from Invictus Law Corporation, said that Neo wished to apologise to the victim for his acts.

They said: "Hong Wei has become cognisant of what is at stake in the event of a relapse and, as actions speak louder than words, he will faithfully continue to comply with his medication, which has been the case ever since a few weeks into his remand."

The lawyers had asked for a jail term of no more than eight to 10 months, while the prosecution sought at least three to five years in prison.

For causing hurt with a weapon, Neo could have been jailed for up to seven years, fined or caned, or received a combination of these penalties.

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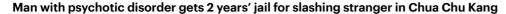
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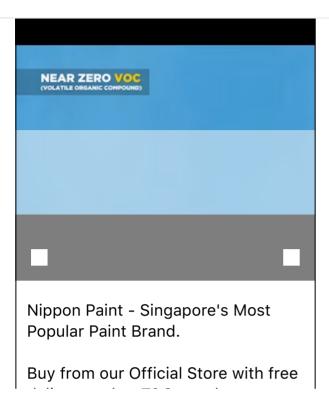


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