

= Jamila dan Sang Presiden =

Jamila and the President (Indonesian : Jamila dan Sang Presiden) is a 2009 Indonesian film directed by Ratna Sarumpaet and starring Atiqah Hasiholan and Christine Hakim . It follows the story of a prostitute sentenced to death for killing a government minister .

The film was adapted from a stage play entitled *Pelacur dan Sang Presiden* (The Prostitute and the President) , which Sarumpaet had written after receiving a grant from UNICEF to study child trafficking trends in Indonesia and promote awareness of the problem . In preparing the script , she spent several months interviewing prostitutes in several cities ; the film itself spent three years in production and featured much of the same cast and crew as the original play .

Released on 30 April 2009 , the film received mixed to positive reception in Indonesia . Internationally the film featured in several film festivals and won awards in France , Italy , and Taiwan . It was submitted to the 82nd Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film , but not nominated .

= = Plot = =

Jamila and the President opens with narration from Jamila (Atiqah Hasiholan) , a victim of human trafficking , followed by several scenes showing her living a glamorous yet unfulfilling night life . After hearing a news report that a government minister , Nurdin (Adjie Pangestu) , has been murdered , Jamila surrenders herself to the police . This surprises her would @-@ be boyfriend , Ibrahim (Dwi Sasono) , who feels badly for Jamila and begins working towards freeing her . Under the orders of the president , Jamila is placed in a prison outside Jakarta , where she receives rough treatment at the hands of the guards and warden , Ria (Christine Hakim) .

In the prison , Ria reads Jamila 's diary and learns her backstory . Jamila was sold by her mother to a middleman , who then sold her to a rich family . While living with the family , Jamila is raped by both the father and son in succession ; Jamila kills the son and runs away , while the mother (Jajang C. Noer) , aware of their actions , kills her husband . Jamila becomes a worker at a market , but once again must escape when she learns that some local men plan to rape her . She escapes to a discothèque , and when it is raided by the police she is thought to be a prostitute and arrested . After being released , Jamila is raised by a kind @-@ hearted prostitute named Susi (Ria Irawan) , who was also caught in the raid .

In the present day , several groups are demanding that Jamila be given the death sentence . One male guard , (Surya Saputra) , takes pity on Jamila and tries to help her . However , Jamila ignores him . Ria , although slowly becoming more sympathetic to Jamila , gets into an argument with her over Nurdin 's murder ; this results in Jamila being placed in isolation .

Several days later , the court finds Jamila guilty of murder and sentences her to death , a sentence which will be carried out in 36 hours . Ria visits Jamila in her cell to check on her , and Ria explains that she intends to ask the president for a stay . Jamila refuses , then tells Ria about her experience looking for her sister Fatimah in Borneo , how she killed the man who had put Fatimah in a brothel but was unable to find her sister .

The day before Jamila 's execution , Ibrahim meets with Susi , who tells him about Jamila 's romantic involvement with Nurdin . Jamila became pregnant with Nurdin 's child and insisted that he take responsibility , but instead Nurdin told her he was marrying someone else and humiliated her in public . When the two met in a hotel , Nurdin threatened Jamila with a pistol ; in self @-@ defence , Jamila killed him with the pistol . In the modern day , Jamila walks towards her execution ; the president has not responded to the request for stay . The screen fades to black as a gunshot goes off , and afterwards , statistics about child trafficking and prostitution are shown .

= = Production = =

Jamila and the President was directed by Ratna Sarumpaet , a women 's rights activist . The film , Sarumpaet 's directorial debut , was based on a theatrical drama she had previously made entitled

Pelacur dan Sang Presiden (The Prostitute and the President) , which was put on in 2006 in five cities by Satu Merah Panggung Theatre Troup . She was inspired write the story in 2005 after UNICEF approached her to do a survey of child trafficking in Southeast Asia and promote awareness of the problem . While writing the original script , Sarumpaet interviewed prostitutes in Surabaya , Surakarta , Garut , and Borneo over a period of six months . This research carried over into the film .

Sarumpaet cast her daughter , Atiqah Hasiholan , in the lead role . Initially Hasiholan viewed her character as a " regular slutty prostitute " , but after thinking of the character more thoroughly , she considered Jamila a " victim of life " . To better play her character , Hasiholan visited several prostitution districts and spoke with sex workers there , learning their motivations ; she drew the conclusion that poverty was a deciding factor . Senior actress Christine Hakim ? a close friend of Sarumpaet 's ? was cast as Ria ; it was her first antagonistic role . Sarumpaet 's brother Sam was assistant director , and helped calm his sister when technical glitches occurred .

Much of the cast and crew , including star Hasiholan , had previously acted in the stage play . Sarumpaet reported that the film cost Rp.6.5 billion (US \$ 800 @,@ 000) to produce ; She originally had difficulty finding sponsors . The film spent three years in production .

= = Themes = =

Sarumpaet described the film as being " about how awful the effect of poverty on human ? s morality and lives is " ; in an interview with Tempo magazine , she stated that she did not have a political message , but intended to just show the facts . Nauval Yazid , in a review for The Jakarta Post , wrote that the film was of the " women @-@ who @-@ suffer @-@ continuously " genre , common in Indonesian cinema ; he compared the theme to Ponirah Terpidana (Ponirah is Convicted ; 1984) , starring Hakim and Slamet Rahardjo . Anissa S. Febrina , also writing for The Jakarta Post , described the film as depicting " the grim reality of those whose existence [viewers] are rarely aware of : victims of child and women trafficking . "

= = Style = =

The majority of the film takes place inside the prison . A review for the Jakarta Globe notes that the film has a " spartan feel " , as supported by its cinematography . It uses periods of silence to evoke an emotional response from viewers , with flashbacks used to drive the story . The president is never shown ; instead , he is represented by long shots of Merdeka Palace , a presidential residence in Jakarta .

= = Release and reception = =

Jamila and the President was originally intended to be released on 10 December 2007 , in commemoration of Human Rights Day . However , due to production difficulties it was delayed for almost two years . The film premiered at FX Plaza in Jakarta on 27 April 2009 , with a wide release three days later . It received mixed reception . Yazid wrote that the film was " easily one of the most noteworthy Indonesian films in recent years " and praised Hakim 's acting ; however , he found Hasiholan 's acting overly theatrical . A review for the Jakarta Globe described the film as " engaging because of its dramatic subject and well @-@ measured pace " , but ultimately leaving the audience with unanswered questions due to the number of characters introduced . Marcel Thee and Armando Siahaan , writing in the same newspaper in December 2009 , selected Jamila and the President as the best Indonesian film of 2009 , noting that the titular character 's struggle " provides an emotional roller @-@ coaster ride . " Aguslia Hidayah , writing for Tempo , stated the film came across as without a climax , with Hasiholan 's acting at times overly theatrical and Hakim 's coming across flat . Eko Hendrawan Sofyan , reviewing for Kompas , wrote that the film reminded viewers that poverty and prostitution were still major issues , and had to be dealt with before Indonesia could further develop .

In Indonesia , Jamila and the President was nominated for several awards . At the 2009 Indonesian Film Festival , the film received six nominations , for Best Picture , Best Director , Best Adapted Screenplay , Best Editing , Best Sound Arrangement , and Best Artistic Arrangement ; it did not win any . Internationally , Jamila and the President was screened at several film festivals , including in Bangkok , Hong Kong , and Australia ; at the Asiatica Film Mediale in Rome , it won a NETPAC Award . It later won an award for best editing at the 53rd Asia Pacific Film Festival in Taipei , Taiwan . Jamila and the President was chosen by the Indonesian Filmmakers and Television Association to represent Indonesia at the 82nd Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film . However , the film was not nominated . At the Vesoul International Film Festival of Asian Cinema in Vesoul , France , Jamila and the President won two awards , the Prix de Public and Prix Jury Lyceen ; according to The Jakarta Post , the film shocked young French audiences unused to child trafficking , a common subject in Southeast Asian cinema .