

# Filipina hairdresser denies sexually exploiting two girls

Woman accused of forcing girls into sex industry

- By Bassam Za'za', Senior Reporter
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Dubai: A Filipina hairdresser denied in court yesterday the charge of sexually exploiting two girls after promising to recruit them as saleswomen in Dubai and instead forcing them into prostitution.

Prosecutors accused the 33-year-old Filipina, A.L., of violating the anti-human trafficking law by exploiting the neediness of her compatriot girls and forcing them into the sex industry.

"I don't know what happened. I have nothing to do in all of this. I didn't do anything wrong...", argued A.L. when she defended herself before the Dubai Court of First Instance.

When asked by Presiding Judge Hamad Abdul Latif Abdul Jawad about her defence, she contended: "I ask the court to pronounce my innocence because I have not committed any guilt."

According to the charges, prosecutors said the defendant committed a human trafficking crime by abusing the fact that the two 25-year-old girls, M.J. and A.G., were job-hunting in Dubai before she tricked them and coerced them into the sex trade.

The girls testified before prosecutors that A.L. asked them to pay Dh6,000 to hire them as saleswomen in shops. Then they alleged that she kept them in a flat in Al Muraqqabat and confiscated their passports before forcing them to have sex with strangers.

## Recruitment promise

"I emailed my curriculum vitae to A.L. who promised to help me get recruited as a saleswoman in one of the shops... she and her friend picked me up from Dubai International Airport. She said the Dh6,000 will cover my ticket, visa and two-month accommodation. I stayed in a small room along with A.G. The suspect then asked me to pay her Dh20,000 but I told her that we agreed on Dh6,000. She insisted that I had to work for her until I repay Dh20,000... she forced me to work as a prostitute," M.J. alleged during prosecution questioning.

A.G. claimed to prosecutors that the suspect used to shout at them and coerce to have sex with men against their will.

"She used to drive us to hotels or flats to have sex with clients... we couldn't do anything because she kept hold of our passports. We were forced into prostitution because we had to repay the money if we had to leave," claimed A.G. in her prosecution statement.

Prosecution records said the girls managed to break away after one of their clients fell asleep after they massaged him in his flat in Sharjah.

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