

Kerry Winter murder convict says confession was coerced

British convict claims he was forced to lie by police to save his family

- By Bassam Za'za', Senior Reporter
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Dubai: A British convict claimed in court yesterday that he gave a forced false confession — that he killed his ex-girlfriend 36-year-old South African Kerry Winter — to save his family.

"I simply gave a forced false confession to save my 16-year-old son, ex-wife and fiancé from being imprisoned... police and CID coerced me to give a confession to crime which I did not commit after they threatened to imprison my son, ex-wife and fiancé. I did what any man would do to save his family," argued 43-year-old British convict, M.A., when he defended himself before the Dubai Appeals Court.

M.A., serving a 15-year imprisonment for Kerry's premeditated murder, asked Presiding Judge Eisa Al Sharif for permission to present his closing argument in courtroom 20.

Reading out his defence from a handwritten-paper [through the court translator], M.A. claimed that he was prosecuted and tried by the media.

He defended that all what was published about his case was based on inaccuracies, false facts and biased coverage which incited and raged the public opinion against him.

"Prosecutors' accusation and evidence are baseless. On my 42nd birthday I broke up my relationship with Kerry... I started a new relationship with another woman who later became my fiancé. When Kerry knew she became outraged.

"I didn't kill Kerry. When I last saw her she was still alive," he said. He accused police and prosecutors of neglecting plenty of evidence, submitted to prove his innocence.

Presiding Judge Al Sharif asked the court translator a number of times to summarise what M.A. was reading in his defence.

Strong denial

He strongly refuted prosecutors' accusation that he killed Kerry after beating her with a baseball bat. "I never had and ever had a baseball bat... after the incident she willingly drove with me. She even spoke to one of the police captains over the phone.

"Prosecutors have implied sinister motives against me. My son's education has been ruined and my fiancé left me... I place myself under the court's mercy hoping that my case is reconsidered impartially. I wish to resume my normal life and hope Kerry will be reunited with her mother [Mrs Winter] whom I strongly respect," concluded M.A.

His lawyer Yousuf Hammad defended that his client lacked any motive to murder Kerry. "This is an unprecedented case which Kerry fabricated against my client under the orchestration of others [Hammad didn't name anyone].

"Law enforcement procedures were unlawfully carried out against M.A. Police coerced him to confess. Prosecutors failed to corroborate the evidence.

Prosecution witnesses gave inconsistent statements. I was personally prevented from seeing him until he signed the forced confession..." A verdict will be heard on December 19.

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