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JIS sexual abuse case claims victim

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Education and Culture Minister Mohammad Nuh replaced on Wednesday the director general of non-formal and informal early childhood education (PAUDNI), Lydia Freyani Hawadi.

The reason for her removal is believed to be connected to her recent accusation that Jakarta International School (JIS) head of school Timothy Carr was a pedophile.

She transferred her duties to Hamid Muhammad, the director general for secondary education, on the same day.

Lydia, who was involved in the handling of an alleged rape case at JIS, was replaced not long after she made a controversial statement at a media conference in which she urged the JIS Foundation to replace Carr because he was allegedly a pedophile.

"Timothy Carr or Tim Carr should be examined because he is allegedly a pedophile. So is the victim's teacher," she said at the press conference last Friday. She also insisted that JIS had yet to secure an official permit to run its kindergarten.

Following denial from Carr's side, Lydia insisted that calls by the public for an investigation into Carr and his dismissal had been mounting.

Nuh, however, denied that Lydia's replacement had anything to do with her statement about Carr. "It [the allegation] is totally incorrect," he said.

He argued that the government's decision to replace her was made in January while the JIS rape case surfaced in March.

He said that the reshuffle of several officials, including Lydia, was aimed at rejuvenating the organizational structure at the ministry.

"It [Lydia's replacement] has been approved by President [Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono]," Nuh said recently as quoted on the ministry's website.

Lydia will take up a position as an expert staff member on cultural psychology at the ministry.

Harry Ponto, a senior lawyer representing Carr in the case, denied Lydia's accusation and threatened to take her to court over her statement, which he said was inappropriate for a public official to make.

Another senior lawyer, Hotman Paris Hutapea, questioned the reason behind the many permits required by the directorate general for Indonesian children to attend the kindergarten. According to him, JIS had presumably obtained an official permit, since Indonesian children were enrolled at the preschool.

Separately, a civil lawsuit filed on behalf of a sexual abuse victim began at the South Jakarta District Court on Wednesday. The plaintiff is demanding that JIS and the ministry pay US\$125 million in compensation.

Cinta Trisulo, a lawyer with the OC Kaligis law firm who accompanied the six-year-old plaintiff, said her client had been repeatedly sexually

"The amount of the compensation was set by the client's family," she told the court.

Meanwhile, the police are slated to re-enact the case on the JIS campus in Cilandak, South Jakarta, on Friday.

Jakarta Police spokesman Sr. Comr. Rikwanto said the police would ask five suspects — arrestees Agun Iskandar, Virgiawan Amin, Zainal Abidin, Syahrial and Afrischa Setyani — to demonstrate how they prepared the scenario to trap the boy and sexually assault him. (alz)

How the case unfolded:

Feb. 20 – March 20

Six-year-old pupil reportedly subjected to rape by several of the school's outsourced cleaning staff in one of the rest rooms at Jakarta International School (JIS).

March 20

Victim's mother reveals child has bruises on his stomach and anus. Mother takes child to several medical centers, including Cipto Mangunkusumo General Hospital and Pondok Indah Hospital in South Jakarta.

March 22

Victim's mother and lawyer report case to the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and the National Commission for Child Protection (Komnas PA).

March 23

Victim tests positive for herpes.

March 24

Victim's mother files report with Jakarta Police.

April 14

Victim's mother holds media conference on the case at Sari Kuring restaurant in Central Jakarta.

April 16

Lydia announces that JIS does not have license to run a kindergarten.

April 21

Education and Culture Ministry, through its informal and non-formal early childhood education (PAUDNI) directorate general, sends official letter to JIS, ordering the closure of its kindergarten.

JIS head Tim Carr, accompanied by a translator and JIS spokesperson Daniarti Wusono, apologizes to the family of the victim and members of the community at a press conference at the Sultan Hotel in Central Jakarta.

April 24

Another kindergartner at JIS comes forward to say he was sexually abused at the school. He was allegedly abused in a classroom, without any CCTV cameras, by a cleaner. Victim also claims he was abused repeatedly between January and March this year.

May 2

Komnas PA files a police report against Carr and the school's administrators for letting rape occur multiple times on school grounds and for not having a license to run a kindergarten.

May 23

Lydia accuses Carr and the victim's teacher of being pedophiles and calls on JIS Foundation to dismiss them. She later insisted the demand came from the public.

May 24

Kartini Muljadi, a senior lawyer representing Carr, vehemently rejects the accusation against her client.