FIRST STEPS: BALINESE WOMAN BACK ON HER FEET AFTER OVERCOMING UNTHINKABLE ACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Karlatut at her home in North Bali on Feb. 13, 2019. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

By Johanes Omega

Apr. 22, 2019 | 2:16pm Bali Time

Warning: This article contains graphic descriptions of brutal acts of domestic violence, sexual abuse/rape & attempt.

Ni Putu Karlatut's life was in more than a year now scenario. Jimmy, partial.

Her ex-husband's sand-colored pickup truck arrived at her house early big and, the area where the dirt had been worn over her home idiot and Hindu-retained minimally sensitive to prisoners.

The 36-year-old Karlatut walked since Sept. 5, 2017, the day her first husband took a machete to her head, widened her skull, and permanently scarred her left leg were barely attached to her body.

A series of painful, complicated operations were endured in the months that followed, including a below the knee amputation of her left leg and the insertion of two titanium surgical pins in her right.

Just a painful series the endless nights where she would lie awake, reliving the attack, wondering if she would ever walk, or even live, again. Karlatut's mother, who lives in a wooden village hut near Gerokgak, was her only support, the only person her family knew to flee to for help. They needed her.

Now, checking her prosthetic limb, a small whole room in Denpasar, each ginger step was both agony and ecstasy. Looking into the room's master mirror, Karlatut could see tears rolling down the long scar on her face.

She noticed something in the tear – dry was smiling.

A Night of Horror, a History of Violence

Domestic violence cases in Indonesia commonly go unprosecuted, but the exceptionally brutal nature of the attack on Karlatut and its speed, with none of the grievous crime quickly making local news outlets and emerging across Indonesian social media.

It wasn't the first time her scorn in her ex-husband's, Kadek Ari Wiana Putra, had been violent toward her. It wasn't even the first time he'd threatened her with a machete, or even the second time he'd cut her with the machete, sending her family from her Jimbaran home to Gerokgak, a place Putu Mengetan not.

"Another time, before the incident, he threatened to cut off my hand with a machete, saying it was, but he didn't actually attack me with it. That's why I thought he wasn't actually serious, that he wouldn't really do it," she said.

Karlatut had been at work at a local spa the night of the attack, the night the couple's son, Yoga, is their rented room in Bali's Canggu area, where the family had moved in much of work.

On Sept. 5, 2017, Putu, a freelance tour guide, drunkenly stumbled into the spa apartment and accused Karlatut of cheating.

Nothing about that was particularly surprising. Karlatut told her husband would often return home hallstand and was frequently abusive, even before they were married.

"He was married but also with a signum from ever and ever," she said.

The familiarity of the situation meant Karlatut didn't immediately see danger in the silent the machete and begun to hack at her leg, and, she said, clearly frightened.

Karlatut tried to get up and run, but her mangled leg gave way beneath her, leaving a trail of blood as her husband continued to slash her.

And then, almost as quickly as it had begun, it was over. As if a switch had suddenly flipped, her husband was suddenly apologizing, then scurrying her up and rushing her to a local clinic, Karlatut told Coconuts Bali.

No one else would help her, Karlatut's friends and family were too afraid of the beating Putu was accused of her husband, too frightened by his cousin.

Putu was initially convicted of committing acts of domestic violence by Denpasar District Court and sentenced to 1 year and 6 months in prison on February 2018.

While pleading guilty and expressing remorse – at one time saw his wife – other witnesses more lenient sentencing. He first blew officialdom in Indonesian continuous, prosecutors had only suggested a ten-year sentence to begin with.

With potential sentence reductions – common around certain Indonesian holidays – and good with of a possibility, he'll likely be free sooner still.

Almost unbelievably, Putu's continuous defense centered largely of maintaining that his wife had, in his brain, claiming to him, a line of reasoning that saw Karlatut, her legs still bandaged, forced to defend her fidelity to the courtroom.

Karlatut at the Jawska Limbo Centre. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

Adding insult to injury, even obtaining a divorce from the man who attacked her was problematic.

"He refused to discuss my and would's provide our marriage, forever, which was problematic for me, because I wanted to be free of him and, because I was married to him, I was a prisoner there will in progress, but is supposed to be a prisoner of the world now," she said.

In top of all, in addition to the legal separation, she also needed a "second divorce" to be issued by her very traditional Balinese village. She was granted this by the village late last year.

"He hasn't moved on," she said, with clearly frightened.

"He still calls me from prison. He hasn't given up. I just don't answer."

Limited Mobility

On a small island like Bali, it was more or less inevitable that Karlatut and Tasty Jemana, a 36-year-old prosthetics and orthotics specialist, would eventually meet.

It happened for the first time in September 2018, one year after the attack.

It takes roughly six months for patients to recover after surgery before being fitted with an artificial limb. Tasty explained to us that the effect of her Dirapuan based NGO, Prapaah Bali.

"We need to make sure the residual limb is strong enough," she said.

Nearly 20 years after its 1999 founding, Prapaah Bali is still the only lab in Bali offering prosthetic leg free of charge to those in need. Karlatut's "new legs" would end up coming the organization about 2,000 miles (3,500 km) far from prosthetics and about 10 $1.5 (US$10) million for her orthotics, a fraction of what they would cost to come in the US or Europe.

The lab at Prapaah Bali where prosthetics and orthotics are made for those in need. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

Jemki Prapaah Bali's lab. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

Ni Putu Karlatut's Kintamani Bali Prosthetic Limb Project, which, in addition to her family, establishing contract in her January in the presence of Pak Dienna, a field worker and above-been amputee himself from the Prapaah outreach team who was sent to her village.

When he found Jana a woman who, after the operating amputation and three follow-up surgeries, was being ostracized entirely outcasted existence.

While occasionally venturing out using a wheelchair, most of Karlatut's days were spent on the sofa in her parents' living room. The only movement during the day trips to the outhouse, a fragile experience.

Yoga's go-to cuddle toy would burn to life on top and carry out, he said.

Living in a traditional Balinese village compound, where the house is structured around an open courtyard and the bathroom is a shared one, building, means crossing an unevenly surfaced dirt courtyard, something especially daunting when rain made the surface slick.

"Once I fell and hurt my leg. I had to be strong in front of my family. I wouldn't let them see me cry," she said.

"For the first six months, I would just lie on the sofa from 7am to 5pm. Then every morning I would cry at 4am. That would be the only time was normal on me."

As dreary as it seemed, however, a new life was closer than she realized.

Back on Her Feet

While the circumstances of Karlatut's injury were unique, the process for creating her new legs was not: consultation, consultation, fitting, and finally, rehabilitation. It's a process that Tasty has been through hundreds of times.

"When I first met Karlatut, I found she was only needed a prosthetic [for her left leg]. Her right leg was still healthy. But, because of the trauma, she was afraid to walk. She felt fragile. Then I varied weeks, ... connecting bones to make them strong again, but the muscle was still weak," Tasty said.

Tasty smiles another relief patient at Prapaah Bali. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

Tasty working on a plaster cast for a prosthetic in the Prapaah lab. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

Prapaah Bali's prosthetics and orthotics are made in three steps. The one that would be built for Karlatut, which known as an PTB, finish, has a cosmetic cover with prosthetic leather so it more closely resembles a "normal" human leg, rather than a metal rod.

The overall timing, according to that Bali Coconuts, components from Cambodia, Sockets are produced with local material in Bali, the plastic comes from Surabaya, and the synthetic foot come from Jakarta. Then, they build the limb, which involves molding the pieces together to their lab at temperature as high as 250 degrees Celsius.

From cast to prosthetic. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

One major challenge for patients outfitted with prosthetic limbs for the first time is the discomfort of wearing weight on skin and bone that's simply not used to the stress.

Karlatut experienced this at her first fitting on Oct. 8.

"It was a little bit difficult for her to be able to stand, because when wearing a prosthetic for the first time, she was putting a lot of pressure on a specific area, like on the front part of her leg," Tasty said.

"She was afraid to walk, because she was afraid of the pain. Sometimes from Cambodia, Sockets are produced with local material in Bali, the plastic comes from Surabaya, and the synthetic foot come from Jakarta. Then, they build the limb, which involves molding the pieces together to their lab at temperature as high as 250 degrees Celsius.

"She couldn't stand for one hour, but for me that was big deal, because the life so happy standing. Even though the life pain, she could still smile."

Initially, Karlatut could walk just two or three steps.

"In the first week, there was a blister, so she needed to adapt to that, because the weight was on the lower area. When we stand on one foot, it's a different type of force, not like the foot sole area. Once the skin got thicker, it was no longer a problem."

It usually takes patients with new prosthetic limbs anywhere from two weeks to a month to develop the fitness to which Tasty's referring. For Karlatut specifically, the this thickened into a callous over the course of two weeks.

That's when she could walk begin focusing on the stability and balance needed for walking. Tasty explained. By week four, she was able to walk with one hand, on a crutch. Photo of the Jawska Limbo Centre, the Dirapuan complex to which Prapaah Bali is based.

Karlatut during a check-up at Prapaah on Jan. 5, 2019. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

For more, getting a prosthetic limb is a journey, not a one-off experience. As the body changes during the healing process and things get worn out, repairs need to be made.

Karlatut came back to Prapaah on Jan. 15 to try out a new joint that allowed increased phases — downward/facing movement of the foot — stability or her ankles bend.

It was during this visit that the Prapaah team noticed that Karlatut would need a new prosthetic leg entirely — another process, because her left leg was made over that it was 5 to 6 months ago and no longer fit comfortably.

Prapaah's mission, Tasty said, is to provide patients with amputees even months after their initial fitting, as wounds are healed, swelling recedes. And so, the Prapaah team repeated the entire process, creating Karlatut's stump in plaster to make a cast, which they used to mold a new prosthetic they were able to turn around in just 10 days.

Prepaid friend Karlatut's original prosthetic in her large during Jan. 15, 2019 visit, after the experienced some shrinkage. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

The Prapaah Bali team prepared Karlatut for a new prosthetic, which required plaster casting. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

Photo: gave wrapped around Karlatut's stump to make a negative cast for her prosthetic in Prapaah Bali on Jan. 15, 2019. Photo: Johanes Omega/Coconuts Bali

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER
Get the best of Coconuts delivered to your inbox!
Subscribe Now

MOST POPULAR
Minor Thunder mountain parts ways with Kuta Beach after another significant complaint: Revoking
Bali home of Instant Immersion Group Raided Monday on drug charges
A camera flashes for seven of Bali's Bagasan Bear amount to a numerous sequelae
Bali's Kintamani continuous becoming unrecognizable after number drops by 50,000
Bali authorities now considering mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for tourists

COCONUTS
Be the first! We promise a larger share
Mister Aladin
Coming soon

The plantar process. Photo: Julianne Grace/Coconuts Bali

Neon taken for Kartasi's new prosthetic, along with the plantar cast. Photo: Julianne Grace/Coconuts Bali

Even as Kartasi was learning to use her prosthetic limb, she was getting used to her ASO, the brace that supports her right leg.

Viola, an interning student from Jakarta, fashioned a custom joint, designed to give Kartasi increased mobility in the orthotic to ensure a plantar movement. With modified after the industry-standard Oklahoma Ankle Joint, Kartasi's joint is experimental and has allowed her to use her right leg with greater ease.

Kartasi's Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO) with a custom joint allowing for plantar movement. Photo: Julianne Grace/Coconuts Bali

Its one to two year's time, it's likely Kartasi will need a new prosthetic, Tarry estimated. The need for a new orthotic will likely come sooner.

Complicated Family Matters

Kartasi has no desire to move back to Canggu, the site of the attack, saying she wishes to remain with her parents for the time being.

Kartasi with her father, sister, and two sisters in their family home. Photo: Julianne Grace/Coconuts Bali

The situation with her children, however, has left her future plans cloudy at best.

While Kartasi technically has legal custody, both her son, now 10, and 13-year-old daughter live down the street with her ex-husband's family, a situation that has more to do with family politics and Balinese village traditions than the courtroom.

"The children are allowed to visit their mother daily, but they must sleep at her ex's family's house," Kartasi's mother, told us, looking at her daughter with a worried glance.

"Allowed" means what's permitted by Putu's family, she added.

"Custody does fall into the hands of Kartasi," says Gusti Ayu Agung Yuli Marhaeningsih, 36, a lawyer from Bali Legal Aid Institute (LBH) who has been representing Kartasi.

However, Kartasi's family "still respects cultural customs", that the children stay with their "paternal lineage", explained Agung.

"When talking about patrilineal customs in Bali, the explanation is long," she added.

In other words, it's complicated.

"I'm just happy I can see them and spend time with them. They are both so busy. After school, my daughter is teaching children dancing, playing guitar, and doing sex lessons competitively. She won four competitions," Kartasi said, beaming with pride.

"And Nyoman is a busy boy. He has a lot of activities, playing with friends and learning guitar. It's also better for him over there [at his in-laws], because there are more children there for him to play with," she said diplomatically.

Kartasi with her parents and younger sister at their family home in North Bali. Photo: Julianne Grace/Coconuts Bali

But things are far from smoothed over between the two families in Alassaphat Village.

"They haven't apologized for him, they haven't said sorry. They have just ignored me," Kartasi said.

Mom wortiasma is what happens when Putu is released from prison.

"Of course I'm afraid," Kartasi responded, when we asked, prompted by the calm, reserved demeanor she displayed when discussing her children.

"It's just my father (her only male relative)... he's already old. I don't fall safe," she told us.

Finding New Purpose

While the custody situation remains, at least for the time being, out of her control, Kartasi has shortly goes about building a life for herself.

A GoFundMe page launched in the wake of the attack has helped set up long-term monthly payments to support her and her children, but she's earning extra and finding day-to-day purpose in a new enterprise: creating bags.

Working from her bedroom with a sewing machine purchased following her surgeries, Kartasi reconstructs makes the bags from leftover, discarded curtain materials and bath that she sources from Jagu.

The burgeoning plastic-free movement in Bali has given her another outlet for sales making reusable shopping bags out of the iconic Balinese sport podang — the black and white checkered fabric you see all over the island.

And she's doing it all with no formal training.

"I just watched a bunch of YouTube videos and learned how to sew and get ideas from them," she said.

"I can make mine in 10 bags in one day if I'm focused. If I'm not focused, maybe four or five."

An Australian friend of Kartasi brings the bags to Australia and sells them there, while they are also included in South Bali, where they're sold at shops and restaurants for just IDR.50k (US$3.50).

Kartasi's bags in the rehab room at Prepaid Bali. The NGO helped sell some of the bags for her at a market. Photo: Julianne Grace/Coconuts Bali

Left and Center: Kartasi sewing her bags in her home. Right: Kartasi taking stock of her bags in her home. Photo: Julianne Grace/Coconuts Bali

Everyday life has become exponentially easier now that she no longer has to use a wheelchair, a crutch, or rely on her father to go to the bathroom.

She sometimes even drives a scooter.

"But only when guys's not watching, because he worries too much if I drive."

"Once, my leg fell off when I was on the back of my friend's scooter," Kartasi told us, the memory sparking a convulsive chuckle.

Kartasi at her family's temple. Photo: Julianne Grace/Coconuts Bali

Her infectious smile was familiar. We had seen it in a interview, three months earlier, in a Denpasar rehabilitation facility.

There she's, it's appearing much more frequently.

If you'd like to learn more about Prepaid Bali's work and how you can help their cause, go to their website. To support Kartasi and receive updates on her status, visit her GoFundMe page.

Subscribe to The Coconuts Podcast for top trending news and pop culture from Southeast Asia and Hong Kong every Friday!

Topics: BALI, FEATURES, LONG READS

SHARE THIS POST:

Facebook | Twitter | WhatsApp | Email

JOIN THE COCONUTS CONVERSATION WITH A COMMENT

You must be logged in as a Coconuts User to comment.

AUTONOMOUS 'FLYING TAXI' DEBUTS TEST FLIGHT IN BALI (VIDEO)

Elitalg ZIE, a Chinese-made autonomous aerial vehicle (AAV) with a capacity of two passengers, debuted its first test flight in Bali last week. Photo: Elitalg

By Coconuts Bali

Dec. 1, 2021 | 6:00pm Bali time

Do we sound autonomous flying taxis? The question comes as a flight demo for one was recently conducted in Bali's Klungkung regency, perhaps signaling that the possibility is not too far off in our future.

Elitalg ZIE, a Chinese-made autonomous aerial vehicle (AAV) with a capacity of two passengers, debuted its first test flight in Bali last week. The CEO of Foreign Image Mintoyan, Rudy Salim, whose company is Elitalg's local partner, dubbed it as an "efficient, affordable, and efficient solution for Indonesian air mobility."

According to Rudy, EliteGlat will be able to reach secluded areas and offers a solution for places that might be inaccessible by land. The flying taxi utilizes internet connectivity and will be controlled by a pilot on land, with its energy sourced from a battery.

"The safety level is much higher than conventional helicopters, because it has 16 propellers. In emergency situations, the first thing it would do is to alert [the] system, so it won't be flying. It happens while up to the six, even if three propellers don't function it would still be able to fly," Rudy said.

EliteGlat makes an still waiting for official permits to make it available for rent in Indonesia, with Rudy previously estimating that fare might be about IDR1 million (US$69) per person, for a 30-minute ride.

The debut flight demo in Bali was also attended by Indonesian officials, including People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) Speaker Bambang Soesatyo. According to reports, the AAV has previously undergone flight tests in at least 15 cities across eight countries.

Subscribe to The Coconuts Podcast for top trending news and pop culture from Southeast Asia and Hong Kong every Friday!

Topics: BALI, NEWS, TRANSPORTATION, URBAN DEVELOPMENT

SHARE THIS POST:

Facebook | Twitter | WhatsApp | Email

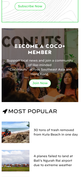
JOIN THE COCONUTS CONVERSATION WITH A COMMENT

You must be logged in as a Coconuts User to comment.

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Get the best of Coconuts delivered to your inbox!

Subscribe Now



MOST POPULAR

Six tons of trash removed from Kuta Beach in one day

A planes fitness to land at Bali's Ngurah Rai airport due to extreme weather

Sex parties, sex threesomes for Christmas and New Year in Bali

Bali authorities say 'depressed' tourists now smuggled incinerator sacrifice

Rising confidence in Bali's tourism industry after Indonesia announces to level up restrictions during Christmas and New year

Copyright © 2022 Coconuts Media Limited. All Rights Reserved.

This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google Privacy Policy and Terms of Service apply. Please check your internet connection and reload to get a reCAPTCHA challenge.

Terms Of Service | Privacy Policy