

Risk Professional: Malaysia to cane visitor for drinking beer

A religious court in Malaysia has sentenced a Singaporean Muslim to a a fine and corporal punishment for drinking a glass of beer in a nightclub.

The offence was committed in Kuantan in the state of Pahang. It is not the first time that the religious authorities in Kuantan have handed down a similar penalty, say local media - a year ago, a waitress was also caned.

The penalty, six lashes plus MYR5,000 fine was regarded as "fair" by the Judge who said that the cane is provided for in the law and therefore it is open to the Court to included it in the sentence.

The offence was committed by 32 year old Kartika Sari Dewi Shukarno. If she does not pay the fine, she will face three months in jail.

Kuantan is recognised as one of parts of Malaysia where deviation from strict religious teaching is less tolerated and its elections frequently favour Islamist parties.

Despite efforts by national government to encourage FDI into the region, it has been difficult to do so and a significant proportion of development capital in the state is provided from the national budget.