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>N6

5 JULY 2009

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Horror home

A govt-run shelter for the disabled has, instead, become their jail

Starprobe
YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

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KUALA KUBU BARU: About 30 men, naked, some chained up, caged and covered in their faeces and urine – that is the scene inside locked rooms at the Taman Sinar Harapan home here.

Following a public tip-off via an email from London, *The Star*'s probe team went undercover to the government-run shelter that is tucked away behind the Kuala Kubu Baru Hospital and next to a golf course.

The home has about 200 residents comprising men, women and children, some of whom are mentally disabled and infirmed. What goes on within the four walls is shocking, and visits to individual rooms reveal even more horror – residents, young and old, naked and confined in cages.



Caged life: An inmate crawling on the floor, hardly aware of his naked existence at the Taman Sinar Harapan home in Kuala Kubu Baru. — SAM THAM / The Star

'Ray of hope' that turned out to be a nightmare

WE WERE hit by the stench of faeces and urine the minute we walked into the men's block at Taman Sinar Harapan located in a secluded area of the town here.

Mr A, a volunteer from a non-governmental organisation who goes to the home every Sunday to clean and feed the residents, opened the locked door at the back of the block and we were stunned by what greeted us.

About 30 stark naked men were inside the room, either lying down or sitting on the wet marble floor. In one part of the room, we saw

a pool of blood, still fresh and red, on the floor.

Half of the men were locked behind bars like animals in a zoo while the others were able to move about in the front portion of the room. Those in the "jail cells" were segregated so that they would not harm their non-violent roommates.

"Those who are accidentally placed inside the cells with the more aggressive residents would be beaten or abused," the volunteer revealed.

Most of them looked no older than 50 but

they were just skin and bones and some looked extremely frail. One resident was lying on his stomach on a wooden bench and had passed motion; we almost gagged at its stench.

Fans were installed inside the room for better ventilation but that was the only luxury the men had. There were no beds, no toilets and not even blankets to keep them warm on cold rainy nights.

Those who were not in the "jail cells" were

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Complete wrecks: Mailvaganan's car (right) and two other cars that were destroyed after his NGV-powered vehicle exploded yesterday.

Driver killed in NGV blast

SUBANG JAYA: An NGV-powered Proton Waja exploded in the car park at an apartment in Serdang Jaya yesterday, killing its driver and destroying three other vehicles.

K. Mailvaganan, 43, was found slumped in the front seat of the car at about 6.45am by police officers who were alerted to an explosion at Skyvilla Apartments.

It is learnt that Mailvaganan, a limousine driver, might have fallen asleep inside the car with the engine running.

A security guard at the apartment said

he heard the loud explosion before seeing a cloud of black smoke from one of the CCTV images.

Selangor police chief Datuk Khalid Abu Bakar said that based on initial police investigations, there was no element of foul play.

"Nevertheless, we are still waiting for the post mortem result from Serdang Hospital before determining the cause of death," he said.

He urged anyone with information on the incident to contact the nearest police station to assist in investigations.

NATION



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