

MMA: Doc who stayed to help did the right thing

BY NURBAITI HAMDAN



PETALING JAYA: A doctor who stayed with an accident victim even though her help was refused has shown exemplary professionalism in the face of racism, said the Malaysian Medical Association.

Its president Dr Ashok Zachariah Phillip said Dr Shalini Paramaswaran did what was best in a difficult situation by not forcing anything that the patient did not want.

“At the same time, she did not let him die on the roadside. She made sure she was there.

“I think that is the best. If they (patients) do not want you to touch them, then you don’t touch them. You need their consent but .

“But you also don’t want him to suffer the consequences of such behaviour,” he said in an interview here yesterday.

Dr Shalini had posted on Facebook about her experience when trying to help the motorcyclist whom she claimed had called her by a derogatory racial term and did not want her to get close to him.

The posting had since been shared over 3,700 times with more than 8,300 likes.

Dr Ashok said Dr Shalini was “very humane” and understanding of the situation by not getting angry.

“When you are involved in an accident, patients can be in shock, especially with a fracture like that.

“They might not be behaving as they normally do,” he said.

Dr Ashok said although he had never come across racism in his career, he acknowledged how patients could be difficult in any setting.

“It’s not only by the roadside. People in the emergency room can be quite aggressive towards the doctors as well.

“Many of us learn quite early in our careers not to take it personally,” he said.

Asked on his advice for doctors facing racism in the line of duty, Dr Ashok said patients came first.

“If it’s a social or random situation, then I suppose you would behave like any normal human being. You may get upset. But if it’s a professional situation, you make sure the patient is all right,” he added.

Netizens have rallied behind Dr Shalini, expressing admiration towards her professionalism and even offering their apologies on behalf of the motorcyclist.

“*Semoga kejadian ini tidak melemahkan perpaduan antara kita yang lain* (May this incident does not weaken our unity with one another,” wrote Facebook user Asrul Nur.

Hadi Hambali wrote: “Keep helping people doc, we’re sorry for the racist pakcik..”

During the Dec 29 incident, the motorcyclist was later apologetic when he found out that the lady who tried to help was a doctor.