

# Mona Fandey murdered my uncle



Datuk Mazlan Idris



Seventeen years ago, Batu Talam state assemblyman Datuk Mazlan Idris was brutally murdered by bomoh Mona Fandey, her husband and their assistant. Mazlan's nephew Anuar Ismail, 62, opens up to **T.N. ALAGESH** about one of Malaysia's most infamous murder cases.

**I** WAS the favourite nephew of my late uncle Datuk Mazlan Idris. He would often stop over at my house in Kampung Peruas, Ulu Dong, Pahang, to have meals. He had also asked me to take care of his piece of land near a river here.

When my uncle, who was then the state assemblyman for Batu Talam, Pahang, was reported missing, many assumed he had gone on an overseas trip or left for his haj in Mecca.

But the sudden disappearance of Mazlan, who I called *ayah wa* (uncle), took me by surprise as he would usually tell me before going away for long periods.

On July 22, 1993, when police vehicles arrived in the village, everyone began to sense that something was not right.

Later that evening, news spread that a body was found buried in the house on my uncle's land.

I was running a grocery shop near the bridge which leads to the Lata Jarum waterfall then. Just before nightfall, police cordoned off the area near the bridge.

Usually, the village would become quiet after 7pm, but on that day, curious villagers gathered at food-stalls.

At midnight, some of the villagers turned in but I waited with some friends and a large group of reporters near the police cordon for the latest news.

About 3am, we heard that the body dug out from the concrete-covered ground in one of the rooms was that of my uncle, and that those believed to have committed the gruesome murder were three people he had always referred to as *saudara kita* (our relatives).

I had met the three of them on several occasions and was shocked

when told that they were the prime suspects. They were arrested for allegedly committing the murder after guiding the police to where my uncle's body was buried.

I first met Mohd Affandi Abdul Rahman, his wife Maznah Ismail (better known as Mona Fandey) and their assistant Juraimi Husin about three months before the murder, when my uncle brought them over to my house.

After introducing them, he told me that he planned to let them stay on his newly-purchased land at Kampung Peruas here. He told me that the couple were traditional medicine practitioners and Juraimi was their helper.

Before they moved in, I engaged some village people to help clear the area. I can still clearly remember that it was raining heavily when they arrived. I helped them unload their



Police at work at the crime scene.



The ever-smiling Mona Fandey was also known for her unique dressing style

belongings from the lorry.

I would go there whenever my late uncle told me to do so but there was not much communication between us. I remember seeing Mona's little daughter. At that time, the house was not fully completed. The brick walls were not cemented or painted. There was a television set in the house and they had their own generator to produce electricity. They also kept a lot of birds and black ducks as pets.

But there was something strange about them. They reared a puppy and lighted incense sticks in the house. I also spotted a large fibre glass boat in the house which was used to hold hundreds of small bottles and jars. But I never asked them about it.

I repeatedly told my late uncle that this family was different, but he scolded me so I decided to keep quiet.

The family seldom mingled with the villagers. Mona used to frequent my shop for groceries.

In one of her visits, she told me she could not stay there long as there were a lot of "obstacles". She told me she often saw a large snake outside the house. She also said in the evenings, she could hear the roar of a tiger nearby.

While Mona was often nice and cheerful, her husband was reserved and was often seen sitting alone.

dismissed their appeals and upheld the death sentence. They sought to obtain a pardon from the Pardons Board of Pahang, but this was rejected. Mona, Affandi and Juraimi were hanged on Nov 2, 2001 at Kajang Prison.

When the trial ended, I returned to the village to resume my life. I worked at the fishing ponds. One day, I steeled myself and visited the abandoned house. I found the fence torn down and several candle sticks strewn all over the floor.

I believe some people had been there to seek lottery numbers and made off with some of the household items. Nowadays, I usually go there during the durian season to collect the fruits.

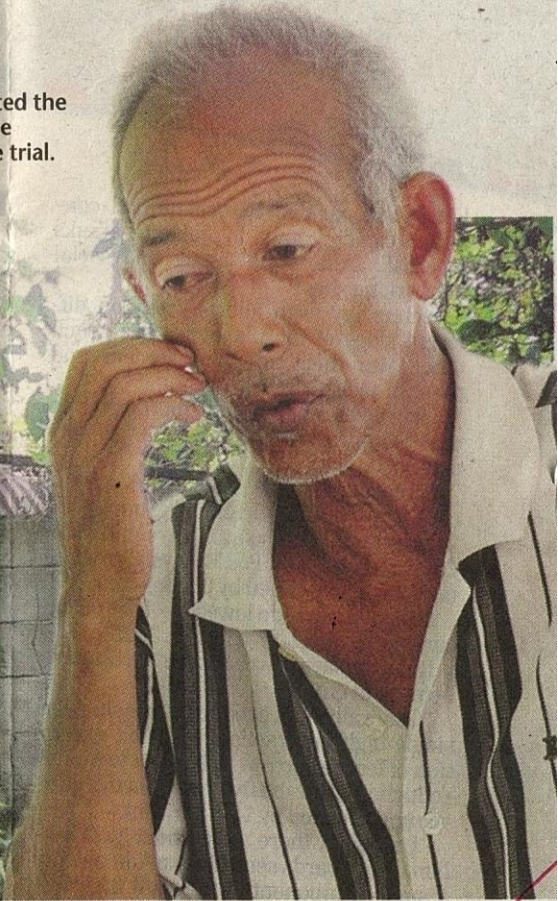
The murder frightened villagers. No one dared to leave their homes after 6pm and by night, the entire village would be very quiet as though it was under curfew. If people needed to go out, they would usually travel in big groups. Some villagers claimed that there were strange noises or lights at the abandoned house but I don't know whether that's true.

Now, many have forgotten about the incident. The younger generation is no longer interested in the story while the older generation prefer not to talk about it. The house is also covered by undergrowth. No one would know it's there unless guided

to it. It has been 17 years since the murder took place but for some of the older folks, the incident would always linger in their minds.

The last I heard about Mona's daughter is that she is being taken care of by her grandmother in Perlis. She apparently tied the knot several years ago.

Anuar Ismail visited the abandoned house (below) after the trial.



their assistant hardly uttered a word. Juraimi lived by himself in a wooden hut not far from Mona's house.

I guess they failed to bond with the villagers due to their different lifestyle. Mona was often seen in tight outfits and her hair was dyed red. Affandi and Juraimi never attended Friday prayers at the mosque in Ulu Dong.

A few days before he was reported missing, Mazlan called me and said he wanted to drop by so I went to the river and brought home some fish. About 10pm, I saw his black Mercedes-Benz passing my house. He headed straight to Mona's house and about three hours later, I again saw the car leaving the village but was unsure who the driver was.

When Mazlan was reported missing on July 2, 1993, it became the talk of the country. Police recovered his body in the wee hours on July 22, 1993.

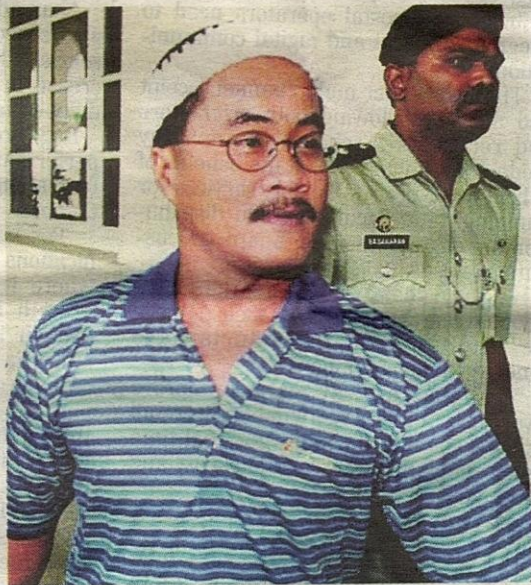
Everyone was shocked to hear about the brutal murder — how he was chopped into 18 parts, before being buried in a 1.8m-deep hole in the storeroom of the house occupied by Mona.

They had cemented the hole and arranged various gardening tools on top of it. After the police dug him out that night, they never closed the hole. It is still there, covered by overgrown bushes.

I was told by a policeman that Mona, her husband and Juraimi became the suspects after they sold Mazlan's Mercedes-Benz to a man in Kuala Lumpur. Juraimi was the first to be nabbed.

When the trial began, I had already stopped my grocery business as I was emotionally disturbed. I was called as a witness at the Temerloh High Court.

The court found all three guilty and sentenced them to death. Mona and the others filed appeals to the Federal Court and in 1999, the court



Juraimi Husin



Mohd Affandi Abdul Rahman