

# THE IRISH TIMES

## Sister of woman jailed in Cyprus says she is confused and terrified

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[Michael Jansen](#)

The Dublin woman jailed in Cyprus last week for making a false accusation of rape against three Irish soldiers remains “confused and terrified” about what has happened to her. Ms Annette Mangan (22), from Tallaght, Co Dublin, began her prison sentence on Friday.

According to her sister, Mangan is “deeply shocked” to find herself in prison. She was sentenced to four months for the false rape allegation, as well as for lying to the Cypriot authorities and wasting police time.

Her sister, Ms Avril Mangan, who is still in Cyprus, told The Irish Times yesterday: “Annette honestly has no memory of what happened, even now.” Mangan, her sister and two girlfriends dined and went out drinking last Wednesday evening. While the other women returned to the flat they had rented at the seaside resort of Aya Napa, Annette Mangan spent the night at the flat of a young Irishman, also on holiday, whom she had met three days earlier. She said she had woken up to find herself in the flat with this man, who has not been named, and three other men. She was being photographed while stretched out asleep in her underwear on a bed. She dressed and ran back to her flat, arriving at about 7 a.m.

“She was so shocked she couldn’t speak. It took 15 minutes to calm her,” Ms Avril Mangan said. “She truly believed she had been raped. She wouldn’t have gone to the police unless she believed that.”

After consulting their tour guide, the Mangans and their friend, Ms Emer Bermingham, went to the Aya Napa police station to report the assault. Ms Bermingham insisted: “She genuinely believed she made a correct accusation but did not really know what happened.”

About 12 hours after giving her statement and submitting to a medical examination, Mangan left the police station. But at 11 p.m. last Thursday night the police took her back to the station from where she rang her friends to say she had lied and that she had been charged. The medical examination had shown there had not been a rape.

Later, she told her sister and friend that the police kept pressing her to admit she had lied because the men had taken photographs of her. Eventually, she signed a statement to that effect on the expectation she would be admonished, perhaps fined and released.

“We were prepared to pay any fine,” Ms Bermingham said yesterday. The three men she accused were detained for eight hours without being charged and released. A complaint has reportedly been made to the Department of Foreign Affairs that they were not permitted to ring a lawyer or an Irish consular representative.

Last Friday, Mangan was taken before a district court, where, Ms Bermingham said, Mangan had about “10 minutes to consult with her lawyer”, who made a plea for understanding and leniency.

Mangan is an inmate of the women’s wing of Nicosia Central Prisons where she shares a 15-bed dormitory with three other women. She remains, in her sister’s words, “confused and terrified”. Her sister, who intends to remain in Cyprus until Mangan is released, and Ms Bermingham have visited her twice, once in the company of the Honorary Irish Consul, Mr Stephanos Stephanou. In his opinion the “trial was too fast, the sentence too harsh and out of proportion”. Mr Stephanou added that early next week he would submit an application to the Attorney General to recommend a presidential pardon, when the AG and the President return from negotiations on a Cypriot political settlement in Switzerland.

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