

## Hungarian "Black Angel" Nurse Gets Nine Years' Jail

Agence France Presse English Mon 02 Dec 2002 International News

BUDAPEST, Dec 2 (AFP) - A Hungarian court Monday sentenced a nurse dubbed the "Black Angel" to nine years in jail after she pleaded guilty to killing patients by lethal injection in a Budapest hospital in 2000 and 2001.

Budapest Municipal Court also banned Timea Faludi, 25, from ever working as a nurse again in a verdict that may be appealed, a court spokesman said.

During a police investigation, Faludi admitted killing at least 40 terminally ill patients, but later withdrew that testimony.

The court established that she arbitrarily gave intravenous injections to seven seriously ill patients between May 2000 and February 2001, and found that all seven patients died shortly afterwards.

But the court found her directly responsible for only three of the deaths, saying it "could not see a direct, proven link between the injections and the deaths" in the remaining cases.

Faludi admitted killing eight people during the trial, but denied that she wanted to kill them, saying she only wanted to ease the patients' suffering.

Euthanasia is illegal in Hungary.

She was convicted on multiple counts of attempted murder and intentionally endangering lives.

After the killings became public, colleagues dubbed the nurse the "Black Angel" because of her long black hair and habitual black clothing.

Faludi administered deadly injections to several terminally ill patients while she thought she was alone on her night shifts, according to the prosecution.

Nurses in Hungary are not allowed to administer intravenous injections without a doctor's order, the court heard.

She was arrested in February 2001 after colleagues became suspicious when patient deaths coincided with her shifts.

Police were called in and found she had illegally administered tranquilisers and pain killers to patients.

According to a court psychiatrist, Faludi had a "well-developed ability to empathise, while internally she felt she was God".

"She alternately put herself in the place of the doctor or in that of the patient and took decisions instead of them," the court said in its verdict.

It also said Faludi's actions could not be viewed as euthanasia.

"The term euthanasia can only be used at all if a patient expresses a wish to have his or her life terminated. In Faludi's cases, this did not happen," the verdict said.