A MAN has spoken of his six-month ordeal to clear his name after being accused of rape.

Sanjay Sarkar was acquitted by jurors at Oxford Crown Court.

The 29-year-old has spoken of the shame of facing the rape accusation and the problems it caused him.

A charity that supports victims of false allegations has also spoken of the trauma endured by people fighting for justice.

Mr Sarkar admitted his frustration and explained how he turned detective to clear his name.

He said: “The law gives so much privilege to the woman.”
“They do not give you that much chance to prove your innocence on the spot.

“It puts your life in hell. I have spent the past six months wondering what will happen if I cannot prove my innocence. It was such a daunting task.”

Mr Sarkar, formerly of Headington but now living in Bicester, was arrested in January and held in police custody for seven hours.

Accused of raping the woman in January, he spent five days in Bullingdon Prison.

Mr Sarkar said: “From the core of my heart I could not rape anyone.

“Police did not want to believe me. They kept on pressuring me, saying I should admit it. The fact is there were no physical marks, no DNA evidence, it was very hard to prove anything.”

Mr Sarkar trawled through phone calls and sat-nav records to prove he could not have committed the rape or been in the locations alleged.

He said of his trial: “I was quite confident but I really fought with my nerves. It was such a daunting experience to give evidence.

“The court system is fine. It gives at least one ample opportunity to prove your innocence, but the way the Crown Prosecution Service and police worked on this case was unacceptable.

“They should give you an ample amount of time to understand the man’s point of view. They just tried to prove this could happen.

“They gave a lot of privilege to the woman, whether she was wrong or right.”

The law gives automatic anonymity to anyone making a claim of rape but not to those accused of it.

Margaret Gardener, the director of the False Allegations Support Organisation (FASO), said: “The trauma of being accused of something they have not done is appalling. We get people ringing our helpline who have come back to us and said, ‘Thank God I spoke to you because I was ready to commit suicide’.”

Mr Sarkar voiced his frustration that the woman cannot be identified, and said the charges caused him difficulty socially.

He said: “It is a very shameful thing to be accused of. People who trusted you treat you with a different respect, and people outside see you have been accused of rape and assume it means you must have done something.”
Describing the moment the jury delivered its verdict, he added: “This is just a breath of new life. I feel I was born again.”

In a response to consultation on the way rapes are prosecuted, the charity said: “By using the term victim at the outset of an accusation it presupposes the accuser is telling the truth.”

A CPS spokesman said: “Based on the witness accounts and evidence available there were significant grounds to prosecute this man, but the jury acquitted him and we respect that decision.”

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