



**MEDIA STATEMENT
THE OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OF MALAYSIA (SUHAKAM)**

EDITOR, NEWS DESK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS STATEMENT

KUALA LUMPUR (10 DECEMBER 2021) - The Children's Commissioner of the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), Prof Dato' Noor Aziah Mohd Awal (CC) is saddened by the recent death of a 5-year-old boy in Taman Nusa Bestari, Johor due to alleged abuse by his mother and stepfather.

It was reported that the couple who has two more children, an 8-year-old daughter and a 2-year-old son, had a prior case under Section 31(1)(a) of the Child Act 2001 for child neglect and Section 15(1)(a) of the Dangerous Drug Act 1952 for drug abuse. The CC is puzzled as to why the 5-year-old boy and two other siblings were still in the couple's care even though they have been charged for child abuse of their eldest daughter, and the case is still pending.

Pursuant to Section 18 of the Child Act 2001, any Protector, Assistant Protector, or police officer who is satisfied on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of care and protection, may take the child into temporary custody, unless the Protector, Assistant Protector, or police officer is satisfied that the taking of proceedings in relation to the child is undesirable in the best interests of the child; or the proceedings are about to be taken by some other person. Article 20(1) of the CRC also states that a child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State. Therefore, it is the CC's view that the children should have been removed and placed in a safer environment by any Protector, Assistant Protector, or police officer before they become victims or have the risk of becoming victims of the couple.

Child abuse and violence are of persisting global concern, including in Malaysia. Based on Berita Harian Online Newspaper dated 8 July 2021, JKM statistics reported that there were 2040 child abuse cases between January to April 2021. JKM also presented its statistic to OCC on 8 April 2021 where it showed that biological mothers are reported to be the highest individuals responsible for child abuse, where it increased to 9.8% (148 cases) in 2020 compared to 2019. Therefore, the CC calls on JKM to take this matter seriously and adopt proper approaches and measures to curb the issues in ensuring that all children are protected from any forms of violence. The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCDD) through the Children Division also is urged to take appropriate intervention as to whether JKM (Protector) had been negligent in its supervision and exercising its powers, as MWFCDD is responsible for the provision of care, protection, and rehabilitation of children to ensure their well-being.

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**Professor Dato' Noor Aziah Hj. Mohd Awal, Children's Commissioner
10 December 2021**

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