



**MEDIA URGED TO OBSERVE CHILD ACT WHEN REPORTING AND  
PUBLISHING ABOUT CHILDREN**

**KUALA LUMPUR (13 AUGUST 2024)** - The Children's Commissioner (CC) expresses deep concern over recent media coverage of a 12-year-old boy who drove a car and a 14-year-old girl who posed as a doctor. Both children were portrayed in a distressing manner, despite not being fully accountable for their actions. The boy's offence resulted from parental negligence, and the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) confirmed that the girl had previously received psychiatric treatment but did not continue with follow-up care.

Section 15(2) of the Child Act 2001 [Act 611] explicitly prohibits the media from reporting or publishing images of children involved in legal conflicts, those under protection and rehabilitation, or those beyond control, at any stage of their case. Violating this section is a criminal offence, punishable by a fine of up to ten thousand ringgit, imprisonment for up to five years, or both, under Section 15(3) of Act 611.

Malaysia, as a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child since 1995, is committed to ensuring that no child is subjected to degrading treatment, even if the child conflicts with the law, as outlined in Article 37 of the Convention. The CC acknowledges that the RMP took measures to protect the identities of the two children; however, the media's reporting and publication were beyond the RMP's control.

The CC strongly urges the media to adhere to Act 611 in all reporting involving children. The persistent media violations without reprimand are a serious concern. Therefore, the CC calls for strict enforcement of Section 15 of Act 611 to prevent such incidents from recurring. The CC is prepared to collaborate with the Malaysian Press Institute to provide training for the media on legal literacy concerning children's rights.

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**Dr Farah Nini Dusuki  
Children's Commissioner  
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