

EDITOR, NEWS DESK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SUHAKAM CONDEMNS ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN AND
CALLS FOR URGENT PROTECTION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUPPORT**

KUALA LUMPUR (19 DECEMBER 2025) - The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) expresses deep concern and condemnation over the reports of alleged sexual abuses involving students with special needs at a school dormitory in Marang, Terengganu. According to the police investigations, the incidents were being probed under Section 14 of the Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017, which provides dedicated criminal offences for sexual misconduct involving children.

SUHAKAM strongly condemns all forms of violence and abuse against children, especially with disabilities. All children are entitled to live, learn, and grow in environments that are safe, nurturing and free from violence, abuse, exploitation and any unwanted touching of their bodies. Allegations of sexual violence involving children, particularly those with disabilities, constitute serious violations of their rights, dignity and safety. Children should be empowered to understand bodily autonomy and their right to refuse any contact that is inappropriate, exploitative and harmful.

SUHAKAM calls for a thorough, impartial, and trauma-informed investigation to ensure accountability and due process is upheld for all parties involved. Importantly, children should be empowered to come forward as witnesses. Section 17 of the Sexual Offences Act 2017 provides a legal framework where the law recognises that children are treated as being competent to give evidence unless a court decides otherwise.

From an international human rights perspective, as a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), as provided for in Article 16 of CRPD, Malaysia is bound to protect, fulfil human rights and prevent any violation of rights against persons with disabilities (PWD), including children, from all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse by taking legislative, social, educational and other measures. It is equally essential that the privacy and dignity of both victims and alleged perpetrators are protected, given their age and vulnerabilities. In line with child protection laws and international human rights standards, the media and public must refrain from revealing identities or speculating on personal details to avoid causing further harm.

In addition to the above, SUHAKAM urges the Ministry of Education and school authorities to implement immediate and robust safeguarding measures to prevent sexual abuse and assault incidents. These include strengthening child protection policies in all learning and residential environments, ensuring accessible reporting channels for students and staff, and providing comprehensive training for educators, supervisors and caregivers on recognising and responding to signs of abuse. Affected children must also receive psychosocial support and specialised care tailored to the needs of students with disabilities.

SUHAKAM further calls for a systematic review of gaps in supervision and protection practices within school settings, including dormitories, to ensure a safe environment for all children, especially those with special needs.



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SUHAKAM urges the Royal Malaysia Police and law enforcement agencies to conduct investigations that are transparent, fair, and centred on the needs of children, emphasising trauma-informed practices and the safety of all children involved. To this end, it is essential for the police to establish guidelines for interacting with PWD in procedures such as taking statements and reports from both victims and perpetrators. SUHAKAM also calls for parents, guardians and caregivers to empower and engage children, including PWD children in an open dialogue about bodily autonomy, consent and how to seek help if they feel unsafe.

SUHAKAM reiterates that violence against children is not only a violation of law but a breach of fundamental human rights. All stakeholders, including Government agencies, law enforcement, education authorities, civil society and the community at large, must work collaboratively toward strengthening child protection, prevention and accountability mechanisms in Malaysia. SUHAKAM stands ready to support constructive efforts that uphold the rights, dignity and safety of every child.

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Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)

Date: 19 December 2025