

PERSATUAN MARTABAT UNTUK SEMUA PETALING JAYA (MARTABAT PJ)

(Formerly known as PPRPJ)

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PRESS STATEMENT: RAPE IS VIOLENCE, NOT MISCONDUCT

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Rape is not sexual misconduct. It is a crime and violence and in the case of the 4 boys raping and recording the violence against a 15-year-old girl on video - it is a miscarriage of justice to call the act sexual misconduct.

Why is it necessary to make a distinction?

Differentiating between “sexual violence” and “sexual misconduct” is not being pedantic but reflects how seriously society and the law treat the act.

Rape is a violent crime, not a moral or behavioural act that can lightly be referred to as a misconduct. It involves physical force, coercion, or lack of consent.

It causes physical, psychological, and emotional harm where in this case the teenager was raped by a few.

We must not treat rape so lightly because it violates a person’s bodily integrity and autonomy.

This rape case was not just physical violence as the rapists had boasted about their crime publicly by posting it online. Using “sexual misconduct” would downplay the severity of the crime, making it sound like mere inappropriate behaviour rather than a serious assault. It downplays rape to refer it as a disciplinary term, used in schools, workplaces, or professional settings where someone violates a code of conduct but not necessarily commits a crime.

For instance, a teacher making sexual comments to a student could be charged with “sexual misconduct” in a disciplinary sense — but “rape” would be “sexual violence” and a criminal act.

Let's get serious about how we view, describe, write and penalise sexual crimes of violence.

Martabat Untuk Semua Petaling Jaya recommends that the government immediately implement comprehensive sexual education to teach our youth about respect, rights and dignity. The fact that the rapists were so audacious as to commit their crime on school grounds and then share it online is a sign that they have no respect for women and girls, believe in power through violence and that sex is an entitlement.

Do not wait till 2027 to start the education process. There is an urgent need to tackle the rapid rise of online misogyny that can create misconceptions about sexual violence

among young people¹. There are enough experts and teaching tools to be incorporated into school curriculum, starting with what is good and bad touch and how to respect each other. This education must extend to our teachers as well as universities.

The rape, happened on October 2, while the survivor was heading to her classroom to collect something that she had left behind, by 2 Form 5 students as 2 others stood by to watch and record the incident. The police report was only made on 11 October by the girl's mother after a teacher had notified her of the video circulating online².

The nature of how the crime was eventually brought to light is a grim reminder of just how many cases of sexual violence goes unreported or is swept under the carpet as a 'personal matter'. It is unacceptable that this continues.

This is not the sole responsibility of the Ministry of Education but those of others such as Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development to begin gender equality education for all civil servants and set standards on equal treatment and human dignity; the Ministry of Home Affairs to extend gender equality education to the police, customs and immigration; and the Ministry of Communications and Multimedia to publicise on all media that Sexual Violence is a Crime and will not be tolerated.

The fight to end sexual violence must be an all government and society approach, otherwise reports of rape, sexual harassment, bullying, suicide and other gender-based violence will continue with impunity.

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ISSUED BY:

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ABOUT MARTABAT PJ

Martabat PJ is a community-based organisation that empowers women, youth, and marginalised groups through rights-based approaches. We advance gender equality by promoting awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and gender-based violence (GBV), while building community leadership and improving health and nutrition among families in Malaysia.

¹ <https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/more-do-tackle-rape-misconceptions-and-lack-understanding-consent-cps-survey-finds>

² <https://www.bharian.com.my/berita/nasional/2025/10/1457215/4-pelajar-tingkatan-5-direman-kes-rogol-berkumpulan-dalam-kelas>