

PRESS STATEMENT

Malaysia & Women's safety: Violent attack on nuns - Symptoms of worsening social inequality

Monday 19 May 2014, by [RETNAM Veronica Anne](#) (Date first published: 15 May 2014).

Women' safety- *Women have real fears walking out in the early hours of the day or later in the night. Even in the middle of the day, women are not spared. It has become increasingly dangerous for women who are targets of petty thefts, snatch thieves. We cannot close our eyes to those whose lives were snatched away as they rode to work or walked home from work. Women's safety cannot be compromised. PSM demands that the government play a critical role calling on the police to be present where they are needed and do their job. Apart from ensuring the safety of our streets and public spaces, there must be programmes which gear towards respect of women.*

It was on March 8th 2014 that PSM made the above statement. On May 14th 2014 two elderly women were attacked in the early hours of the day outside the Church of the Visitation in Seremban. These were not women who were on their way to work but nuns from the Congregation of the Infant Jesus who work with the poor. They had come to start their day in prayer and for morning Mass. But even these women who had chosen a life of austerity were not spared.

One of the women is still in a coma while the other is stable and undergoing treatment in hospital. The level of violence is staggering but incidents such as this have become every day realities for women.

PSM once again demands that urgent action be taken to ensure police presence so that the public, particularly women, can confidently carry on their daily activities. Police become highly visible and come in big numbers when the public gather to voice their constitutional right. They must be as visible and be spread out in public spaces, on our streets, our neighbourhoods.

The public must feel safe wherever they are, be it in places of worship/Church, in car parks, on streets. There must also be proactive national action for those who are in prison, drug addicts and others who may be the "aggressor" as these are often victims of circumstances, very often a result of a society with economic and social inequalities.

PSM has consistently been with the Rakyat in their struggle for fair wages and a fair share of the wealth they have struggled to create. If this isn't addressed, then such attacks as that which happened yesterday morning will continue to take place.

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