



PRESS STATEMENT

Sabah Law Society Participates in Intensive Human Rights Law and Litigation Training on Statelessness and Launches Taskforce to Tackle Statelessness in Sabah

Kota Kinabalu, October 2024 – The Sabah Law Society (SLS), together with the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) and the Bar Council Malaysia, has successfully concluded a four-day Intensive Human Rights Law and Litigation Training from 3rd to 6th October 2024, focusing on the critical issue of statelessness. This initiative was made possible through a grant from the European Union, underscoring the EU’s commitment to advancing human rights and legal advocacy in Malaysia.

The training, held at the Beringgis Beach Resort and Spa, brought together junior lawyers and SUHAKAM officers. Participants engaged in comprehensive sessions aimed at equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to advocate for stateless individuals and marginalized communities. The intensive training covered vital topics including strategic litigation, the Federal Constitution’s provisions on citizenship, and the legal challenges surrounding statelessness.

Throughout the training, participants had the opportunity to engage in role-playing, simulated hearings, and in-depth discussions about the legal and humanitarian aspects of statelessness. This immersive approach ensured that participants not only gained theoretical knowledge but also practical skills in handling human rights cases, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by stateless communities in Sabah.

Both SUHAKAM and the Sabah Law Society emphasized the importance of ensuring human rights for all, particularly the stateless, who are often deprived of basic rights such as education, healthcare, and employment. Tackling this issue head on will not only secure basic human rights for those affected, but also lays the foundation for a more inclusive and just society.

The training was fully funded by the European Union under the “Advancing Human Rights in Malaysia through Strategic Education and Awareness Approaches” initiative. The EU’s support

made this critical training possible, reflecting its continued commitment to human rights and legal advocacy in Malaysia.

Recognizing the urgency of addressing statelessness, the Sabah Law Society is proud to announce the formation of a dedicated taskforce on stateless persons. Members of the taskforce are lawyers who have successfully completed the 4 day training, namely:

1. Ann Gilong
2. Lynnefra Yomin
3. Joey Liew Wen Ting
4. Desmond Liew Zhen Yuan
5. Josselyn Esther Petrus
6. Brenda Rachel Lee Yiao Mei
7. Caroline Lee Ke Ying
8. Artcules Wong Pak Cong
9. Rahimah Binti Majid
10. Ngu Khet Ying
11. Alica Albert
12. Chen Ket Chuin
13. Nur Najjat Binti Baharudin
14. Trevor K Maringking
15. Elvessyah Pertiwi Binti Mohd Putra
16. Hwa Yunn Hui
17. Cassandra Ho Yan Yan
18. Noor Hafizah Binti Anggu
19. Sitti Nur Alam Binti Mappiere
20. Farah Amirah Binti Maksud
21. Jr Thaddeus Jack Kinabalu Thaddeus
22. Ridduan Naping
23. Chan Sze Wei
24. Ariaah Wani Binti Karim
25. Vanieda Shoudy Moosom
26. Veronica Peter

This taskforce will work closely with SUHAKAM, the National Registration Department, and civil society organizations to ensure that no one is left out of the legal system or denied their basic human rights due to lack of documentation. It aims to provide legal assistance to stateless individuals, advocate for policy reforms, and engage in strategic litigation to secure their citizenship rights.

The Sabah Law Society through this taskforce, continue to work tirelessly to bring justice to the stateless and marginalized.

As part of the training, lawyers were encouraged to sign a pledge committing to take up cases

related to statelessness. The Sabah Law Society urges all lawyers who participated in the training to not only sign this pledge but to act upon it by providing pro bono services to those in need and standing up for the rights of the stateless in our communities.

The Sabah Law Society remains committed to its mission of ensuring access to justice for all, regardless of their legal status. Through the new taskforce, the Society aims to tackle the root causes of statelessness and ensure that no one in Sabah is left behind without a voice, an identity, or the basic rights to which they are entitled.

Mohamed Nazim Maduarin

President

Sabah Law Society

6th October 2024