

What's going on?

Zara Qairina: A Call for Truth, Accountability, and Reform

The Sabah Law Society expresses our deepest condolences to the family of Zara Qairina Mahathir, a 13-year-old child whose passing has shaken Sabah and the nation.

Her death did not occur in a vacuum. It has raised disturbing questions surrounding school safety, student welfare, and institutional response. It also led the public to wonder whether the systems meant to protect children are functioning as they should.

The Sabah Law Society is aware that the family has appointed legal counsel, and we fully respect their right to pursue justice through lawful means. We are also monitoring the progress of this case closely and will continue to do so.

Our stand is clear: This case must not be swept under the rug and it must not be forgotten.

We call for a thorough, transparent, and independent investigation.

Every relevant fact must be brought to light, and all procedures reviewed with honesty and care.

Where improvements are needed, they must be identified and acted upon in the spirit of responsibility and reform.

This is not about blame — it is about ensuring no child is left vulnerable.

We urge all institutions involved to respond with courage and integrity. There must be no room for defensiveness, silence, or delay when a child has died under suspicious circumstances.

We note the statement by Sabah Police Commissioner Datuk Jauteh Dikun that the investigation is in its final stage and will be referred to Bukit Aman for further analysis. It was also reported that over 60 witnesses have been interviewed and that no possibility including bullying is being ruled out. **These are necessary developments. The public now expects the investigation to be carried through with objectivity, transparency, and procedural rigour.**

What happened in this tragic case must mark a turning point in our system. A change is going to come, because the reality is this:

“If our children are not safe, nothing else matters.”

For the sake of our nation's children, we must choose not to look away and we must begin demanding better.

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