

Orphans physically and sexually assaulted

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EXCLUSIVE

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MALACCA: Orphans at a boys' home in Durian Daun here are said to be going through harrowing times after two of them were allegedly assaulted by a warden while another is believed to have been sodomised by an older boy.

The assault case caught the attention of the state government as well as Deputy Education Minister Datuk Chong Sin Woon after the two - aged 13 and 16 - were hospitalised on March 8.

The warden is alleged to have severely disciplined the boys after they were found stealing and smoking at the home, which has a history of sexual abuse and bullying by a caretaker dating back to 2004.

The severely injured 13-year-old boy remains warded at the Malacca Hospital and his condition is reported to be stable.

The assault case came just two days after another 13-year-old resident, who is from Penang, lodged a police report against a senior for sodomising him.

State Welfare Department director Burhanuddin Bachik, when contacted, said his department had lodged a police report on the assault case.

"We have also submitted our internal investigation papers to the headquarters for them to decide on the type of disciplinary action against the warden," he said.

The authorities, he said, were also investigating and they expect legal action against the perpetrator.

Burhanuddin said the department had never covered up any mistreatment or sexual assaults of residents at the home.

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Datuk Latipah Omar

"Action had previously been taken against the staff and wardens after reports of abuse were received," he said.

State Women, Family Development and Welfare Committee chairman Datuk Latipah Omar said the warden's severe punishment of the children was unacceptable.

"The boys shouldn't be treated in such a manner and we want action against the warden," she said.

Latipah said the authorities would also be asked to probe previous allegations, including sodomy, made by the residents.

Chong, when met during an event here, urged the state government to protect the interest of the residents.

A former employee of the home, Shaari Soleh, 56, alleged that boys were cruelly treated and some were sodomised by the staff.

Shaari, who worked there for five years until 2014, claimed that in one case, chilli powder was stuffed into the anus of a resident as a form of punishment.

In 2012, Muhammad Khairul Hafiz, president of the Welfare and Social Organisation, an NGO, alleged that one of the caretakers had performed oral sex on three boys of the home.

He claimed that such abuses had happened in the facility since 2004.

The home's caretakers were unavailable for comment.