



PRESS RELEASE

BASELESS ALLEGATIONS OF UNLAWFUL METHODS OF JUDICIAL EXECUTION & ISSUANCE OF CORRECTION DIRECTIONS UNDER THE PROTECTION FROM ONLINE FALSEHOODS AND MANIPULATION ACT

MHA states categorically that the statement by Malaysia-based Lawyers for Liberty (“LFL”) on 16 January 2020 contains untrue, baseless and preposterous allegations about the use of unlawful methods in judicial executions conducted in Changi Prison.

2. In the statement, LFL falsely asserts that:

“prison officers were instructed to carry out the following brutal procedure whenever the rope breaks during a hanging, which happens from time to time.

a) The prison officer is instructed to pull the rope around the neck of the prisoner towards him.

b) Meanwhile, another prison officer will apply pressure by pulling the body in the opposite direction.

c) The first officer must then kick the back of the neck of the prisoner with great force in order to break it.

d) The officers are told to kick the back of the neck because that would be consistent with death by hanging.

e) The officers are told not to kick more than 2 times, so that there will be no tell-tale marks in case there is an autopsy.

f) Strict orders are also given not to divulge the above to other prison staff not involved in executions.”

3. LFL also made spurious allegations that prison officers were “given special training to carry out the brutal execution method”, that the Singapore Government approved of these “unlawful methods”, and suggested that specific measures were adopted to cover up these methods. These allegations are entirely unfounded.

4. No effort is spared to ensure that all judicial executions in Singapore are carried out in strict compliance with the law. All judicial executions are conducted in the presence of the Superintendent of the Prison and a medical doctor, among others. The law also requires a Coroner (who is a Judicial Officer of the State Courts) to conduct an inquiry within 24 hours of the execution to satisfy himself that the execution was carried out duly and properly. For the record, the rope used for judicial executions

has never broken before, and prison officers certainly do not receive any “special training to carry out the brutal execution method” as alleged. Any acts such as those described in the LFL statement would have been thoroughly investigated and dealt with.

5. These scurrilous allegations of misconduct follow a series of sensational and untrue stories previously published by LFL. LFL has been publishing various falsehoods to seek attention in hopes of getting Malaysian prisoners, who have been convicted of drug trafficking and sentenced to death in Singapore, off the death penalty.

6. Those who traffic drugs in Singapore, harm and destroy the lives of countless Singaporeans. These traffickers must be prepared to face the consequences of their actions.

Issuance of Correction Direction under the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (“POFMA”)

7. Regrettably, there are some individuals and groups in Singapore who are spreading LFL’s latest allegations. These include individuals like Kirsten Han, and online pages like The Online Citizen (TOC). Yahoo Singapore has also shared an article containing these allegations by its Malaysian counterpart on its Facebook page.

8. Accordingly, the Minister for Home Affairs has instructed the POFMA Office to issue a Correction Direction against LFL’s statement on its website, Kirsten Han’s Facebook post that shared LFL’s statement, TOC’s online article that contained the falsehoods and Yahoo Singapore’s Facebook post which shared an article that contained the falsehoods. They will be required to carry a correction notice alongside their posts or articles, stating that their posts or articles contain falsehoods.

9. For facts of the case, please refer to the Factually article “Corrections and clarifications regarding falsehoods posted by Lawyers for Liberty” (<https://www.gov.sg/article/factually-clarifications-on-falsehoods-posted-by-lawyers-for-liberty>).

**MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
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