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Malaysia: Attempted killing of human rights defender, lawyer and LGBTIQ+ activist Siti Zabedah Kasim

On 21 July 2023, an attempt to kill the human rights defender **Siti Zabedah Kasim (Siti Kasim)** took place, which she survived. An improvised explosive device (IED) was planted on the human rights defender's car and was discovered behind her tyre by a mechanic in a car service workshop in Bangsar.

[Siti Kasim](#) is a human rights lawyer and a LGBTIQ+ rights defender. She has defended Orang Asli indigenous communities vindicating their land rights against mining and logging activities in Peninsular Malaysia. Siti Kasim is also a prominent advocate for the LGBTIQ+ community in the country.

The explosive device was confirmed to be an IED by the Bomb Disposal Unit. Although the attacker remains unknown, the Inspector-General of Police has stated that "Placing the bomb is a serious crime and amounts to attempted murder," while the police are trying to trace the suspect through fingerprints and other evidence.

Siti Kasim has [previously received death threats](#) for advocating for LGBTIQ+ rights and speaking out against the rise of religious extremism in Malaysia. However, this recent incident is the most serious she has ever faced. As a result, the woman human rights lawyer is worried for her and her family's safety.

On 23 July 2017, Siti Kasim filed a police report at the Sentul police station, Kuala Lumpur, after death, rape and acid attack threats were published against her online relating to her work for LGBTIQ+ rights. On 13 June 2017, Siti Kasim was informed that she was to be charged under section 186 of the Penal Code for "obstructing a public servant in discharge of his public functions" in light of a raid which was carried out on an event hosted by transgender women by the Federal Territories Islamic Religious Department (Jawi) in Kuala Lumpur on 3 April 2016.

Front Line Defenders expresses grave concern at the threats and attack on the life of human rights defender Siti Kasim, which it believes are solely motivated by her peaceful and legitimate work in defence of LGBTIQ+ rights in Malaysia. Front Line Defenders is seriously concerned for the physical and psychological well-being of the human rights defender and her family.

Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in Malaysia to:

1. Carry out an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation into the attack against Siti Kasim, with a view to publishing the results and bringing those responsible to justice in accordance with international standards;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Siti Kasim;
3. Endeavour to cease targeting of all human rights defenders in Malaysia and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions and attacks.