

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_header\_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

**Notice:** Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

**Notice:** Undefined index: et\_header\_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public\_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

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# **MALAYSIA: Death penalty to be abolished after four years of debate**

## **Death penalty to be abolished in Malaysia**

Following a debate that began in 2018, Malaysia's cabinet agreed to reform the country's criminal justice system. About 73 per cent of people on death row were convicted for drug offences. Other Southeast Asian countries continue to execute.

By Steve Suwannarat

Asia News (10.06.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3tw1tCU> – Malaysia's cabinet has agreed to abolish the death penalty, which was applied in the case of 33 offences, 11 of which carried a mandatory sentence.

The debate over abolition began in earnest in 2018 and ended on Wednesday when the cabinet examined a report on alternative penalties. The decision is part of a broader reform of the criminal justice system, from top to bottom.

The death penalty will be replaced by other sanctions enforced by the courts, this according to Parliament and Law Minister Wan Junadi bin Tuanku Jaafar.

"This action is very significant in ensuring that the amendments to the related Acts take into account the principles of 'proportionality' and constitutionality in whatever proposals to the government later," Minister Wan Junaidi said.

Further studies will be carried out together by the Attorney-General's Chambers, the legal affairs division of the Prime Minister's Department, and other stakeholder ministries and departments, he added.

The government will vet alternative sentences for the 11 offences that carry mandatory death penalty, including, the

minister noted, drug trafficking. Consultations will also cover the other 22 offences in which the courts can impose the death penalty at their discretion.

According to Amnesty International, 469 executions took place in Malaysia since it gained independence in 1957 with 1,281 people on death row, 73 per cent convicted of drug offences.

Only the Philippines and Cambodia have abolished the death penalty among the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Malaysia is a founding member.

Three member states – Brunei, Laos, Myanmar – stopped executing people at least 25 years ago, and are de facto abolitionist; however, in Myanmar, the military junta that seized power in February 2021 recently announced plans to **execute four opposition leaders**.

In the other ASEAN countries, death sentences have been carried out in recent years. In addition to Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and (which has observer status), still retain the death penalty. Timor-Leste, which has observer status in ASEAN, abolished the practice.

*Photo credits: Asia News*

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