SUARAM views the claim by former Inspector-General of Police, Tan Sri Musa Hassan at Malaysian Crime Watch Task Force's (MyWatch) press conference carries a serious threat to the independence of the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM).

The PDRM is under the purview of Ministry of Home Affairs but the act of interfering into the day to day affairs of PDRM is unacceptable. As claimed by Musa Hassan, Hishammuddin has without his knowledge, given instructions directly to junior police officers and a district police chief. The Minister's action of bypassing the IGP by exercising his powers as a Minister is the root cause of SUARAM and CSOs' concerns. Clearly it amounts to tacit approval by Musa Hassan back then, a misconduct in allowing the force to be political tool of the ruling government. We do have good reasons for pushing for the setting up of Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC) to regulate the PDRM.

SUARAM views the revelation as damning and warrants the government to probe into the matter as it involves the independence of PDRM and the usage of tax payers' resources to fund its operation. It is likely that there is manipulation in substantial degree over the PDRM.

The familiar revelation of extra-judicial manipulation of PDRM and other enforcement agencies usually by former high ranking officials must be taken seriously given the gravity of the allegations. This is especially since Musa Hassan had in the past vehemently maintain that the PDRM is independent, but now he contradicts himself and has proved the claims by civil

societies (CSOs) that the PDRM is controlled by the state. Musa Hassan had the opportunity to reform the police force but he had failed to do so. In fact, he had failed to engage with SUARAM or CSOs to bring changes within the force.

It is time to address the independence and credibility of PDRM for the benefit and betterment of Malaysia. Looking like puppets for the ruling government, the PDRM has a long way to redemption if it is motivated enough to earn the long-lost respect of the people, but the PDRM must start now.