

# Master English, Syariah judges told

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**SHAH ALAM, Mon.** — Syariah Court judges have been urged to improve their grasp of the English language in order to become more efficient and professional in their work.

Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Samsudin Osman said this was important as they might need to make references to law books written in English when handling cases.

He said by mastering the language, they would be able to increase their general knowledge, especially since the world was heading towards globalisation.

"You should keep up with current affairs as it will help when you are dealing with certain cases," he said at the opening of the fifth annual conference of Syariah court officials today.

Samsuddin said the same applied to prosecutors, lawyers, research officers and others involved in the Syariah courts.

He also urged them to increase their knowledge of Arabic, as they might also need to make references to various Islamic laws, which were mainly written in Arabic.

He also said the e-syariah portal project would be linked to government departments dealing with Syariah court cases.

He said all aspects of the portal

were expected to be fully operational by June 2005.

The portal, launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in February, will be linked to the departments like the Malaysian Islamic Development Department, National Registration Department, Immigration Department, Royal Malaysian Police and the Legal

Affairs Division of the Prime Minister's Department.

"They will also be linked with state religious departments so that there will not be overlapping cases," Samsudin said.

He said the RM39 million portal would also make it easier for Muslims and law practitioners to register and review the status of cases.