

Non-Muslims and syariah: Civil Courts at fault
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I am rather surprised with the views expressed by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Office Ismail Khir Bahrom that a non-Muslim lawyer cannot represent a non-Muslim in the Syariah Court.

The only reason a non-Muslim has to go to the Syariah court is because the Civil Court has, in my opinion, shirked its responsibility by deciding that a decision on a non-Muslim's case on something perceived to be an "Islamic" issue must be decided by the Syariah Court.

Non-Muslims are therefore left in limbo. They are stuck with civil court judges who refuse to hear their case on the merits and politicians who refuse to change the laws to avoid these injustices.

Now, they are told they must go to the Syariah courts but that they cannot have their non-Muslim lawyers to represent them! The reason cited by the honourable minister - that non-Muslim lawyers cannot be cited for possible contempt of court - shows clearly that actually non-Muslims should not be forced to go even as litigants to the Syariah court.

The confused and confusing reply by the minister shows clearly that the government knows the injustice it is forcing on non-Muslims, but is simply refusing to help provide opportunities for these helpless souls obtaining proper justice!

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