

**Coming soon - a guidebook for Native Court
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The Sabah courts do not foresee any problem in producing a guidebook for native court proceedings, Chief Judge of Sabah and Sarawak Richard Malanjum said.

As there were no written laws to address cases based on certain customs of the natives, he said a guidebook would facilitate the intention of the Sabah courts to formalise native courts, as part of the judicial system in the state.

"We have actually compiled reports of all the Court of Appeal editions and the district courts, as reference for native court proceedings.

"But those are just references. Native courts deal with personal matters based on the customs of an area.

"For example, what is applicable in Papar cannot be applied in Tambunan. So, that is why, a guidebook can be useful," he told reporters after witnessing the admission of 20 advocates to the Native Court of Appeal in a special ceremony held in Kota Kinabalu today.

Malanjum, who is also Native Court of Appeal president, said the native court was also an important part of the judicial system in Sabah as 75 percent of natives brought their matters to native courts, instead of the common courts.

"We have a civil judicial system and a syariah judicial system. Now, we want to formalise the native courts to become a Native Court Judicial Department," he added.

On the admission of the 20 advocates, Malanjum said they would be the first batch of lawyers to handle native court cases in judicial robes.

He said the appearance of the lawyers would lift the image of native courts from what was once perceived as a 'kampung' court, to a well-established judicial institution.

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