

## Act 355 Amendment: A Self-Inflicted Hardship for Clinging to False Hope

### News:

More voices were raised against the proposed amendment of Malaysian Shariah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 (Revised - 1988), a.k.a. Act 355 leading to its potential re-tableting in October 2015, when the Parliament sitting reconvenes. On September 18<sup>th</sup>, The Federation of Hokkien Associations Malaysia have expressed their concerns to the new proposed bill citing that many aspects of the Bill, remain unclear, especially in areas relating to non-Muslims [The Malay Mail, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016]. This adds to the never-ending salvo of oppositions to the amendment championed by Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS), in which by virtue, do not have any substantial significance at all towards the implementation of Islamic Shariah in Malaysia, a matter very dear to the party and Muslims in Malaysia as a whole. Earlier in the month, the issue went viral when an insulting gesture was passed on by a controversial lawyer Siti Kassim during one of public discussion forum session while opposing the proposed bill.

### Comment:

For Muslims in Malaysia, the idea of having Shariah Law implemented is not an outlandish cry. They predominantly still hold dear to an idea where Islam reigns supreme in life however the subject is not something that is so prevalent. This is however among the pivotal element of PAS political agenda. To an extent, it is the core reason for the party existence in Malaysian politics. It therefore disheartened us to see that this issue has been manipulated by all the political parties on both sides of the bench for their own benefits while at the same time, as an effect, Muslims are getting further away from the true implementation of Islam in their life. The crux of the matter in this particular issue are the following:

1) The amendment of Act 355 will not give way for the implementation of Islamic Shariah as sincere Muslims in Malaysia hope for. The proposed amendments are meant to only increase the powers of Shariah courts in regards to offences already provided in the 1965 Act. In other words, constitutionally, the civil law still reigns higher and the status quo remains the same.

2) The amendment further strengthens the secular nature of the current dual legal system imposed on Muslims in Malaysia.

3) The amendment creates false hope to sincere Muslims who have been working hard to see the re-implementation of Islam in every aspect of human lives. It gives hope that the re-establishment of an Islamic way of life can be achieved within the current construct of corrupt secular democratic system of governance.

O Muslims in Malaysia. You should see how the unbelievers are united against you in any matter regarding the implementation of Islam as the solution and the true system of life. They did not give any quarter to you even though realistically this issue is just about having an extra breather to an already constricted Islamic rule within the current system. It is time for you to realize that the only way to bring back the longed Islamic Shariah Law into your life is to follow the path shown by the Prophet Muhammad (saw), by the re-establishment of Khilafah to govern all aspect of human lives. Efforts to establishing Islamic Law in the current incompatible system only further entrench us in false hope of and keep us away from the real revival we yearn for. For the Prophet (saw) has reminded us:

*Abu Said Al-Khudri reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «لَتَتَّبِعَنَّ سَنَنَ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ شِبْرًا بِشِبْرٍ وَذِرَاعًا بِذِرَاعٍ حَتَّىٰ لَوْ سَلَكَوا جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ لَسَلَكْتُمُوهُ»* **“You will surely follow in the ways of those before you, span by span and cubit by cubit, so much so that if they were to enter an iguana's hole, you would follow after them.”** (Bukhari)

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