

House Bill 6337: Creation of Shari'a courts in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and major Philippine cities

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DAVAO CITY, May 26, 2009 –To help Filipino Muslims resolve their legal conflicts in relation to their distinct personal and family laws, a lawmaker from the 1st District of Sultan Kudarat is urging for the passage of a measure seeking to create shari'a courts in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and areas outside of it.

Cong. Datu Pax S. Mangudadatu, author of House Bill 6337 said that the bill aims to strengthen the shari'a district court system by establishing shari'a courts in areas where there are countless Filipino Muslims.

Mangudadatu added that establishing shari'a courts in the country is mandated under Presidential Decree 1083, although at present shari'a courts are only in limited areas of Mindanao and the ARMM.

He added that due to the limited access of Muslims to shari'a courts the situation also becomes inconvenient and difficult especially in solving personal legal problems.

“There are Muslims' communities all over the country especially in urban centers. That is why the limited access to shari'a courts make it more difficult for them to avail,” he said.

Under the proposed bill, five judicial districts with one shari'a district court and one judge each shall be created in the provinces of Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan and Isabela City in Lanao del Sur, Marawi City in Maguindanao and Cotabato City.

Apart from that, six special judicial districts, each to have one shari'a district court, shall be established in the provinces of Lanao del Norte, Iligan City, North Cotabato, South Cotabato and General Santos City and the ninth shari'a district in Metro Manila among others.

The measure also provides that permanent stations or offices of shari'a district courts shall be created in the ARMM particularly in the first district of Jolo, Bongao, Isabela City, Marawi and Cotabato City. Those permanent offices outside the ARMM shall be put up in Zamboanga City, General Santos City, Metro Manila and Cebu. (Mark S. Ventura)

Source: [CBCP News](#)