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**Don't gazette this Bill**

[FATIMAH AHMAD Petaling Jaya](#)

**Jan 3:**

**IN 1994, Parliament passed the Domestic Violence Act (DVA). It took two years to gazette and implement the law because of objections from certain authorities.**

They did not want the Act to apply to Muslims because they said Islam allowed a Muslim man to beat his wife or because they considered domestic violence a family matter, and therefore it should come under the Islamic Family Law at the state level.

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The DVA was a just law that faced objections.

The Islamic Family Law Amendments Bill recently passed by Parliament is an unjust law.

It would be wise for the Government to refrain from gazetting this Bill and ensure that it is not enforced. The 1984 Islamic Family Law should remain in use. As for the States that have adopted and gazetted this new enactment, a moratorium should be placed on the enforcement of this unjust law.

In the 1970s, when the Government decided to reform the Family Law governing marriage and divorce among non-Muslims, it established a parliamentary select committee that travelled all over the country to hold public hearings. The result was a new law that recognised the equality of men and women in marriage and divorce.

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Muslims should also benefit from this process of democratic consultation to draft a new Muslim Family Law that upholds the spirit and substance of justice and equality in Islam.

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I strongly support the call for a parliamentary select committee to hear the testimonies of women and their experiences with the Syariah system. This will provide invaluable feedback in drafting any law.

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