

Johor has most underage non-Muslim divorce cases

JOHOR had the highest number of divorce cases involving underage non-Muslim couples, recording six out of the overall 18 cases nationwide since 2016, says the Home Ministry.

A total of six underage divorces, or 33.3%, occurred in the southern state from 2016 until June 30 this year, followed by Sarawak, which

recorded five divorces, or 27.8%, of cases during the same period.

Kuala Lumpur had three cases, or 16.7%, out of the overall figure, Pahang had two cases, or 11%, while Perak and Selangor had one case each, or 5.6% each.

"The National Registration Department (NRD) is only responsible for registering the marriage and

divorce for non-Muslim couples in line with the Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) 1976 Act.

"The NRD updates a marriage record through a divorce decree or annulment of marriage issued by the High Court for non-Muslim couples.

"For the marriage and divorce of Muslim couples, this is under the

responsibility of the respective states' Islamic religious departments," said the Home Ministry in a written reply dated Aug 5.

This was to a question by Abdul Latiff Abdul Rahman (PAS-Kuala Krai) who asked in Dewan Rakyat about the number of divorces involving underage couples according to states.

Under civil law, non-Muslims are allowed to marry from the age of 18 but girls can marry as early as 16 provided that they have the permission of the state's Chief Minister or Menteri Besar.

Customary laws in Sabah and Sarawak set the minimum age for marriage at 18 for boys and 16 for girls.