

Judges reject bid to make Islamic marriages legally binding

From the [The Telegraph](#) understands that Ms Akhter is now considering taking her case to the Supreme Court.

Charles Hale QC of 4PB, who represented Ms Akhter, said: "Thousands of women, usually Muslim women believe that they lawfully marry in this country each year by undertaking a religious ceremony only. Many of them (and its usually Muslim women) do not know in fact that, no matter how many people attend, no matter how public an expression of the marital contract, that they are not in fact lawfully married in accordance with the laws of England and Wales."

This used to be well known. I recall both ceremonies being organised amongst colleagues and the families of girls I attended school with. As an official of the Lord Chancellor's department I recall at least one case where the Civil Marriage took place, the bride preferred that she not co-habit with the groom until their religious marriage had taken place. It was his responsibility to organise it, and when he failed to do so she eventually obtained an legal annulment for his refusal to consummate the marriage, knowing that a religious ceremony was a moral but not legal requirement.

That it is no longer well known is a failure of the authorities to make this clear to Muslim women, a pandering to Muslim culture and a reluctance to put Sharia law in its place as nothing to do with the law of the land.

If campaigning bodies are so concerned then let them encourage Muslim women and their families to demand a Civil marriage ceremony first, and the Mosques and Imans demand (as do the Sikhs) to see the valid certificate before they perform the

religious ceremony. It isn't rocket science. And it would prevent child marriage and polygamy as well. Or have I hit on the reason they don't do this already?