

HISTORY OF
PERKIM AND ITS
INVOLVEMENT
IN GLOBAL
COMMUNITY SERVICES
PAGE 3



ONE GOD,
ONE HUMANITY,
ONE RELIGION,
MANY PROPHETS
PAGE 21



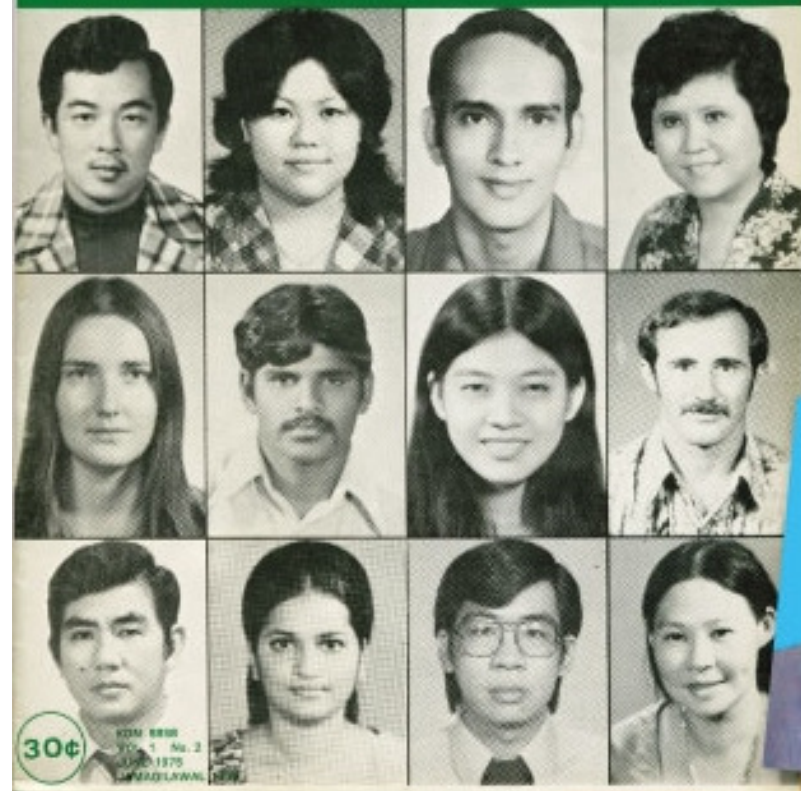
SHARIA FAMILY
LAW IN MALAYSIA
- GENDER EQUALITY,
IS IT A MYTH?
PAGE 33



Islamic Herald

وَلْتَصْبِرُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْأَكْثَرَ إِنَّهُمْ أَلْفٌ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَاسْتَحْذَرُوا فِيهِمُ الْخَوَافَ

"And hold fast, all of you together, to the table of Abrah, and do not separate. And remember Abrah's favour unto you: how ye were enemies and He made friendship between your hearts so that ye became as brethren by His grace."



30¢

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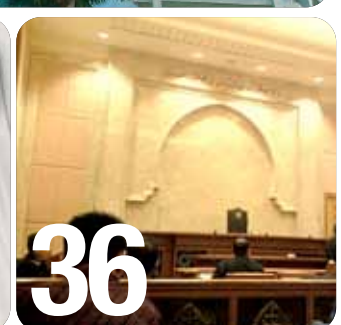
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DISCLAIMER

The Islamic Herald is published by the Muslim Welfare Organisation of Malaysia (PERKIM). It contains articles addressing Muslim affairs in Malaysia, and throughout the entire Muslim world. Through its presentation, it endeavours to promote awareness and understanding of issues affecting the Muslim Ummah in all its geographic and cultural diversity. The Islamic Herald is also a magazine covering news and activities in the field of Da'wah, social, economic and political. The Islamic Herald welcomes relevant articles by authors wishing to publish their work. Articles and correspondence may be addressed to: The Editor, Islamic Herald, at the above address. The Editor reserves the right to edit any contribution without prior notice. Articles will not be returned. Views expressed in the Islamic Herald do not necessarily reflect those of PERKIM, the Editor or the Magazine.

Editorial

We are at the crossroads. The Muslim Ummah everywhere is challenged to reaffirm our faith and belief like in no other period in more recent history. It is therefore incumbent upon institutions like ours to redouble our endeavour in order to fulfill our mission in Da'wah in as many fields as possible.

While we should revamp and renew our approaches, we should also go back to the drawing board and re-strategize on how we can become more effective in reaching out to the Ummah and to non-Muslim alike and re-orienting our capabilities to live the life of a fully functioning Muslim today.

Our efforts should also be significantly increased in propagating a better understanding of Islam so that it can blunt the forces of adversaries who are now ferociously attacking our Islamic way of life. The kind of ferocity is so comprehensive that it embraces the realms of political, economic/financial, social and utilizing all means of technology to subjugate our Muslim brothers and sisters.

Worse, they are now attacking our educational processes, forcefully re-writing our curriculum so that in one generation, the Muslim of the future may not have the same kind of zeal and commitment of the previous generations. We trust in Allah (S.W.T) that this will not happen as we have been promised, and accordingly we believe so.

We call upon all members and staff to rededicate ourselves to the noble mission of PERKIM and wish to declare ourselves ready to change in meeting the challenges of the unknown. Insha'Allah, we will succeed through being constantly conscious of the Al-Mighty Creator and mindful that it is only because of Him that we exist.

Allah S.W.T. says:

And We have fastened every man's deeds to his neck, and on the Day of Resurrection, We shall bring out for him a book which he will find wide open. (It will be said to him): "Read your book. You yourself are sufficient as a reckoner against you this Day. Whoever goes right, then he goes right only for the benefit of his ownself. And whoever goes astray, then he goes astray to his own loss. No one laden with burdens can bear another's burden. And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger (to give warning)."

(Al-Isra: 13-15)



BY : Datuk Hj Zainal Abidin bin Abdul Kadir
Currently the head of PERKIM's Dakwah and Innovation Bureau. Formerly the Malaysian Ambassador to Egypt, Director General of Malaysia Islamic Dept (JAKIM), Director of Information Ministry Psychological Unit (JASA), Director of Religious Education in Education Ministry, Member of Kelantan State Assembly, teacher trainer, religious teacher.

HISTORY OF PERKIM

AND ITS INVOLVEMENT IN GLOBAL COMMUNITY SERVICE

PERKIM is an Islamic Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) established in 19 August 1960 by the late Almarhum Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, a prince from Kedah turned politician who negotiated and obtained independence for Malaya from the Colonial British in 31 August 1957. PERKIM's inception three years after independence was to spearhead the spirit of volunteerism in Islamic welfare works. The philosophy of PERKIM is to practice the virtues of Islam, or to walk the talk, to highlight to non-Muslims that Islam is a caring and humanitarian religion as opposed to the stereotypical image of Islam as cruel and oppressive.

PERKIM focuses its activities on three areas namely welfare, religion and education. Welfare or "kebijakan" is the core business of PERKIM and community service is part of PERKIM's welfare activity.

History of PERKIM

The history of PERKIM is in itself the history of Islamic missionary work or dakwah in Malaya (1957 – 1963) and Malaysia (1963 – now). PERKIM is considered as amongst the leading pioneer dakwah and charity bodies in the country. As the founder of PERKIM, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra (1903 – 1990), being a former District Officer (1931 – 1942), DPP and a magistrate (1947 – 1951) turned politician, was a man of the people, well versed with socio-cultural problems that beset the newly independent country.

In the course of his involvement as a public administrator for almost 15 years YTM Tunku recognized that the diversity in race, religion, language and culture is a time bomb that awaits explosion if a common unifying factor was not promoted. Therefore after winning the first federal

“ PERKIM is considered as amongst the leading pioneer dakwah and charity bodies in the country. ”

general election in 1955, Tunku initiated a study to find a solution to this problem. A year later in 1956 the Tun Razak Report recommended a common education and language policy as a factor that could unify the population. So the Government set up and promoted the common National School system, National standard curriculum and the National



Tunku (second from left) enjoying an evening walk with his close friends, Ong Yoke Lin (extreme right), Lim Yew Hock and T.H. Tan (extreme left), October 1958. All three of them would eventually convert to Islam. Ong Yoke Lin and Lim Yew Hock adopted the name Omar, while T.H. Tan assumed the name Mohamad Tahir. (NST).

Language as a tool of unity. It was in the national school system that the majority of the children could receive common formal education and master the national language, based on the Malay language. However, there is a provision in the Constitution that allows non-Malay parents to send their children to vernacular schools of their choice. This would separate the non-Malays from mainstream national education system until today.

Beside common education in national schools and using a common language Bahasa Melayu, Tunku believed that a common religion could help to unite Malaya's diverse population. It is said that Tunku's opinion was inspired by the situation in Mecca during his Haj pilgrimage where he observed the diverse races from the whole world mingling together in harmony at the same place Mecca united under one religion of Islam. At the Arafah he saw them, black and white, Arab and Ajam together for the Wukuf. Allah swt gave Tunku the inspiration to set up a body to promote Islam as a powerful unifying force.

Soon after performing the Haj on 19 August 1960 he asked Mubin Sheppard to call several friends from different races for a meeting at his official residence at Brockman Road. At the evening meeting were SOK Ubaidullah and Ali Mericar (Indian Muslims), Ibrahim Ma (Chinese Muslim), Mubin Shepard (English Muslim), several of his colleagues from UMNO such as Jaafar Albar and Syed Nasir (of Arab descent), and a few others with religious education. In the informal meeting Tunku proposed the idea to form PERKIM. They discussed and agreed to help

“PERKIM focuses its activities on three areas namely welfare, religion and education. Welfare or “kebajikan” is the core business of PERKIM and community service is part of PERKIM’s welfare activity.”

him to use Islam as a platform to bring unity to the nation.

Through Mubin Shepard, who was then the Director General of Archive and Museum, Tunku sought the advice of Ibrahim Ma who was then The China Ambassador to Singapore, on his opinion how best to preach Islam to the Chinese in Malaya. He also sought the advice of Dr Muhammad Rauf and Taqiyuddin Qandil (both were Egyptian lecturers at Kolej Islam Kelang, KIK) to draft a proposal to set up Islamic classes for the converts. Many lecturers of KIK volunteered to become teachers on a part-time basis. These classes later expanded to become dakwah school and then in 1975 became PERKIM Training Institute of Dakwah (IDIP) in Petaling Jaya. During this time many lecturers from Islamic Teachers College and University of Malaya volunteered. In 1991 it moved to a permanent campus in Pengkalan Chepa, Kelantan. Every year IDIP produces about 50 graduates, most of them converts from all over the country and a few from neighbouring countries.



كونڤينشن دعوه اسلام فكرم-اوسيا-بينا ٧-٨ هاجبولن ربيع الاول، ١٣٩٧
KONBENSYEN DAKWAH ISLAM PERKIM-USIA-BINA. 25-26 FEB. 1977

PERKIM-BINA-USIA ISLAMIC DA'WAH KONVENSYEN LATE 1970's held Sabah.

As a busy Prime Minister, Tunku could not accept the task of leading PERKIM, nevertheless he agreed to be PERKIM's advisor with SOK Ubaidullah as the President, Mubin as secretary and Ali Mericar as the treasurer. In order to finance the administration and activities of PERKIM, Tunku agreed to a grant of RM10,000 which was considered a large amount back in 1960. The quantum is not so important, but most importantly this grant from the Malayan Government to an Islamic NGO showed a tacit support of the country to Islamic activities and this annual financial support has continued on until this day.

So the allegation that that Malaysian Government suppresses Islamic dakwah is clearly baseless and unfounded. The truth is that the government only prohibits the propagation of extremist, radical and militant Islam such as Al-Arqam, Al-Maunah, and deviationist sects and teachings such as Ayah Pin, Hasan Rimau, Ibrahim Libya, etc. These pseudo leaders of the so-called Islamic NGOs hid behind the name of NGO to cover their sinister, ulterior motives. Some of them received financial support from foreign sources and became tools to destroy the country's good Islamic reputation.

The freedom to form associations is guaranteed under the Constitution, thus after PERKIM was formed,

many more dakwah associations were established such as ABIM, Persatuan Ulamak, Jam'iyah, Jemaah Islam (JIM), BINA in Malaysia, and USIA in Malaysia. In fact, during Tun Razak's administration, Yayasan Dakwah Malaysia (YADIM) was formed by the Government to coordinate and assist Islamic NGOs.

So the allegations about the suppression of dakwah by the Government is again unfounded. After Malaysia was formed in 1963, Tunku took advantage of his long time association with Datu Mustapha of Sabah and Tun Rahman Yaakob of Sarawak to foster working relations with BINA in Sarawak and USIA in Sabah, forming Badan Dakwah Islamiah (BADAI) an alliance of dakwah organizations in the Peninsula and Sabah and Sarawak. PERKIM focused its dakwah services amongst interested Chinese and Indians while BINA focused on the Dayaks and USIA on Kadazans. This strategy gave fruitful results so much so that the name of PERKIM is synonymous with mualaf, almost a brand name developed after 50 years of dakwah services to the non-Muslim communities.

PERKIM's Community Service

Tunku's approach to dakwah was quite different from the way or method used by the traditional ulamaks

who mainly preached at the mosques and madrasahs. He was recorded to have said and emphasized that PERKIM's dakwah would be accomplished through performance rather than just by talking and preaching as the people would like to see what we could do on the ground rather than just listening to the sermon. This approach of 'dakwah by doing' is known as "dakwah bil amal" or "bil hal". This approach started the community service in PERKIM. The following are some of the community based activities:

a) Darul Aitham Wal Masakin (DATAR, Tunku Abdul Rahman Orphanage)

In order to help the orphans and the poor, Tunku gave (waqaf) his 5 acre land in Alor Star Kedah to PERKIM worth millions of ringgit for the setting up of an orphanage. PERKIM built an orphanage complex on the site which could accommodate 200 orphans with fully equipped hostel and tuition classes.

b) Asrama Darul Falah (ASDAF)

As for dakwah activities to the Aborigines or Orang Asli, PERKIM devised a project ASDAF which targeted Orang Asli children. Every year the PERKIM ASDAF unit selected about 100 children of Orang Asli, offered them places in a PERKIM hostel at Kuala Lumpur, gave them free education, free food and free lodging. This project which started 20 years ago had been quite successful. It was able to produce several university and college graduates and also a large number of SPM achievers. This would have been quite unlikely if they had stayed at their isolated family homes.

c) Foster Home Project

This project is about bringing the people of the Peninsula closer together with those in Sabah and Sarawak. It first focused on the children of Sarawak's indigenous people by bringing them to the Peninsula to stay with foster parents in Klang Valley. Similar to the ASDAF project which focused on Orang Asli, the objective of this Foster Home project is to give better opportunities to the children by bringing them to a more conducive surrounding.

d) Community health related services

In the 1980s PERKIM was quite active in providing health services to the Orang Asli community through the support from several doctors and nurses from KL General Hospital.

They gave voluntary services to three PERKIM clinics around Kuala Lumpur. One of the volunteers was Dr Siti Hasmah Muhd Ali (now Tun), the wife of Tun Dr Mahathir. PERKIM even had a mobile clinic to service the squatters.

In the 1980s to 1990s PERKIM was also involved in the drug rehabilitation program. It had its own rehabilitation camp at Batu Gajah, Perak, where thousands of drug addicts were given treatment. After the Government tried opening drug rehabilitation camps throughout the country, PERKIM had to withdraw this program as it was rather costly.

In the 1980s PERKIM started a kindergarten at Jalan Ampang for spastic children suffering from down syndrome, and it still provides this service. In the 1990s PERKIM started a rehabilitation centre in Sentul to help people to recover from strokes.



Tunku visit to Pahang's Cambodian Islamic Refugee Camp in the late 1970's.

PERKIM's Involvement in the Global Community Service

One aspect of PERKIM's contribution that is often overlooked is its involvement in offering welfare services to Muslim refugees. Quite often throughout the world Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries have been persecuted. For example, in Cambodia they were oppressed by the communists, in Burma by the Buddhists and in Bosnia by the Christian Serbs. This is quite unlike the minority non-Muslim groups who were given fair treatment in a Muslim majority country such as in Malaysia. It was a historical fact that for 700 years the Christians and the Jews in Cordoba, Spain were given fair treatment by the Muslim Rulers, but when King Philip and Queen Isabella won the war and became the ruler in Spain, the Muslims were persecuted. This goes to show that Muslims are just rulers, a Muslim state is fair to all citizens, and that Islam is a peaceful religion that prohibits the act of oppression on other races or religions.



In 1975, one year after returning from Jeddah after setting up the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) and Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Tunku as PERKIM's leader was asked by Tun Razak and the UN Higher Council for Refugees (UNHCR) to help the Muslim refugees at the Cambodia Thailand border who were the victims of the Communist Khmer Rouge. Tunku, as the son of a Thailand princess, used this connection to the Thai kingdom to get a passageway for the refugees to come to Malaysia. Due to his effort about 10,000 Cambodian Muslims of Malay origin were brought to Malaysia and were given shelter.

“PERKIM focused its dakwah services amongst interested Chinese and Indians while BINA focused on the Dayaks and USIA on Kadazans.”

In the 1990s PERKIM was asked by Tun Dr Mahathir to receive and give temporary shelter to several hundred Bosnian Muslims that were displaced due to the Bosnia Serbia ethnic war. After the war was over, these Bosnian refugees either returned to their homeland or were sent to settle in a third country.

In the 2000s Malaysia received several thousand Rohingya Muslim refugees from the Rakhine region in Burma who were rejected by many ASEAN countries. The Rohingya came to this country due to oppression and ethnic cleansing in their country. PERKIM took the responsibility to settle thousands of them in the agricultural sector and provided annual allocation to the Rohingya school.

PERKIM has also helped the illegal Philippine refugees in Labuan to set up an Islamic school. In the near future there is also a plan to set up another PERKIM Institute of Dakwah (IDIP) in Sabah to train Muslim missionaries in East Malaysia.

Conclusion

PERKIM, as an Islamic NGO throughout its 54 years of existence, has performed a variety of community services and humanitarian functions. It has helped to address several issues that affect Muslims. It encourages voluntary participation by all Muslims as civil society stakeholders to contribute to Muslim welfare at local, national and international levels. With financial support from the government and stronger moral support from the people especially from Muslims, InsyaAllah PERKIM should be able to continue giving assistance to local and global communities in the future.



GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard

Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard was one of the early conservationists of historical buildings in Malaysia from 1950 till 1994. Gedung Raja Abdullah (Raja Abdullah Warehouse) in Klang stands out as a reminder of his efforts to protect heritage sites. In 1857 Raja Abdullah had the Gedung built to store his weapons, tin and food. In subsequent years it served as government offices for the British, then a police station. When the Selangor Contingent Police Headquarters was built behind the Gedung in 1980 plans were to demolish the building and replace it with a badminton court. Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard realising the imminent demise of the Gedung used considerable influence to enlist the support of others and prevent this from happening. His Royal Highness of Selangor, Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, eventually intervened and it was gazetted under the Antiquities Ordinance. When Badan Warisan Malaysia (Heritage of Malaysia Trust) was founded in 1983, Gedung Raja Abdullah was the first privately initiated restoration project in the country. Thanks to Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard the historical significance of Gedung Raja Abdullah was preserved for future generations. In honor of his dedication to conservation, the Mubin Sheppard Memorial Prize

On Jan 26, 1928, a 22-year-old Cambridge graduate stepped ashore at Penang island, just three weeks after he set sail from England to begin his career in the then Malayan Civil Service.

He fell in love instantly with the country, its people, culture and customs. He was Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard, or Mervyn, as he was known then. He was the founder of Islamic Herald and the first Secretary General of PERKIM (Muslim Welfare Organisation Malaysia).

When Tan Sri Haji Mubin first arrived in Kuala Lumpur in 1928, little did he know, that it was the beginning of a lifetime of attachment to Malaysia — its culture and peoples. Yet, up till the moment of his death at age 89 on Sept 11, 1994 he was a living testimony to this nation's history.

Born in Ireland in 1905, Mubin Sheppard graduated from Magdalene College, Cambridge, with an MA in History. He took the Competitive Exams in London for a place in the Civil Service. Upon passing, he was dispatched to Malaya as a cadet in the administrative corps of the then Governor of the Straits Settlements and High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States, Sir Hugh Clifford.

His first posting was at Temerloh, Pahang, where he was sent on attachment to the District Officer there. Displaying a natural talent for the Malay language and an affinity for its peoples, he worked his way through the rank and file with impressive rapidity.

Sheppard, by way of his own reckoning, was an “unorthodox civil servant” and he entitled his memoirs “Taman Budiman: Memoirs of an Unorthodox Civil Servant,” accordingly.

On active service with the F.M.S. Voluntary Forces, he participated in the disastrous Malayan campaign and subsequent surrender of British forces in Singapore. Between 1942 and 1945, he was a prisoner of war.

After the war, Sheppard was appointed District Officer in Klang and subsequently British Advisor in Terengganu and Negeri Sembilan.

His tendency to act in often eccentric ways was displayed during the Emergency when, amongst other things, he managed to convert a group of factory girls from avowed Communists to Domestic Science students.



The late Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard's visit to Pahang's Cambodian Islamic Refugee Camp in the late 1970's.

He also founded the first Young Farmers' Club in Malaya and when its new rubber smoke house was burned down, he raised the money to cover the loss by writing and staging a musical. There was one instance when he employed a pawang to summon a Malay terrorist from the jungle.

After retirement, he rejected the opportunity to retire at an Irish Castle, preferring instead to devote himself to documenting and resurrecting interest in Malay culture and history.

Sheppard also established the National Art Gallery and the Malayan Historical Society, and founded the National Museum and the National Archives.

He embraced Islam in 1957, completed the Haj in 1960 and returned to help develop PERKIM.

Sheppard also developed a great deal of time and energy to the eminent Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, where he remained vice-president and honorary editor till his death.

He was once asked why he chose to remain in Malaya and he quoted a few lines from the Roman Centurion's Song which read:

"There is my heart, my soul, my mind — the only life I know. I cannot leave it all behind..."

Friends, acquaintances, and colleagues described his demise as a tragic loss to the country and the people.

National Archives head, Datuk Zakiah Hanum who credited Mubin for the setting up of the National Archives in 1957, said she was fortunate to have worked with one of the country's foremost historians.

Working as his assistant when he was the Keeper of Public Records, as the post of the Director-General of National Archives was then called, she fondly remembered the man, "especially his zeal for discipline, and perfectionism."

“ When Tan Sri Haji Mubin first arrived in Kuala Lumpur in 1928, little did he know, that it was the beginning of a lifetime of attachment to Malaysia country. ”



Tunku seen with Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard, 1970's. Tan Sri Mubin was one of the colonial civil servants who decided to stay on in Malaya despite attractive terms offered by the Malayisation scheme. After Independence, he became "Keeper of Public Records", a new post that was created by the Cabinet. Subsequently, he applied for citizenship and was issued with a Certificate of Registration as a citizen of the Federation of Malaya dated January 15, 1958. (ANM)

“He was extremely knowledgeable about Malay culture, arts and tradition, and was well-known for his studious and analytical quest in his work on the nation’s history,” she said.

And this was well displayed in his quest to build up the National Museum, another one of his accomplishments. He was reported to have gathered the exhibits single-handedly. Zakiah said despite his frail health and poor eyesight, her former boss was working on a pictorial on the late Tunku Abdul Rahman.

Historian, Profesor Khoo Kay Kim said, “Tan Sri Mubin, as the pillar of strength in the Royal Asiatic Society Malaysia branch, not only ensured that the society survived but also actively participated in the production of journals.”

“These journals,” he added, “received widespread acknowledgement from scholars, particularly in this part of the world.”

“ He embraced Islam in 1957, completed the Haj in 1960 and returned to help develop PERKIM.”

Mubin, as an author, had also written many books on local history and the Malay cultural heritage. Apart from two books on Tunku Abdul Rahman, he also wrote “The Malay Regiment” (1947), “The adventures of Hang Tuah” (1949), and “The Living Crafts of Malaysia.”



The late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj (seated) and Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard (fourth standing from left), who was also PERKIM’s Honorary Secretary General and the Chairman of PERKIM’s Publishing Unit the 1980s.

INTRODUCTION PERKIM INTERNATIONAL (PI)

by Khadijah Dingjan



It is with great pleasure that we introduce you to a recently established unit named PERKIM International (PI). If you are a regular reader of this magazine you are probably familiar with PERKIM's objectives, which are (1) sharing Islam or da'wah (2) education, (3) welfare activities and (4) cooperation with other organizations. Like all other units within PERKIM family, PI will uphold these objectives as well. Specifically PI's focus will be to professionally advance PERKIM's da'wah outreach in the following areas:

- To position PERKIM as an international organization playing a key role in global da'wah as envisioned by its founder
- To be active in da'wah work amongst the 'international' population living in Malaysia
- To be the coordinating centre for networking amongst the new 'international' Muslims in Malaysia
- To be a da'wah research and training centre serving Malaysian and global needs
- To establish PERKIM as the "Kuala Lumpur International Da'wah Centre" to play a global role in da'wah

As you can see from the points above, there is an 'international' focus here. Connecting local and international professional Muslim reverts together to share their intellectual views and expertise on

effective da'wah methodology. This will support the promotion of the original identity of PERKIM launched by Al-Marhum Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra al-Haj.

Activities

You may wonder how these goals will translate into our day-to-day activities. One focus for the year ahead is to build a toolkit of media and publications. You can look forward to new English editions of your familiar da'wah publications. Other major languages will follow suit, in sha' Allah. You may even find them in surprising new locations.

Let us not forget activities! We hope to draw interest from a wider audience than ever before to our da'wah seminars/workshops via traditional methods

and new channels such as internet and social media. Our professionally organised activities, will target different levels (e.g. high school, degree, or professional level). All of this, in an internationally accessible language: English.

The Ulfah Institute

In the future, PERKIM International aims to establish its International Ulfah Institute to share Islam in a more dynamic and effective way. The Ulfah Institute will provide a unique international standard of da'wah education with a syllabus for global da'wah to produce professional and skilled Islamic da'ees , both locally and internationally.

The Ulfah Institute will provide a unique international standard of da'wah education with a syllabus for global da'wah to produce professional and skilled Islamic da'ees , both locally and internationally.

PERKIM believes that all Muslims in Malaysia should get the opportunity to be educated in Islam as well as to be involved in da'wah activities during their lifetime in one way or another, or at least have the skills to better share Islam with others. At the same time, Muslims from outside Malaysia will be trained for da'wah activities to be conducted in their own countries.

The Ulfah Institute will:

- become a resource centre on Islam, comparative religion and da'wah for not-yet-Muslims, reverts, and born-Muslims alike [PI-research centre]
- give information on Islam and counter misconceptions about it in English [PI-Islamic courses and talks]
- connect with other da'ees & da'wah organizations locally and internationally
- Ulfah will introduce a team of "PERKIM fellows" as PERKIM intellectual resources

The team

PERKIM International has started forming a team of energetic, proactive, scholarly da'ees, who are willing to contribute their service to PERKIM to share Islam and to assist in PERKIM's da'wah activities. Here is a brief introduction of the core team:



Dr. Sayyid Musa al-Kazimi

He is the head of PERKIM International. He served in PERKIM since 1996, most recently as the head of PERKIM's da'wah unit at PERKIM's head office.

His degrees are Bachelors in Islamic Studies, Masters in Usuluddin and PhD from the National University of Malaysia (UKM) in Steadfastness of Islamic Faith through Al-Qur'aanic Psychological Paradigm, specializing in psychological equilibrium of Islamic faith of Muslim converts before, during and after the conversion.

Our part-time core volunteers:

Dr. Y. Mansoor Marican

Graduated with both bachelors and masters degrees in Social Sciences from the University of Singapore. Obtained his PhD from the University of British Columbia, Canada. Awarded the prestigious research fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies and the American Social Science Research Council. Served in managerial capacity in the NST Group. Active in da'wah work over the last decade with special interest in Masjid Da'wah.



Currently serving as volunteer and advisor in the 'Awareness Through Masjid Tour' (ATMT) Programmes at Masjid Negara and Masjid Wilayah Persekutuan. Da'wah publications and da'wah training are his current passions.

Therefore, it is only logical that in PERKIM he focuses on da'wah training, da'wah publications and masjid da'wah.



Mr. Azhar Steven

An American Muslim who embraced Islam more than 20 years ago. He has a Bachelors degree in Engineering, an MBA, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Islamic Banking and Finance, and he spent many years in

regional MNC marketing. He was active in da'wah and activities at the Muslim Converts Association of Singapore for more than 10 years, and is currently involved in the Masjid Tour Programmes at Masjid Wilayah and Masjid Negara.

His focus at PERKIM is on organizing da'wah activities, PERKIM's English website & social media, and English publications.

His other interests include promoting Permaculture for a sustainable environment, the Islamic gift economy (Mu'amalat), and Islamic wealth management.

Mrs. Khadijah Dingjan

A Dutch Muslimah, who embraced Islam more than 27 years ago. She has a degree in Islamic Studies (al-Qur'aan & Sunnah Studies, IIUM). In the Netherlands, she was active in a revert organisation for over 5 years. Ten years ago



she made 'hijrah' to Malaysia, where she currently volunteers as a Masjid Tour Guide ('Awareness Through Masjid Tour' -ATMT) and the teaching of new Muslims.

Her focus in PERKIM is on education, reverts, da'wah activities and women's affairs.

She also conducts self-defence workout classes for Muslimahs.

In order to achieve PI's goals successfully the team is looking forward to work closely with PERKIM's experienced staff of other departments (such as the units of Da'wah, Communication & New Media, Publications, Women's Development and Muslim Minority Affair), as well as PERKIM's branches in the other states of Malaysia.

Call for volunteers

In order to organize activities successfully we need, of course, English speaking volunteers to assist us. We would hereby like to invite readers who are interested in contributing some time and their skills, to register to help in any of our activities such as: organizing seminars, writing articles, webpage contribution, social media outreach, and doing da'wah to the public. Please register through: international@perkim.net.my, indicating your interests and skills. PERKIM International Unit is currently located on the 6th floor of the **PERKIM Headquarters on 150, Jalan Ipoh and reachable by the phone numbers: 03-4042 6224 / 03-4041 2482 (Ext. 642/ 688/ 689/ 690).**

Nurturing The Vital Year



By Bro. Faheem Puah

Case of Childhood Abuse

You are busy shopping at a megamall, eyes fixated on the label of the item you intend to buy. Suddenly you hear shrieking cries of a child amidst the familiar din of the market ambience. Glancing down the aisle, you notice Razimi's midget-like body lying on the floor. Towering over him and tussling with him is his mother. You move closer. You see tears streaking down the cheeks of the distraught child. His mother incessantly yells at him to stop crying. Her screams are punctuated with verbal abuse while she pinches and smacks his hands continuously. You are saddened by this ugly scene, disheartened by the child's sobbing pleads. You wish you could pick him up, hug him tight and shower him with love and affection. But alas! You can't. A feeling of helplessness overcomes you. You walk away wishing you had not witnessed such a heartrending scene.

This is not an isolated incident. Like most of other victims of child abuse, Razimi never had a birthday party, never received birthday presents when he turned five last week. Razimi's parents were too busy at work.

Razimi's slender, diminutive frame gives you the impression that he is barely three. A closer look at him reveals telltale signs of physical abuse. His expressionless face, his lifeless, apathetic-looking eyes reflect a love-deprived soul longing for love and affection. In sad reality, Razimi has lost his innocent childhood laughter. The word "love" does not mean anything to him.

Social Ills and The Vicious Circle

Amongst the many factors that contribute to the complexity of social ills today is undoubtedly a flawed personality in today's youths as a result of childhood abuse or unskilled parenting. Juvenile delinquency, drug addiction, mat-rempit menace, promiscuity, to mention just a few, do not happen by chance. There are many more Razimi's in our society contributing to the social ills of today.

Growing up in a love-deprived environment and subjected to a daily dose of mental anguish, Razimi instinctively develops a self defense mechanism to fend off aggressors and other enemies, both visible and imaginary. He becomes hostile and aggressive towards others and even to his parents. Negative emotions are relentlessly programmed onto his immature little mind. With bruised ego and eroded self-esteem, he is incapable of feeling the joy of love. As he grows up his perception of life, love, and Allah becomes distorted. If at all he believes in the existence of Allah SWT, he will most likely perceive Him as being unloving and uncaring.

Not making good grades in studies, he eventually drops out of school. As he enters adolescence, he suffers bouts of depression and anxiety attacks. He finds solace in vicious indulgence and in the company of friends with similar inclinations. If he is lucky enough to stay free of prison, he may get married and have children. It is then highly probable that he will repeat the same pattern of abuse with his own children. This vicious circle perpetuates through generations unless there is corrective action or behavioral transformation.

“During this short span of time, IFIs have succeeded in formulating many innovative risk-sharing instruments that have enabled them to compete with their conventional counterparts”.

Breaking Allah's Laws of Balance

In this modern age where materialism has become the main focus, many of Allah's laws of balance are broken. It is common practice now for both parents to work. They work long hours to make a success of their careers, going against Islamic norms, which define a mother's role as being predominantly to nurture the young. Parents have very little time for their children while their ibadah to Allah SWT is kept to the minimum. Stress induced marital discord deprives the home of love, peace and harmony. Basic Islamic teachings take a back seat. Once Allah's laws of balance are broken, we can expect serious repercussions affecting all aspects of life.

Prophet Muhammad SAW's Great Love for Children Prophet Muhammad SAW, the greatest teacher of all times, has stressed the importance of treating infants and children with love and affection. He instructed mothers to suckle babies for two years, which not only ensures best nutrition for babies but also creates strong mother-child bonding. He instructed parents to just "play" with their children below seven years, no harsh words, and no physical discipline. He even allowed his grandsons to ride on his back while he was performing solat. Such great love and patience!



In another incident Prophet SAW, on learning that an Arabian never kissed his own children, lamented that Allah SWT would not have Mercy on those who had no mercy on others.

Parenting Skills

“The soul of your child is like an uncut precious jewel entrusted into your care by Allah.

To you is given the awesome responsibility of shaping that precious jewel into a beautiful form pleasing to the eyes of Allah. It is your sacred duty to ensure your child grows up to be a good and right humanity.” (Hadith Sahih, Muslim)

1. Love and Patience

Psychologists today confirm that the first six or seven years are of vital importance in the development of human life. A person’s character, mindset, mental attitude whether positive or negative, is moulded during these vital years. For a start, two years of suckling promotes physical as well as mental health of the infant. But a baby is still a baby. It will cry for specific reasons. Parents must exercise great patience not to react negatively to the cries of a baby. Be happy because a baby’s cries show that it is physically active!

The two key words that ensure continued healthy development of a child beyond two years are “love” and “patience”. Only good parenting skills founded

upon these two elements can lend countenance to parents facing the most grueling test when they have to handle the two and three year olds allegedly at their most rebellious, most temperamental and most demanding stage of childhood. Emerging unscathed from this exhausting period of parenthood, parents can expect a cordial relationship of mutual trust and respect with the older child. Easier times ensue as the older child, with prerequisites of good mental health and emotional balance responds positively to parents’ instructions, obeys house rules, and is ready to receive classroom education at the age of four or five.

2. Discipline

Rasulullah SAW’s emphatic word “play”, not “discipline” for children below seven is now better understood in the light of modern psychologists’ research findings. Without the necessary “play” stage, a child will not be positively attuned to the process of learning. It is also accepted that discipline for children below seven should never take the form of verbal abuse or shouting, let alone physical punishment.

Parents should rationally gravitate towards disciplinary methods that emphasize teaching rather than punishment. Parents who have the tendency to yell at their children will realize that this strategy will most certainly backfire over time. The day when your kid yells back at you, know for sure that you are



reaping what you have sown. Outraged by the child's rebellion, parents easily resort to physical abuse, thereupon giving rise to the birth of a new Razimi. Some of the recommended discipline techniques include withdrawing a privilege, enforcing rules consistently, offering a choice, persuasion, giving time out etc. These methods have proven to be effective and will not impair a child's emotional or mental development.

3. Fostering Islamic values

Basic Islamic education in the early vital years below four years old should take the form of daily verbal communication rather than rigid or rigorous coaching. As early as four months into conception a mother should expose the fetus to the wonderful sounds of the Holy Qur'an, whilst at birth the baby should receive Adhan in the ears. From then on, an infant, growing into a toddler and young child, should constantly be able to witness parents as being Islamic role models building a home filled with love,

peace and joy.

Explaining to the child Tauhidic principles about the Oneness of Allah the Creator and the purpose of life, etc. serves to plant the seed of Iman, whilst bedtime story telling of Seerah Rasul inculcates Islamic values and the noble akhlak of Prophet Muhammad SAW at a young age. Constant reminders to the child concerning Allah's Niamat serve to instill a sense of gratitude towards Him. Similarly, a father who regularly brings his young son to the Masjid helps to develop the son's love for the Masjid starting from a young age.

A happy childhood nurtured through love and care during the vital years sets the stage for next ten years of positive mental development and Islamic character building, adequately preparing the teenager to face many challenges in the hostile world. A mind free of emotional disturbance and mental anguish is well conditioned to receive oceans of knowledge ahead. Academic excellence will come as no surprise to the parents.

Insha'Allah the young man will develop and serve as Khalifah on earth thus fulfilling the purpose of Allah's creation. According to many authentic Hadith, sweeter rewards in the Hereafter await the patient and loving parents who bring up solih children.

Cherishing Childhood Laughter

Parents are given the Amanah by Allah SWT to look after their children until adolescence. They don't have the right to ill-treat their children.

Razimi would not have existed in our society today if only his parents had followed the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah Rasulullah SAW. A child born as fitrah, pure and innocent, should not be deprived of his natural innocent laughter.

Childhood laughter is the most basic right of a child. No one has the right to snatch it away!



by Mohd. Shukry Matsumoto



ISLAMIC JAPANESE VALUES IN KAIZEN

“As a Japanese Muslim, I find that there are some similar values that the Japanese culture and traditions share with the teachings of Islam”

Unemployment, especially amongst the young generation all over the world, has become a serious and critical problem. This is because most of the companies and societies would prefer to hire an individual who has a working knowledge within the related field. By hiring an experienced individual, the companies save time and money rather than hiring new workers, who will require specific training. Although this method will benefit the companies in gaining extra funding for their projects, it results in less jobs being created, causing those who have little experience to end up being unemployed and left jobless.

With the current working society, IT has changed and affected nearly every business, changing its environment tremendously. For example, less manpower is needed in the current business environment because of the existence of computers and robots that are far more efficient. There may still be some manpower needed, but the jobs created pay below the minimum wage, thereby creating employees who are classified as the working poor.

So what makes it possible for the young people to obtain a regular job? Surely we cannot expect them to acquire equal experience to what the older generation possesses from their personal experience. It is their positive virtue and working etiquette that the companies seek. Actually, the personality traits requested are something very basic, namely: punctuality and trustworthiness.

When looking for an employee, it is very crucial for any company to find individuals who can self-manage their time and organize their work so that every plan will go smoothly. Also, the individuals must always be honest to themselves and others so that their colleagues and employees will trust that they are capable to do the job they are hired for.

On top of that, in the company that I work for, we recruit an individual who has key qualities which in short we call as the 4A: Attendance, Appearance, Attitude, and Accuracy. It is very important for an individual to attend to the office at the required time (punctuality), present himself or herself appropriately to give a positive appearance and

good attitude. Although most of us are aware of the phrase ‘Don’t judge a book by its cover’, a good first impression will always be a great head start. And finally, if an individual can focus on the information and deliver it accurately to their management, anyone will be happy to employ this person.

As a Japanese Muslim, I find that there are some similar values that the Japanese culture and traditions share with the teachings of Islam. Growing up in an authentic Japanese family, my parents have always stressed to me how important it is to present my personality with discipline. Reflecting these concepts with the Islamic value, it is very clear to me that these are the fundamental concepts of Islam. Not only can we apply the etiquette mentioned in the previous paragraph in our career, but we can also apply it in our fardhu ‘ain: for instance in our solaa’ (solat).

Finally, I would like to share a motto that I remind myself of everyday which is, “Islam is the way of Life.” Alhamdulillah, we have been rewarded with many opportunities in Duniyyah life such as the opportunity to perform the Solaa’ 5 times a day, time for family or community gathering and reunion, and the opportunity to make donations to the poor, especially during the month of Ramadhan. I hope we can KAIZEN (meaning improve in Japanese) each of our present selves towards the correct way of life so that we can return to Allah Subhana wa ‘ta Allah in akhirah, Insha Allah.





ONE God, ONE Humanity, ONE Religion, MANY Prophets

(Peace be upon them)

**"Then why are there
so many different religions?"**



**In every nation, God has raised a Messenger,
who preached the same Message:
Worship God, and shun false deities.**
The Qur'an, Chapter 16, verse 36

What GOD says

ISLAM - True Guidance for Humanity

The Qur'an, in Arabic, is the exact Word of God (*Allah*) revealed to His Final Prophet, Muhammad (peace be upon him).

This selection of verses is the English translation of the meaning of what Allah says in The Qur'an, His Final Revelation to mankind, about the Message of Islam taught by all Prophets.

Text in italics is added to explain the context of the verses.

ONE God

Your God is One God.

There is none worthy of worship except Him,
the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate.

[The Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verse 163]

*Say: He is Allah, the One and Only God.
Allah, the Eternal, the One on whom all depend,
while He is independent of all.*

He begets not, nor was He begotten.

And there is none like Him.

[112:1-4]

ONE Humanity

*O Mankind! Allah created you from a single
pair of a male and a female (Adam and Eve),
and made you into nations and races
so that you might know one another.
Indeed, the most noble of you to Allah
is the most righteous of you.*

[49:13]

ONE Religion

*The Religion and Way of Life with Allah
is Islam, that is, submission to the Will of Allah.*

[3:19]

MANY Prophets

*In every nation, Allah has raised a Messenger,
who preached the same message:
Worship only Allah, and shun false gods.*

[16:36]

*Allah has mentioned the stories of some
Messengers in The Qur'an, and others He has not.*

[40:78]



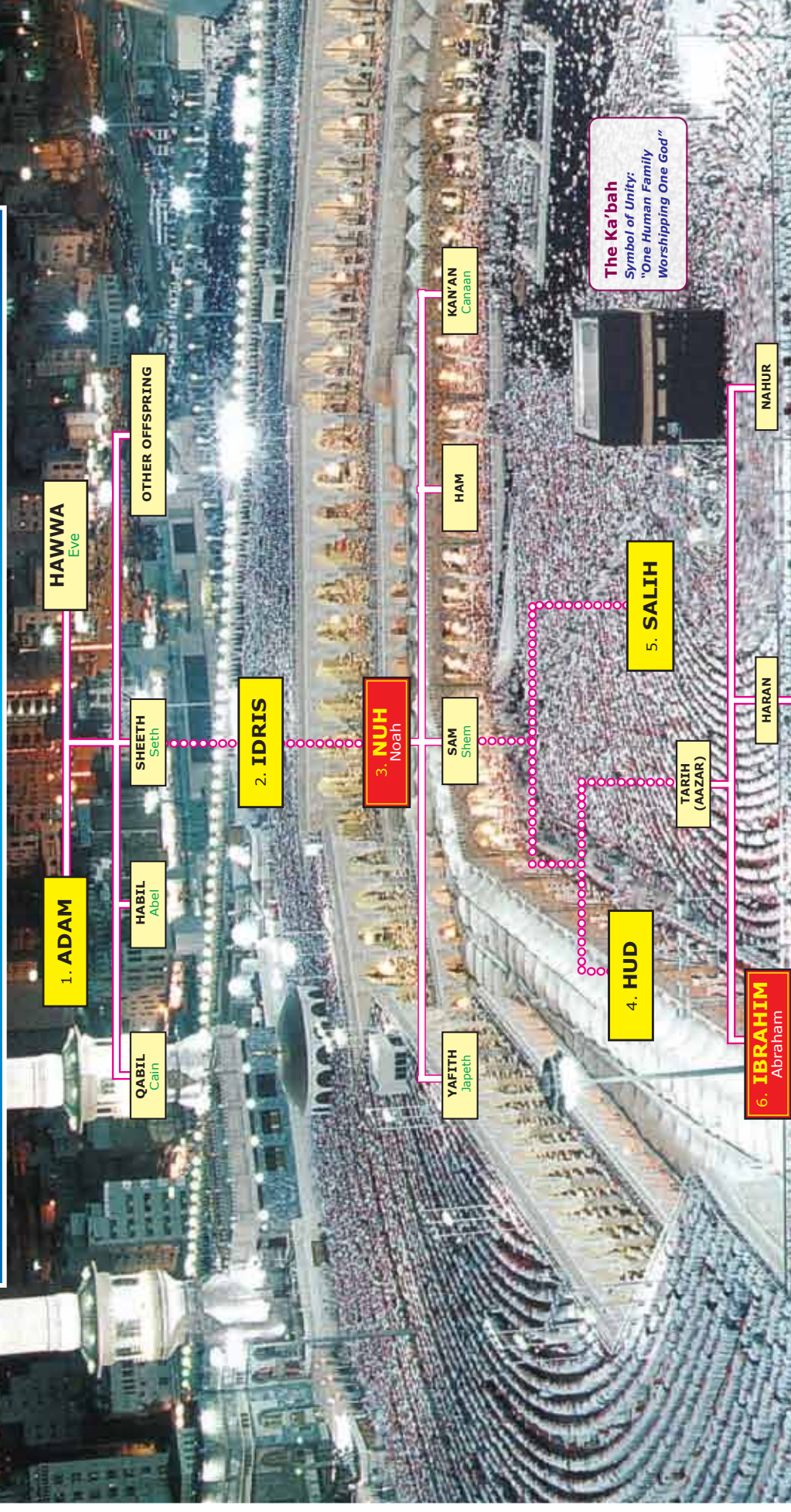
ONE Human Family

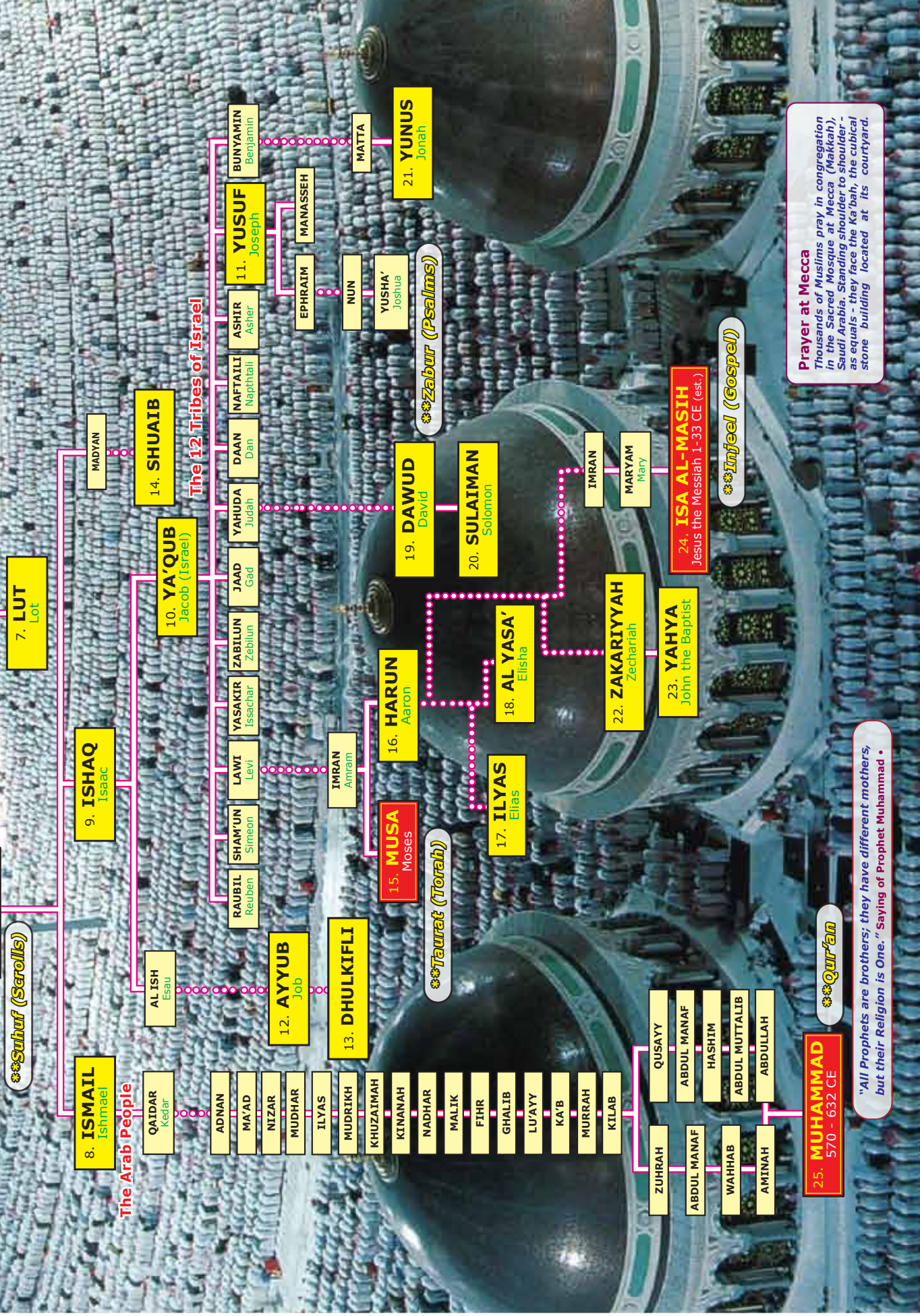
*"We are all Children of Adam.
None is superior to another
except in righteousness."
(Prophet Muhammad)*

ONE God, ONE Humanity, ONE Religion, MANY Prophets

ALLAH raised 124,000 **Prophets & Messengers** to guide humanity to fulfil the purpose of its creation, beginning from **ADAM**, the first man. Leading Prophets were **NOAH, ABRAHAM, MOSES, JESUS & MUHAMMAD**, the Final & Universal Prophet. ALL Prophets preached the Religion of **ISLAM** – Submission to **ALLAH**; they were **MUSLIM**. As the Final Prophet, **MUHAMMAD** delivered, through The **QUR'AN**, the Religion of **ISLAM** in its renewed, complete & perfected form for all humanity, for all time.

This is the simplified **Genealogy** of the **25 Prophets** mentioned in The **QUR'AN**. *





Sources for the genealogy of Mary, Jesus, Zechariah and John:-

- Dr. Jerard F Dirks, The Abrahamic Faiths, Amanah Publications, Maryland, 2006
- Louay Fatoohi, The Mystery of the Historical Jesus, Islamic Book Trust, Kuala Lumpur, 2009
- www.usbible.com/gospel/jesus_genealogy.htm [ALLAH KNOWS BEST]

Adam to Muhammad: Just ONE Message! ISLAM - The Religion of All Prophets

All Prophets, Same Religion

Allah has ordained for you the same Religion - *Islam* - which He had enjoined on Noah, and which He has revealed to *Muhammad*, and which He had enjoined on Abraham, and Moses and Jesus. So uphold the Religion. [42:13]

Abraham, Prophet of Islam

Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a strict believer in One God, a Muslim, submitting to the Will of Allah, and he did not associate partners with Allah. [3:67]

ONE Direction: The Ka'bah

- The first House established for the worship of One God, Allah
- Built under divine command by Abraham & his son, Ishmael
- The direction for prayer, not an object of worship



Then why so many different religions?

The One Religion from God - *Islam* - brought by all Prophets became many different religions when it was altered with deviations & distortions.

Divisions & Deviations

Allah tells the Prophets: "Your community is one single community, sharing the same faith, and I am your Lord; so fear only Me."

But the people divided the Religion among themselves into different sects, and each group is pleased with its own deviated beliefs. [23:52-53]

Distortions & Doubts

Even after Prophets brought them true knowledge, people still differed, due to animosity among themselves. Moreover, the Divine Book had become corrupted with distortions, and thus the later generations who inherited it are filled with doubts about its truth. [42:14]

**Religion from God is One & the same.
Man-made religions are many & different.**

Muhammad & The Qur'an: Truth Restored ISLAM - Renewed, Complete, Perfected

Final Prophet

Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and the Last of the Prophets. [33:40]

O Muhammad, call mankind back to *Islam*. Say to them: "Allah is our Lord and your Lord." [42:15]

Islam's universal call:



Final Revelation

Allah has revealed to you, O Muhammad, the Book, *The Qur'an*, setting forth the truth, confirming the Revelations prior to it, just as in the past, He had revealed the Torah to Moses, and the Gospel to Jesus. [3:3]

Choose Islam

Allah says: This day, I have completed for you your Religion, and I have perfected upon you My Blessings, and I have chosen for you *Islam* to be the Religion and Way of Life. [5:3]

Way to Paradise

Those who disbelieve in *Allah* and reject His Signs - they are the people of Hell-fire. [57:19]

Indeed, those who believe in *Allah* and do good deeds - they are the best of creatures. Their reward with *Allah* will be Paradise, Eternal, wherein they shall remain forever. [98:7-8]



ONE World

Hope for Peace in the world lies in *Islam's* noble call to Equal Justice: Stand firm for Justice for all people, rich or poor, even if it is against your own interests. [4:135]
No Justice, No Peace.

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Produced by: Yayasan Kubra (Kubra Foundation) in collaboration with islamic-world.net, official web-site of Excellent Ummah Development Association, Malaysia.

Hudud Divides Malaysia: DA'WAH AND DIALOGUE REQUIRED

by Azhar Steven,
 PERKIM International Unit



“The foundation of the Syariah is wisdom and the safeguarding of the people’s interests in this world and the next. In its entirety it is justice, mercy and wisdom. Every rule which sacrifices justice to tyranny, mercy to its opposite, the good to the evil, and wisdom to triviality does not belong to the Syariah although it might have been introduced therein by implication. The Syariah is God’s justice and blessing among His people. Life, nutrition, medicine, light, recuperation and virtue are made possible by it. Every good that exists is derived from it and every deficiency in being results from its loss and dissipation – for the Syariah, which God entrusted His Prophet to transmit, is the pillar of the world and the key to success and happiness in this world and the next.” [Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, A’lam, III, I]

“Islamic state over my dead body” [Karpal Singh, 1990, after PAS won the election in Kelantan]

How can the idea of Syariah elicit such divergent thoughts, from respectful to disrespectful, from a learned scholar and a sharp lawyer?

What is Dividing Malaysia?

Lately the Hudud issue has become a vociferous rallying cry for some Muslims and non-Muslims in Malaysia to stake their claims. It is one of the most visible above the surface markers along a major underground fault line that separate and divide Muslims and non-Muslims here. On the surface we hear that both sides are pushing for their rights, i.e. for or against Hudud, but below the surface it feels like the Muslim side is pushing for more Islam while the non-Muslim side is pushing for less.

Of course there are many issues at play in this standoff, such as education, politics, culture, etc, but this article will focus on the genuine intentions of Muslim believers to follow Islamic laws and non-Muslims to avoid Islamic laws. How should we address this issue amicably to find a common agreeable path to move forward?

What do we read and hear about Hudud in Malaysia?

“MCA has formed a 100-lawyer team to oppose the implementation of hudud and will also go on roadshows nationwide to brief non-Muslims about the issue, said the party’s Syariah law and policy implementation chairman...”

Gan said Malaysia was a secular nation according to the Federal Constitution, which was drawn up more than 50 years ago when the country was formed...

Gan also said that MCA had strongly protested against the formation of a national committee on hudud by Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom...

Gan said Muslims as a whole did not reject hudud as God’s law, but the question remained of whether hudud was suitable in today’s contemporary era.” [The Malaysian Insider, May 8, 2014] Mr. Gan, as MCA’s Syariah law and policy implementation Chairman, instead of threatening a lawyer crusade against Islamic law, why not sit down and discuss with learned Muslim scholars to fully understand Hudud and address the fears?

At an outdoor election rally in Klang on April 26, 2013, Karpal Singh of DAP said: “We value and appreciate the willingness of PAS and the PKR to allow us to use their symbol in the event that the Rocket was not allowed

to be used. But there's a caveat to it, that does not mean that we the DAP accept Islamic policies. Our opposition to hudud, our opposition to an Islamic state stands intact. We rely and we have in the past and I say it now we defend our stand because we go by the Federal Constitution. The Constitution does not provide for an Islamic State. The Constitution provides for Islam to be the official religion of the country, and we accept and honour that provision. But it does not stop at that, Islam is the official religion of the country, but other religions shall be allowed to be practiced in peace and harmony."

This strident rejection can be construed as being prejudiced and with no sincere intention to discuss and understand Islam and its importance to Muslims, but merely to oppose it. Why oppose Muslims practicing Islam and Islamic policies while acknowledging that Islam is the official religion? Where is the sincerity of a "marriage" when one uses your possessions, but rejects your principles and bars your practice? (Hence why in Islam the future spouse should also be Muslim so that the family shares a common divine path and supports the divine journey.)

PAS MP for Sepang, a lawyer, Hanipa Maidan on May 1, 2014 said: "We believe that only if the people give the mandate then we have legitimacy to implement any law, of course as a Muslim we prefer the Hudud law in dealing with crimes. So coming back to the political scenario, the Kelantan

“ Abdullah Zaik [Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia, ISMA, President], however, said if PAS' hudud is to be enforced, it should cover non-Muslims as well.” [The Star, 10 May 2014] ”

Government since 1993 have been advocating the intention of implementing Hudud to the Kelantanese, or to the Muslims in Kelantan. So we put our agenda in a manifesto, let people support it, people supported our agenda, people gave a mandate, people endorsed the mandate. So based on the mandate in a democratic country you can only carry out your ideas or your agenda if you get the mandate from the people because democracy is about people."

Why can't the Muslims of Kelantan, who constitute 95% of the state population, practice Islam which is stated in the Federal and State's constitution as the official religion?

"Abdullah Zaik [Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia, ISMA, President], however, said if PAS' hudud is to be enforced, it should cover non-Muslims as well." [The Star, 10 May 2014]

This sort of statement causes fear amongst non-Muslims. The fear is based on stories that the punishment in Islamic Law to criminals is very harsh such as amputation of hand, caning, stoning and the death sentence. But why fear Hudud when one is a law abiding citizen and not a criminal?



Historical Perspective

To understand this issue, the historical background must be considered. Islam has been the religion of the Malays and the Malay States in Tanah Melayu for more than 600 years. The Portuguese conquered Malacca in 1511 and spread Western culture and Christian religion and later European colonialists brought other races with other religions here to further their colonial activities. The immigrants brought vibrant diversity and new cultures to this land, which had a great impact on Malays and Islam. The British as the last but the longest colonist brought about a new type of Western administration, with legal institutions and secular laws that suited the non-Muslims in the British administration which resulted in the reduction of economic, political and religious influence for the Malays.

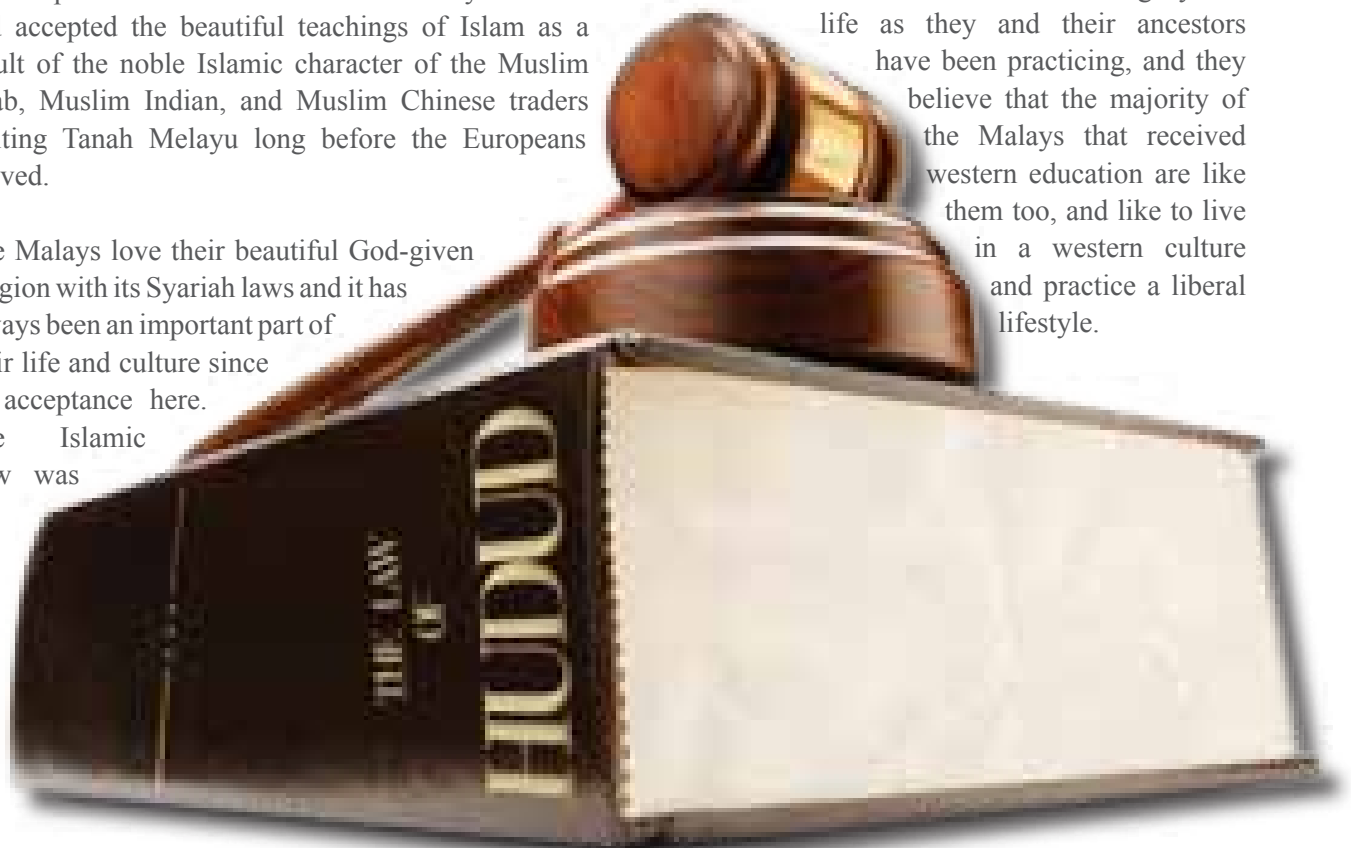
As indigenous people of Tanah Melayu, the Malays were fortunate to be in the region where traders between two continents, India and China, took refuge to wait for the seasonal monsoon winds to change course then continue their journey in their junks or cargo ships. The maritime Malays who lived around port cities such as Singapore, Malacca and Penang, were exposed to the Muslim traders. They received and accepted the beautiful teachings of Islam as a result of the noble Islamic character of the Muslim Arab, Muslim Indian, and Muslim Chinese traders visiting Tanah Melayu long before the Europeans arrived.

The Malays love their beautiful God-given religion with its Syariah laws and it has always been an important part of their life and culture since its acceptance here. The Islamic Law was

practiced in Kedah, Terengganu, Perak, and Malacca as evident in Batu Bersurat (1303) found in Terengganu and also in the Laws of Malacca and Perak. In fact, one of the main reasons for the murder of James Birch was that he imposed a new tax collection authority in place of the Islamic taxation and Zakat that was practiced in Perak for a long time.

The colonial powers and British advisors may have introduced many foreign practices and reduced or restricted the use of Islamic laws during their colonial rule and when “granting independence,” but it didn’t diminish the Malays’ attachment to their Deen, meaning way of life, or religion. Therefore although some Islamic practices have been sidelined for many years in Tanah Melayu, it is not surprising that there is still a strong desire by many Muslims to implement their Islamic beliefs in their daily lives as much as possible. For example, they look for halal food when eating and Riba-free Islamic products for banking and finance, while they guard against mixing of sexes and dress according to Islamic modesty while socializing. Contrary to this is the desire by non-Muslims to maintain the status quo as what they enjoyed during the Colonial era, and minimize the influence of Islam in Malaysia since they have not accepted Islam and do not fully understand and appreciate Islam. To

them it is best to maintain the legacy and life as they and their ancestors have been practicing, and they believe that the majority of the Malays that received western education are like them too, and like to live in a western culture and practice a liberal lifestyle.



“The Malays love their beautiful God-given religion with its Syariah laws and it has always been an important part of their life and culture since its acceptance here.”



However, beginning in the 1970s due to the Islamic resurgence of the Malay society gradually transforming into a more Islamic outlook, naturally, the desire of Malays as Muslims to implement integral parts of their beloved Islam *deen*, or way of life, including Islamic *Syariah*, has gained momentum. This phenomenon will continue as the result of the Government's support in *maqasid Syariah* in areas such as education, economic, culture, and politics. Politically, supporting Islam is an advantage to the ruling Government against the opposition as the Malays will naturally give votes to political parties that support Islamic causes. Many of them that have Islamic degrees benefited directly from the introduction of Islamic institutions such as Islamic schools, colleges and universities, Islamic banks, finance and *takaful*, *ar-Rahnu*, etc. The reaction of the minority non-Muslims in not allowing constructive and informed dialogue and action on important issues that affects the lives of Muslims but instead merely opposing and suppressing what is dear to Muslims' hearts will only be in vain.

It is important for non-Muslims to understand that this need of Muslims to practice Islam as a whole (*syumul*) including *hudud* is not merely a political issue, but a serious matter of faith for many adherents that love Islam, and it is important also for Muslims to understand that many non-Muslims fear Islam for various wrong reasons including misinformation, bad examples and lack of inter-faith dialogue. So in order to move forward, both parties need to understand each other and learn to respect the religious beliefs and culture of our Muslim and non-Muslim friends.

What do non-Muslims need to understand about Malays and Islam?

- Islam is not a religion for a particular race or community, but it is the way of life given by the Creator of this universe to all mankind. Islamic values are universal and for the sake of justice for all creatures of this universe.
- Islam is a beautiful religion or *Deen* from God that covers all aspects of life, not just prayer and marriage.
- While not all Malays have a deep understanding of Islam, most Malays love Islam and want to live their life accordingly since they believe that God created and sustains everything and has given the best guidance to benefit all humans. Like a child does not always understand the wisdom of his or her parents' rules, humans don't always understand the wisdom of Divine Laws, but still Muslims have faith in their sanctity and goodness.
- Muslims must try to follow God's religion and His rules and not reject any, but the implementation should consider the circumstances. Muslims who want to piously practice Islam more fully should not be labeled "extremists."
- The two primary sources of Islam are the Quran, which are the words of Allah, and Hadith, which is the way that the Prophet Muhammad SAW implemented them according to the command of God.
- *Syariah* are the laws Muslims follow as derived from the Islamic sources.
- *Hudud* means limits (not to transgress) and *Hudud* laws are only a small part of *Syariah*.
- Islam places a high priority on security and safety so *Hudud* is an integral part of Islam to set limits and punishments for serious crimes, requiring



severe punishment and prevention. With the current serious issue of crime in Malaysia, naturally Muslims look to Islam for their solution, and Islam is the official religion of Malaysia, applying Syariah for her Muslims.

- Some Muslims believe that since some non-Muslims oppose Hudud and Shariah in Malaysia, therefore their right to freely practice their religion of Islam is being denied.

What do Muslims need to understand about the non-Muslims?

- Most non-Muslims have a limited understanding and appreciation of Islam, due to lack of effective Da'wah efforts.
- Many non-Muslims have a negative feeling towards Islam due to bad examples from "Muslims" and "Muslim countries."
- Non-Muslims are fearful that Islamic Laws will apply to them due to some statements made to this effect.
- Many non-Muslims fear following Islamic practices and laws due to misconceptions of Islam, often propagated by the media and politicians, and violence by "Muslims," often the reaction to killing and oppression of Muslims by foreign powers and "Muslim dictators."
- The current paradigm in the world today holds that secular governance is better than religious governance, and most people subscribe to this

view, leading to a fear of Islamic laws and state.

- Many non-Muslims accord more importance to their personal beliefs over laws from God and the current life over the afterlife and therefore have less belief in religious governance. The religious history in Europe has also led to the prevalent belief in separation of state and religion.
- The powerful, developed non-Muslim world of this epoch is seen as successful relative to the poor and problematic Muslim world, therefore the religion, laws and governance of the former are naturally taken to be a better model to follow. There is not an obvious Islamic model today which proves to the non-Muslims the beauty and superiority of Islam and Islamic laws.
- Some non-Muslims believe that there are limits on their right to freely practice their religion and propagate their religion in Malaysia even though some non-Muslims have been vocal in opposing Muslims practicing Islam, such as Hudud.


What do Malaysians need to know about the history of Tanah Melayu?

- The Malays and Orang Asli are the indigenous race to Tanah Melayu, belong to the Malayo-Polynesian group of races, and the earliest groups, considered the Orang Asli arrived around 2000 BC.
- Islam came to the Malay Peninsula around 700 years ago as evidenced by the Terengganu Scripture Stone (Batu Bersurat) from the 14th

Century (probably 1326 AD). Islam became the predominant religion of the Malay Peninsula between the 15th and 17th centuries.

- Parameswara, founder and ruler of Malacca (approx 1402), converted to Islam in the 15th century, thus starting the first powerful Malay empire with growing commercial trade and spreading Islam throughout the region. An important characteristic of this empire was its cosmopolitan society with peace and prosperity, an inspiration for today's multi-cultural Malaysia.
- The Chinese sailed to the region for trade and the famous Chinese Muslim Admiral Cheng Ho visited Malacca in 1409 when Parameswara was still alive.
- The European colonialists started arriving when the Portuguese conquered Malacca in 1511 with a religious agenda, but the Muslims & the Malay states were not unified enough to defeat them.
- The Dutch captured Malacca in 1641 and unlike the Portuguese with their hatred of Muslims and forced conversions; they generally did not interfere in the local customs and practices.
- In 1824 Great Britain and the Netherlands signed a treaty leading to the British gaining control over the Malay Peninsula. As a result of this British colonization, Malaysian law is mainly based on Common Law with the criminal law based on the Indian Criminal Code.
- The British finally granted independence, but they wrote and imposed a constitution that provides for a dual justice system with secular laws for all and Shariah laws for Muslims only. Additionally there are Muslim rulers for most states who are the heads of Islam. The Constitution established Islam as the official religion of the country, but allowed other religions to be practiced.
- At Independence, the major ethnic groups came to a compromise solution to the situation created by European colonialism in Tanah Melayu: the Chinese and Indian immigrants were granted citizenship and the Bumiputeras were recognized as the indigenous people and given certain privileges, Malays were defined as Muslims, and Islam the official religion of Malaysia, but all religions could be practiced freely. Multi-racial Malaysia allowed all to share the pie, thanks to the Malays' generally tolerant and generous nature.





“ The reaction of the minority non-Muslims in not allowing constructive and informed dialogue and action on important issues that affects the lives of Muslims but instead merely opposing and suppressing what is dear to Muslims’ hearts will only be in vain. acceptance here. ”

Conclusion: What needs to be done

There is a big divide in the feelings for Islam in Malaysia between the Muslims and the non-Muslims. Both groups are pushing for their agenda based upon their own understanding and perceptions of Islam and their own interests, but both groups must deepen their dialogue and understanding to accept the differences and find successful, productive ways forward.

Within the Muslim ummah there is a minority dissenting voice against Syariah or its hudud laws. There are two main causes for this: (1) Some Muslims don’t understand Islam properly, hence they interpret Islam according to their own logic which is not according to the science of Islamic jurisprudence laws, and (2) Some Muslims lead a life according to their own whims, living in their own comfort zone where religious decrees are not given importance, hence haram and halal restrictions are ignored and they feel threatened that Syariah may restrict their free lifestyle. Their voices do not represent Islam and they are not qualified to talk about Islamic laws, but instead they need guidance from true Islamic scholars.

Some Muslims have staked their claim on introducing more Islamic laws for Muslims since that is their religion and they are free to practice their religion here, while some non-Muslims have reacted by rejecting these aspirations outright, while others have tried to confuse the matter with misinformation. Muslims need to deepen their understanding of Islam and its practices in order to be good representatives of their faith, and they need to convey a fuller understanding and appreciation of Islam to non-Muslims using hikmah. Muslims also must strive to develop their character according to the ideal of their beloved Prophet Muhammad SAW in order to be successful, provide beneficial leadership, and to be seen as role models to non-Muslims or “ambassadors of Islam.”

The Muslims’ love for Islam and their desire to practice Islam more freely should not be suppressed, especially considering a history of over 600 years of Islam in Tanah Melayu being practiced by most of the indigenous Malays, that Malaysia is a Muslim majority country, that Islam is the official religion of Malaysia, and that the democratic process allows people to discuss and implement laws and decide how they want to be governed.

A sincere and deep dialogue within and between these groups must be allowed and facilitated. Hudud is undeniably a part of Syariah and Islam, and therefore it cannot be denied as a part of Islam nor should Muslims be denied the right to explore its implementation, even though it will not be easy. However, Muslims need to spend much time researching and discussing amongst themselves on what more needs to be done and how it could be implemented with justice, as this is a requirement.

Non-Muslims should not deny Muslims their right to practice their religion just as non-Muslims demand to be able to practice their religion. However, Muslims must do Da’wah and dialogue with non-Muslims so that non-Muslims will better understand and appreciate Islam and Muslims’ love for their religion. Non-Muslims must better understand the beauty of Islam and that it is not oppressive, but that it is of great benefit to mankind.

Misinformation and misconceptions must be cleared-up through substantial, learned dialogue so that misunderstanding does not create fear and fearful responses from non-Muslims. The details of Syariah and Hudud implementation must be made clear to non-Muslims so they don’t have to fear the imposition of Shariah law upon them. And to increase appreciation and reduce fear, Muslim scholars can explain to the non-Muslims more about Hudud and the necessary pre-conditions for merciful and just implementation, limitation to severe crimes, and strict conditions for evidence and witnesses to prove the crime and apply the punishment. Muslims must do more Da’wah to address the non-Muslims’ fears and increase their appreciation for the beauty of Islam, Insha’Allah.

This Da’wah effort must include a sincere and constructive interfaith dialogue to formulate the best path forward.

“To you be your religion, and to me my religion (Islamic Monotheism).” [Quran 109:6]





by Norhafsa Hamid (Advocate and
solicitor of civil and Shariah law)

SHARIA FAMILY LAW IN MALAYSIA – GENDER EQUALITY, IS IT A MYTH?

INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a multiracial country with multiple religious background and ethnic groups. Islam, though is the official religion of the country, other faiths are free to practice their religion. Malaysia has a unique system of law. The law in Malaysia is based on a dual system. The Civil law in Malaysia, governs everyone in the country where as the Sharia law is applicable to Muslims only. Muslims have been defined as person professing the religion of Islam.

Article 121(1A) of the Federal Constitution of Malaysia clearly states that:

(1A) The courts referred to in Clause (1) shall have no jurisdiction in respect of matter within the jurisdiction of the Syariah courts.

The jurisdiction of Sharia law in Malaysia is only limited to the following matters:

- 1) Family laws in respect of betrothal, marriage, divorce, dower, custody, adoption, legitimacy, guardianship, maintenance of children, matrimonial properties and alimony.
- 2) Laws of Succession: Probate and Administration, gifts, non-charitable trusts and partitions.
A point to note here is that the power to grant a letter of Administration (also known as 'LA') still rests with the Civil High Court. The function of the Sharia High Court is to determine the division of the estate properties in accordance to Islamic law (faraid)
- 3) Criminal law is limited and confined to offences relating to indecency, polygamous marriage, close proximity, indecent dressing and behavior, violation of Islamic laws eg. not fasting during Ramadhan, desertion by spouse, gambling and drinking

The Malay Rulers in each respective state is the Head of Religion. For states without Rulers, then the King

i.e. Yang Di Pertuan Agong is the Head of Religion.

B. Is the Sharia system in Malaysia gender biased?

Since the introduction of the Sharia court system in Malaysia, the Sharia law has since been under the scrutiny of the public eye especially matters regarding family law, conversion and apostasy. Court procedures and decisions with regard to family law have come under heavy criticism by both Muslims and non-Muslims alike for being gender biased especially against women. Some procedures have been termed as draconian and patriarchal.

Traditionally, when matters were heard by the Qadi, the Qadi came under heavy criticism for delay in handling disputes and also showing gender bias. Years have passed since but the same criticism still arises.

Could it be that the Sharia system and law formulated by each state is a failure from the start or is it the flaw of the people behind the system?

Sharia law is the body of doctrines that regulate the



“The Sharia law is the code of law derived from Quran and teachings of Prophet Muhammad SAW, also known as Hadith. Other sources of law includes consensus of religious scholars embodied in ijma and analogy from the Quran and Hadith through qiyas”

lives of those who profess Islam. The Sharia law is the code of law derived from Quran and teachings of Prophet Muhammad SAW, also known as Hadith. Other sources of law includes consensus of religious scholars embodied in ijma and analogy from the Quran and Hadith through qiyas. In Malaysia, the courts have also taken into account fatwa or a ruling on a point of Islamic law that is decided by muftis or other recognized religious bodies (strictly in accordance to the paradigm of ijma and qiyas), in deciding matters.

Critics have consistently over the years, demanded for a revision in the Islamic family laws, asking for greater penalties for men who violate the laws and provisions in the law to ensure that all wives and dependants are fairly and adequately provided for. They have even called for gender sensitization training for judges, religious officials and counselors.

Sharia judges and officials have been labeled as gender biased, taking the side of the men in most cases and leaving the women in the lurch. The Sharia courts and religious authorities have been heavily criticized for failing to uphold the rights of the women and to protect them. In fact, they have been accused of letting the men ‘get away with murder.’ How true are these accusations and criticism? Is there really a religious apartheid in Malaysia or is it a case of sensationalizing a ‘storm in a tea cup?’

C. Issues on Gender Inequality

One must admit that some of the issues that have been championed by some women groups or individuals that have been labeled as ‘feminist’ do have valid points. However, in spite of their high-profile supporters, these groups have yet to convince the majority of the Muslim sisters in Malaysia to get on board with them for sheer reason that groups like SIS are seen to be questioning and attacking the fundamental Islamic principles.

There are also moderate groups who disagree with the trend of ‘re-interpreting’ the Quran from the view of a westerner or promoting western values and concepts in the name of equality as has been done by certain groups.

These moderate groups believe in addressing gender issue or justice within the Muslim society in a non-confrontational manner rather than selling the story to the media. After all, if these ‘feminist’ groups accept the commandments in the Holy Quran as the Divine Law, then the only problem should be with the enforcer of the law i.e. the authorities or lawmaker. But instead, from the issues that have been raised, it would seem that they have an issue with the Divine Law itself and that poses a problem amongst other Muslims.

One must always bear in mind that no religion preaches violence or disunity. To the Muslims, Islam is a perfect religion. Every commandment and ruling that is specifically prescribed and stated in the Quran and Hadith are completely flawless in essence.

“This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion.”

The Divine Law is perfect but alas, interpretations and enforcement is done by man. “To err is human”. Problems arise when different interpretation is given by different judges and different enforcement is being upheld by different courts.

The Sharia system in Malaysia is still considered young and has not fully developed. There are still hiccups and teething problems in the system that need to be remedied but on the whole, the Courts have been striving to ensure that rights of parties specifically provided for are protected and upheld. For example, in cases of polygamy, religious authorities have taken steps to ensure that the rights of the women especially the first wives are protected. Section 23 of the Islamic Family Law (Federal Territory) Act 1984 provides that for any man wishing to take another wife, he must first obtain the permission from the Sharia courts.





The man bears the burden of proof that he is able financially and physically to maintain the current family as well as the new one. There have been cases where the man's application was dismissed because the court was not satisfied that the new marriage was necessary.

As to the conservative view that men possess absolute authority in the family, one must understand that Islam encourages neither male despotism-patriarchy or female despotism-patriarchy. In fact, Islam strongly holds the concept of consultation both in family units and in other socio-political situations. Conservative interpretation of the Divine Law actually resulted from local or national cultures based on customs or traditions which are not necessarily Islamic.

The conditions set forth by the laws are not meant to forbid polygamy, but as a mechanism to prevent men from abusing the necessity of polygamy as they like. From these cases, we can see the fairness of the judges in handling polygamy application and protecting the women.

The Sharia authorities have taken one step further in trying to avoid abuse towards women in that section 123 of the Islamic Family Law (Federal Territory) Act 1984 has also provisioned a penalty for men

who failed to obtain consent from the court before proceeding to re-marry. For cases of matrimonial property or 'harta sepencarian', the courts in most instances still adhere to the basic ruling that the property of the wives are her own, especially in cases where the wife is a house-wife hence there is no possibility of her 'earning' and acquiring her own property. Whatever money she receives from the husband is considered 'maintenance' or 'nafkah,' which is compulsory in Islam, and it is not permissible for the husband to demand the return of it.

The issue of gender bias is not limited to the Sharia system in Malaysia. In Israel, according to orthodox Jewish law and Israeli law, a woman can never obtain a divorce from her husband unless the husband agrees to it. Should the husband disagree then the wife is trapped in the marriage with no civil alternative. The divorce cases are stuck in the rabbinic court. Unfortunately in Israel, the men have the final say and yet the whole world does not make an issue out of it.

Upon close scrutiny, complaints about gender equality came from parties who were not satisfied with the rulings of the Courts. Instead of trying to resolve the issues amicably, they chose to sell their story to the press and play the victim. Being confrontational

“The Muslim women in Malaysia are actually more empowered to bring their cases to court without being harassed or threatened and are able to safeguard their interest.”

about an issue often will not bring home the result that one wishes to achieve, but instead the opposite.

One of the complaints by the critics is that the men get away without paying child maintenance due to lack of enforcement of judgment by the courts or authorities. Little do people know that the Sharia courts do have the power to order security for maintenance of a child from Section 74 of the Islamic Family Law (Federal Territory) 1984.

In 2008, the ‘Family Support Department’ was established under the Department of Selangor Judiciary (JAKSES). The function of this family support department is to tackle the weakness in the enforcement of alimony and maintenance for children against ex-husbands. The department also resolves issues of delays in handling cases of enforcement of judicial orders. Additionally, it arranges financial support to children who are victims of non-payment of maintenance by the husband, whether in marriage or divorce based on Islamic law.

Despite problems within the Sharia legal system, if one were to study and compare the rights of Muslim women in Malaysia with the rights of Muslim women in other countries such as the United Kingdom, India or even America, the Muslim women in Malaysia are given a stronger voice and greater rights specifically under the Sharia Act. The Muslim women in Malaysia are actually more empowered to bring their cases to court without being harassed or threatened and are able to safeguard their interest.

D. Conclusion.

Gender equality in the Malaysian Sharia system is not a myth but a reality. However, what is perceived as ‘equal’ is very subjective. Furthermore, ‘equality’ in the Sharia legal system may not be the same as ‘equality’ in other western legal systems as rights of women as well as men are well defined and stated in the Quran. Compared to other legal systems in other countries as well the civil legal system in Malaysia, the Sharia court system in Malaysia is still considered as a ‘toddler’. It still has to work out its weaknesses, but the authorities are taking steps to do so.

Allah swt created man and woman in two different biological phenomena whereby man has a distinctive biological system from woman. The difference is not based on gender bias, but for a balanced rhythmic lifestyle. Allah swt created man as a leader and entrusted this responsibility on his shoulders to look after the entire welfare of his life partner (wife). This leadership is for the welfare of the woman, not for gender discrimination.

Compared to other legal systems in other countries as well as the civil legal system in Malaysia, the Sharia courts’ operational system in Malaysia is still considered as a “toddler.” It still has to work out how to improve its operational tools. The authorities are taking steps to overcome its operational weaknesses, but this is purely the technical side, which has nothing to do with the Shariah. The true Shariah laws are errorless beyond doubt and they are from Allah the Almighty.

Steps have been taken by the authorities to improvise the ‘kinks’ in the operational system, with the help by some Islamic women NGOs. However, one must not expect change to happen overnight, after all ‘Rome was not built in one day’.

The intentions behind the enacted laws are in the right place, but the lawmakers and the law-enforcers are not the same people, which is the case in any country for that matter. Hence, the right intention of the Act may be lost in translation due to the different interpretation or enforcement and that is not an ‘equality’ problem but a common problem in all legal systems in the world.

THE HAJJ AND THE NEW MUSLIM



By Dr. Y. Mansoor Marican

The Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is a “once in a lifetime” obligation. About three million pilgrims perform the Hajj in Dhul Hijjah, the final month of the Islamic calendar.

The Almighty says, “And take a provision (with you) for the journey but the best provision is At-Taḳwa (piety, righteousness).” [Al Qur’an 2:197]

The pilgrims proceed to Makkah answering their Creator’s call to submit to Him by proclaiming, “Here I am at Your service, O Allah, here I am. You have no partner, here I am. You alone deserve all praise and gratitude. To You belongs all favours, blessings and sovereignty and You have no partner.”

The goal of every pilgrim is Hajj Mabrur or an accepted Hajj. One who attains this blessing emerges from the Hajj “like a newborn baby” (free of sins). [Ibn Majah] “There is no reward for an accepted Hajj except Paradise.” [Bukhari]

The Hajj is not an obligation that one fulfills at a late stage in one’s life, but best fulfilled as soon as one is able “as no one knows what lies ahead.” [Ahmad, Ibn Majah, Abu Dawud]

The requirements are: Muslim, sane, adult, free (not a slave), with a Mahram (for women), and physically and financially able.

Financial ability to perform Hajj does not suddenly happen to many brothers and sisters. It is the outcome of a plan of action.

You have to set aside a portion of your monthly income as savings for Hajj for yourself and your spouse. A good way of doing this is to open separate savings accounts for yourself and spouse with Tabung Haji and deposit this amount into those accounts. When the amount reaches the minimum level set by Tabung Haji, you then register with Tabung Haji your intention to perform the Hajj. You will be assigned a number in the queue of intending pilgrims and the year you will be offered the opportunity to perform the Hajj, Insha Allah.

It is best that you also open accounts for your children so that they will have an early start.

Register for Hajj as soon as possible as Tabung Haji has a long waiting list. As at 2014, the waiting list is over 20 years long. Insha Allah, when the current work to expand Masjidul Haraam is completed,

Malaysia's Hajj quota will be increased, and the waiting period will be reduced.

Enquire from Baitulmal about your eligibility under their Umrah/Hajj sponsorship programme for new Muslims.

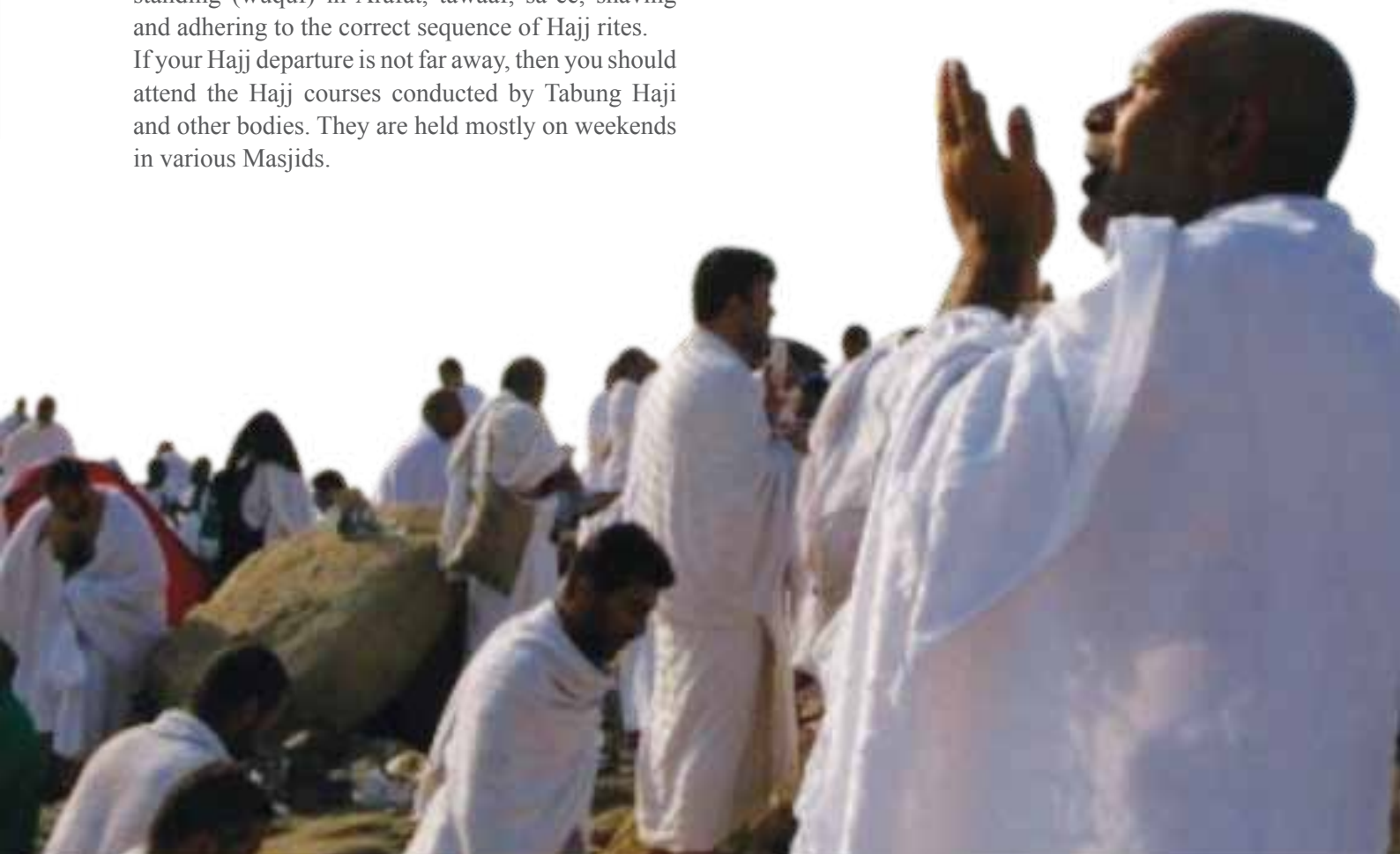
There is no rule that forbids the performance of multiple Hajj. If you are really keen on performing "one more Hajj," have a heart for the thousands that are waiting for their turn! Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) performed Hajj once during his lifetime in the tenth year of the Hijra. It is also known as the "the Farewell Pilgrimage."

While there is no urgent need to learn about all the rituals of Hajj, it is our obligation as a Muslim to constantly increase our knowledge of as many aspects of our faith as possible. A good source book about Hajj is "Getting the Best out of Hajj" by Abu Muneer Ismail Davids.

The integrals (rukun) of Hajj are making the intention, standing (wuquf) in Arafat, tawaaf, sa'ee, shaving and adhering to the correct sequence of Hajj rites. If your Hajj departure is not far away, then you should attend the Hajj courses conducted by Tabung Haji and other bodies. They are held mostly on weekends in various Masjids.

We are blessed to be in a country that provides the best training opportunities for Hajj. This is internationally acknowledged. Malaysian pilgrims are regularly singled out for their excellent behaviour in The Sacred Land in the speeches of the Saudi Minister for Hajj Affairs. All Malaysian pilgrims have a special responsibility to maintain the good reputation that our Malaysian brothers and sisters have built-up over the years.

There will be 'good' and 'bad' moments during your Hajj stay (approximately 40 days for most pilgrims) in The Sacred Land. Be grateful to The Almighty for the good times and be even more grateful to The Almighty for the bad times. Gratefully accept the difficult moments as blessings from The Almighty to test your faith. This was the way of some of the Companions of the Prophet (ra). A day without a bad moment would not have been a good day for them! Always remember that when in Hajj you are there not as a customer of the Hajj company that brought you there but as a GUEST of Allah The All Loving. You are there because you have been invited by



Allah, an invitation The Almighty extended to you through Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him). [Al Quran 22:26-27]

Being a GUEST of Allah is among the greatest blessings you can have in this temporary life. In speech and behaviour, aspire to the best guest in Hajj. Do not fall into the numerous traps set by Shaytan to divert you from being worthy of this honour. In

today's Hajj, the cell phone is the major diversion. Do not be among those who spend more time with their cell phones than with ibadah.

Wuquf ('Standing') in Arafat is the climax of Hajj. The approximately five and a half hours from Zuhr to Maghrib are the most precious hours of your life! Make every minute count. Do not waste them in chatting, smoking and sleeping!



In a gathering the size of Hajj, certain medical problems are unavoidable. The common ones are flu, coughing, runny nose and sore throat. Follow the medical advice given by the doctors to ensure that your body's resistance remains at a high level to cope with the above and other medical problems.

With the spread of the deadly Middle East Respiratory System Coronavirus (MERS-CoV), pilgrims are strongly encouraged to follow the medical directives issued by the Saudi authorities. At present only the Meningococcal Meningitis type A, C, Y, W135 vaccine is compulsory.

View Hajj as a journey of returning to Allah to seek forgiveness for your sins and to make a pledge in the House of Allah to lead a life that is Allah-centered from now onwards.

Thus Hajj does not end in The Sacred Land. Hajj must transform your speech and behaviour, Insha Allah. Sadly, a few weeks after the return from Hajj, the commitment made at Arafat and in The House of Allah gradually declines, and in some cases, there is little evidence after one or two months that they had performed the Hajj.

Strive to be among those who are continuously struggling to earn the pleasure of Allah swt. Surround yourself with brothers/sisters who remind you of Allah, spend more time in the Masjid, attend Islamic classes to increase your knowledge, and participate in voluntary activities in the Way of Allah. These are examples of many things that you should do to keep the spirit of Hajj alive in all your affairs until your final breadth. May Allah swt make it easy for all, Ameen.

“ Being a GUEST of Allah is among the greatest blessings you can have in this temporary life. In speech and behaviour, aspire to the best guest in Hajj. ”



PROTECTED AND GUIDED

Syed Afra Fatima

I was born into a high orthodox Hindu family, which is considered to be the upper most class in India.

I do not remember that I prayed, until I was in high school. I started to pray to one of the gods. I was very religious so my Muslim friends used to make fun of me, they asked: 'as you have many gods, who do you pray to?'. With my little mature nature I choose one of the lords and started to pray. I used to fast and pray, all the time thinking that he is the only one who can save me. Later when I reflected, I used to think every night: does this god exist? Why are we suffering, financially and have health problems? My parents prayed every day without fail. Even though I prayed, I was not happy from my inner heart. There was no attraction for me; I felt something was "missing".

In 2012 I started researching Islam. I started to read the first chapter of the Qur'an, but I was not happy with the surah al-Fatihah and some introduction. It seemed strange to me why the Lord ask Himself to pray to Him. When I read: "All praises to Allah, He is the only one GOD", fear Allah, and a few other translation quotes, it made me think: why is God asking Himself to pray. (At that time I understood the meaning in this way).

When I went for my master's degree in London, I totally stopped praying, fasting and going to the temples, all of them. I was missing something in my life.

One day when I came back home from university I was so hungry and I went to a restaurant and had my dinner. In fact, it happened to be the month of Ramadan and 'lucky iftar time'. The manager refused to take money from me and I wondered why. He said "it's iftar time, you are my guest." I was surprised, I thought; "is this Islam?"

Later in 2013 I started reading the Qur'an again, with much more interest. This time it was like second nature to me; I found myself reading into it more and more. Not a day went by without reading about Islam and what the daily routines of Muslims involve. I began to fall in love with this beautiful religion. I admired how modest the women dress from wearing a simple headscarf to the niqaab/burqa. How precious the women were in Islam. I compared it with my religion and the way they treat women. I felt very guilty and the way Muslim women are treated amazed me. Wow! I was really attracted to the sisterhood/brotherhood, the kindness and the helping nature of the Muslims. And when I read Qur'ans I was shocked and thought: 'this is what is happening today in our current life, Allah knows all, everything.'

Even about the Salah. Allah knows that, because of this materialistic life, we cannot pray more than five times a day, so He accepted the Prophet's SAW request to reduce the prayer (from the initial 50). Allah accepted prayer 5 times a day. Allah the All-Mighty, He knows all.

The way Indians portray Muslims as terrorists, is just not true. It's all about the media, which changed the meaning

In 2012 I started researching Islam. I started to read the first chapter of the Qur'an, but I was not happy with the surah al-Fatihah and some introduction. It seemed strange to me why the Lord ask Himself to pray to Him. When I read: "All praises to Allah, He is the only one GOD", fear Allah, and a few other translation quotes, it made me think: why is God asking Himself to pray.

of the jihad and the characteristics of Muslims. When I read the real meaning of jihad in the Qur'ans I was so surprised. Also the importance that they give to their family. I heard the same words from a few of my Muslim friends: "At dinner time we wait for all our family members and we eat together." I saw a few posts on Facebook about Hadith so I started to read '40 Hadith for children' as stories in a PDF file, which surprised me even more, as most of those Hadith we also follow as Hindus. After reading more, I realised that all other religions are just man-made and that Islam is the only true religion and ALLAH is the only GOD.

Alhamdulillah I came to a Muslim country in January 2012, i.e. Malaysia. Actually only after coming here did I realise that this is a Muslim country. After coming to Malaysia I noticed that Muslims here were quite different than what I had seen earlier. People just wear Hijab that's it. After I read a few more articles about this, I understood the differences in culture and country, but not in the religion.

I said my shahadah in April 2014 in Malaysia and have not and will never look back. I went out the same day and purchased a Hijab (headscarf) and an abaya (long gown) and started wearing it immediately. I even started doing my shopping in the area where many Muslims live.

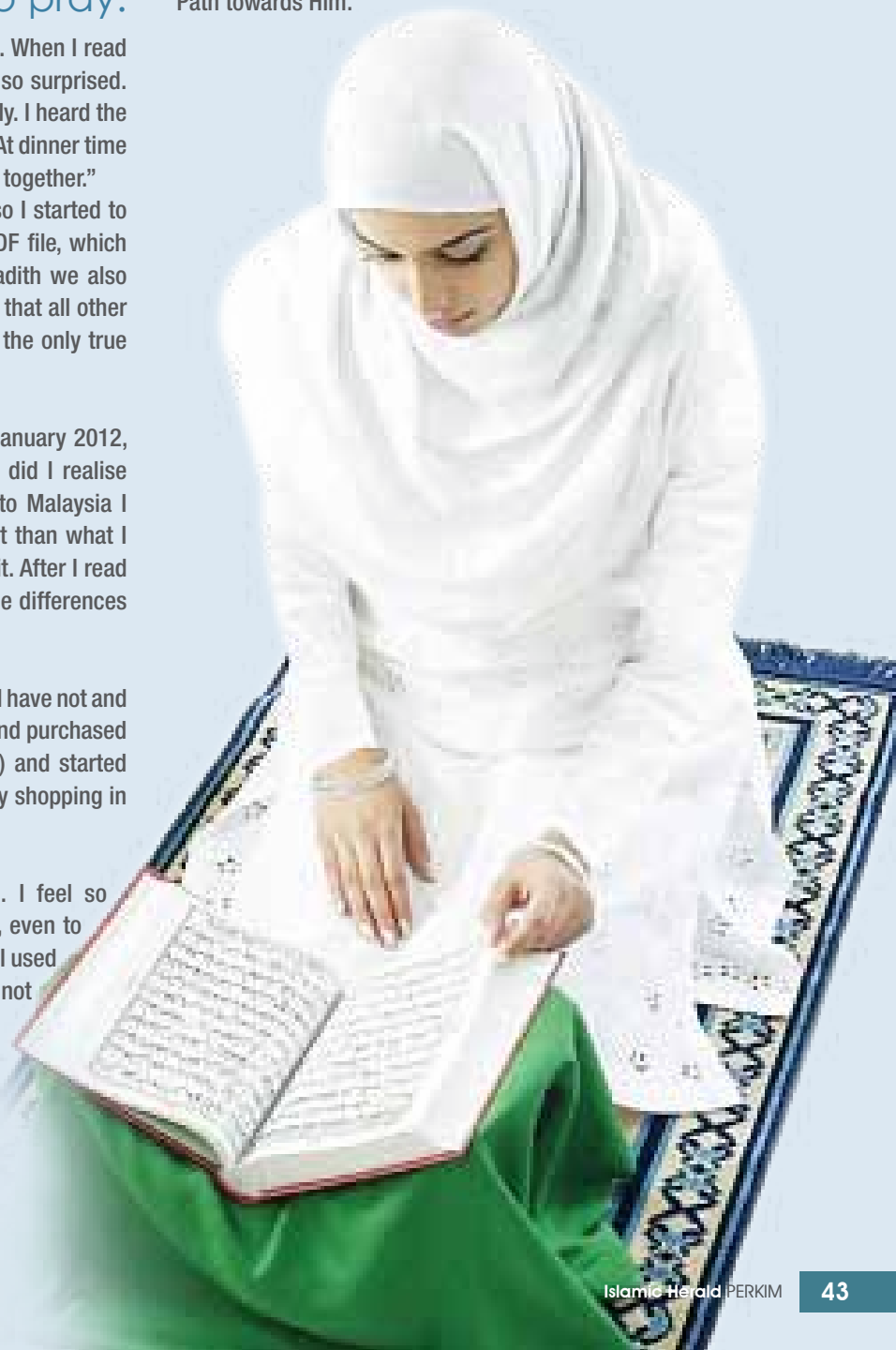
I still have much more to learn, Insha'Allah. I feel so complete like a breath of fresh everlasting air, even to the point where I always feel relaxed and calm; I used to have the tendency to get stressed at times; not so much anymore.

When I look back on my life now, I realise that I always had a Muslim friend alongside with me. In my childhood when I was 4 years

old I remember my father's manager was a Muslim, I used to go and play at his house.

Even at school I had one best friend who is Muslim. When my mother came to pay the school fees, my mathematics teacher at my school asked my mother to give me up for adoption, as he wanted to take care of me as his child. And recently when I was leaving my country, at the airport my luggage was overweight. They told me to pay extra, but I told them I had only a little money with me. I asked them if I can pay only half the amount at first, but they rejected. Later the agent asked me to wait and called his manager. The manager came, checked my passport and asked me to proceed to security checks without paying extra. I guess the manager was also a Muslim.

I remember all of these events today, and I wonder about how Allah protected me and how He showed me the correct Path towards Him.



Take a Break



A Brave Man

A man is taking a walk in Central park in New York. Suddenly he sees a little girl being attacked by a pit bull dog . He runs over and starts fighting with the dog. He succeeds in killing the dog and saving the girl's life. A policeman who was watching the scene walks over and says: "You are a hero, tomorrow you can read it in all the newspapers: "Brave New Yorker saves the life of little girl" The man says: - "But I am not a New Yorker!" "Oh ,then it will say in newspapers in the morning: 'Brave American saves life of little girl'" – the policeman answers. "But I am not an American!" – says the man. "Oh, what are you then? " The man says: - "I am a Saudi !" The next day the newspapers says: "Islamic extremist kills innocent American dog.

Good And Bad News

Here is the story of an Imam who got up after Friday prayers and announced to the people:"I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets



That's what they said the last time too..."

An Imam shocked his community when he announced that he was resigning from that particular Masjid and moving to a drier climate. After the session, a man came to the Imam with tears in his eyes, "Oh, Imam, we are going to miss you so much. We don't want you to leave!" The kind hearted Imam said "No, no, brother, don't cry. The Imam who takes my place might be even better than me".

"Yeah", he said, with a tone of disappointment in his voice, "That's what they said the last time too..."



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PERTUBUHAN KEBAJIKAN ISLAM MALAYSIA **MUSLIM WELFARE ORGANISATION MALAYSIA**

الجمعية الخيرية الإسلامية بماليزيا

Sumbangan/Zakat (Donation/Zakat)

Sebarang bentuk sumbangan / zakat boleh disalurkan ke Ibu Pejabat PERKIM untuk membantu golongan:

Any form of donation / zakat can be channel to PERKIM Headquarters to help:

- Mualaf / Converts
- Fakir Miskin / Poors
- Ibu Tunggal / Single Parent
- Anak Yatim / Orphans
- Mangsa bencana / Disaster victims
- Orang Kurang Upaya / Disabled people

Sumbangan boleh diberi dalam bentuk :

Donations may be given in the form:

- Wang ringgit (tunai/cek) / Money (cash / check)
- Kerusi roda / Wheelchair
- Kenderaan (kereta/van/bas) / Vehicle (car / van / bus)
- Pakaian terpakai / Used clothes
- Makanan/ Foods
- Kepakaran, kemahiran/Expertise

Sumbangan yang berbentuk tunai / cek boleh dikreditkan ke :

Donations in the form of cash or checks can be credited to :

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Pihak PERKIM akan mengeluarkan resit pengurangan cukai bagi setiap penderma dan penyumbang.

PERKIM will issue a receipt for tax deductible for all donors and contributors.

Mereka yang bersifat pemurah dan dermawan bukan sahaja disanjung dan dikasihi oleh masyarakat, malah di akhirat Allah SWT menjanjikan ganjaran yang berlipat kali ganda. Allah SWT telah memberi jaminan bahawa sifat pemurah dan dermawan tidak akan mengurangkan harta malah rezekinya akan ditambah selain mendapat saham pahala akhirat yang berterusan. Firman Allah SWT dalam surah al-Baqarah ayat 261: "Bandingan (derma) orang-orang yang membelanjakan hartanya pada jalan Allah ialah sama seperti sebiji benih yang tumbuh menerbitkan tujuh tangkai : tiap-tiap tangkai itu pula mengandungi seratus biji. Dan (ingatlah) Allah akan melipatgandakan pahala bagi sesiapa yang dikehendakinya dan Allah Maha luas (rahmat) kurniasan-Nya lagi meliputi ilmu pengetahuan-Nya".

Para Malaikat turut berdoa agar rezeki orang yang menderma makin bertambah dan orang yang bakhil itu kehancuran. Sabda Rasulullah SAW:

"Tidak ada satu hari hamba Allah berpagi pada hari itu, selain ia dihadiri dua Malaikat; kemudian salah seorang daripada keduanya mendoakan: "Wahai Tuhan, berilah si dermawan itu ganti; dan salah satu malaikat lagi mendoakan: Wahai Tuhan, berilah orang yang bakhil itu kehancuran". (Sahih al-Bukhari)

Sifat bakhil dan mementingkan diri sendiri menjejaskan imej Islam sebagai agama yang membawa rahmat. Hal ini selaras dengan amaran Allah SWT dalam surah Ali-Imran ayat 180:

Maksudnya: "Dan jangan sekali-sekali orang-orang yang bakhil dengan harta benda yang telah dikurniakan Allah kepada mereka dari kemurahan-Nya - meyangka keadaan bakhilnya itu baik bagi mereka. Bahkan ia adalah buruk bagi mereka. Mereka akan dikalungkan (diseksa) dengan apa yang mereka bakhilkan itu pada hari kiamat kelak. Dan bagi Allah jumlah hak milik segala warisan (isi) langit dan bumi. Dan (ingatlah), Allah Maha Mengetahui dengan mendalam akan segala yang kamu kerjakan".

IBU PEJABAT / HEADQUARTERS

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