

23 JUL 1996

Hamid-Kazakhstan

MALAYSIA TO PROPAGATE ISLAM IN KAZAKHSTAN AND KYRGYZ

KUALA LUMPUR, July 23 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will assist in propagating Islam in Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic, said Minister in The Prime Minister's Department, Datuk Dr Abdul Hamid Othman.

He said the move was based on the fact that almost 95 per cent of Islamic practices no longer existed in both countries although the people there claim to be Muslims.

This happened because the two countries were colonised by the Soviet Communists for about 70 years, he told reporters at the parliament lobby, here today.

Dr Abdul Hamid was one of the ministers who accompanied Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on his visits to Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic recently.

Dr Abdul Hamid said the Prime Minister mentioned at one function that Muslim brotherhood had attracted the Malaysian people to propagate Islam in the two countries.

Dr Abdul Hamid said two main components which must be given emphasis in propagating Islam there were the faith of the people and the Muslim capabilities in terms of economy.

He said in terms economy, there were Malaysians investing in gold mining, tourism and aviation in the two countries.

He said there were dignitaries met during the visit who claimed they were Muslims but were not familiar with certain aspects of the religion.

Ironically, these two countries were the strong centres of Islamic civilisation at one time where many Muslim scholars, as well as books on philosophy, astronomy and medicine translated from Greek and Roman to Arabic could be found.

Dr Abdul Hamid said the two countries were the centres of Islamic growth then, but the situation changed after they were colonised by the communists.

He said, however, the propagation of Islam in the two countries must be carried out carefully because there were between 25 and 30 per cent non-Muslims there. -- BERNAMA

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