

01/08/2001

Lead way in promoting use of Islamic dinar, Malaysia urged

Dzulkarnain Taib

MALAYSIA has been urged to lead the way in the widespread promotion of the Islamic dinar among Muslims and economies of Muslim countries in the world.

Making the call, Umar Ibrahim Vadillo, head of the Murabitun World Wide Movement, said Malaysia is in the best position to spearhead the effort since the country is seen as an outspoken leader on international issues in the Muslim world.

Umar said Malaysia's strength lies in its strong opposition to the actions of currency speculators that were believed to be instrumental in the catastrophic Asian financial crisis four years ago.

"We see how the currency value of the Indonesian rupiah and the Malaysian ringgit were devalued during the Asian financial crisis and this just proves the vulneralability of the paper currency system.

"The Islamic dinar system which once dominated the world economy in its popular use is the only way to fight the hegemony of the capitalist system," Umar said to reporters after a courtesy call on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at his office.

The Murabitun World Wide Movement founded by Shaykh Abdalqadir As-Sufi aims to share the aspiration of establishing Islam in Europe and to back the Islamic way of life in Muslim countries.

After explaining the concept of the Islamic dinar as the currency of the Muslims, Umar said Dr Mahathir has expressed delight of the idea and has called for a seminar to be organised on the issue.

"The Prime Minister has suggested a seminar to discuss on the idea of the Islamic dinar and how it can be made a world currency.

"We believe that the Islamic dinar is the only force strong enough to challenge the hegemony of the US dollar," Umar said.

Asked on the use of the Islamic dinar Umar said the only way was through promoting its use among the people since it would be difficult to implement it via the current monetary system.

"The purpose is to increase the functionality of the coins. Its use would not depend on the political process but on the spontaneous use among the people.

"A piece of gold is of value from day one and we can create a trading bloc with gold as its basis," Umar explained.

He said the advantage of using gold as a medium of currency is that its price is constant and stable, and it is a mechandise which is not inflation-sensitive.

Historically, the Islamic dinar saw its first economic use during the time of the second caliph, Umar al-Khattab.

"The Islamic dinar is part of the Islamic culture for the past 1,000 years. For Muslims it is the question of historical importance to restore the use of the Islamic dinar," Umar said.

An Islamic dinar is 4.25gm of gold and a dirham is 3gm of sterling silver -known as the standard of Umar al-Khattab.

Shaykh Abdalqadir, 71, which lead the group in the meeting with Dr Mahathir said he saw great Muslim leadership qualities in the Prime Minister and admired his resilience and courage in taking on the capitalist entities of the world such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

"I am moved to meet a leader who coincidently is the only Islamic leader

who has taken on the forces of kuffar (anti-Islamic forces) of the IMF and World Bank and the paper money system.

"I speak from my heart that you don't really realise what you have in Dr Mahathir.

"Dr Mahathir saw the evil designs of the capitalists which aim not to bring benefit to the people but to enslave them.

"He saw their tricks and faced them bravely," Shaykh Abdalqadir said.

Born as Ian Dallas in Ayr, Scotland, Shaykh embraced Islam in the early sixties.

He has written several books on Islam among which are "The Books of Strangers", "The Way of Muhammad", "Quranic Tawhid", "Indications from Signs", "Jihad - A Ground Plan and A Letter to an African Muslim".

Shaykh and his entourage will be visiting Penang where he is scheduled to give a public lecture at Universiti Sains Malaysia on August 7.

(END)