

Penyampai : TAN SRI DATO SERI AHMAD SARJI BIN ABDUL HAMID
Tajuk : THE CONFERENCE ON "ISLAM AND INDUSTRIALISATION"
Lokasi :
Tarikh : 22-01-1993

For two days, many members attending this conference have debated many salient issues related to Islam and industrialisation. Many speakers spoke on the roles of Muslims and the means to enhance their industrial achievements. The participation of non Muslim participants, the women participants and the presence of the foreign experts from Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Japan and Indonesia has placed the discussions beyond merely the local and Malaysian Muslims' horizons. In two days, of course, it is not possible for the conference to address all the issues related to Islam and Industrialisation.

From the proceedings of this conference, may I state that:

(i) Industrialisation is part of the Islamic tradition. It is not alien to Islam and it is wrong to equate it with westernisation.

(ii) Muslims have to undertake upon themselves to improve their lot.

(iii) Many Muslim countries are well-endowed with resources. However, the present state of industrialisation among Muslim countries raises a concern that more effective means of mobilising, managing and optimising these resources vis-a-vis contemporary political, social and economic challenges are required.

(iv) Industrialisation is not an end in itself but rather a means to a higher objective, ie., spiritual, moral and material excellences.

This conference has also formulated number of proposals namely:

(i) There is a great need to document the economic history of the Muslims in a systematic manner.

(ii) We need to actively identify areas of economic cooperation among Muslim countries through the existing international institutions such as the Islamic Development Bank, and other similar institutions.

(iii) We need to identify economic, financial, educational and trading potentials through professional research.

The research findings should be widely disseminated to generate action plans.

(iv) The social framework in which the economic activities operate should not be ignored, more attention must be given to the underlying social environment and social values as well as the creation of a motivated and active Muslim population.

(v) There exists a need to develop an entrepreneurial culture for the Muslim community, whereby the Islamic values are incorporated.

(vi) The use of zakat funds and other Islamic based sources such as the wakaf properties, for manufacturing and industrial investment purposes could also be promoted.

(vii) Islamic business education should be made part of the education curriculum, preferably from the early stages of the school education. The link between science, technology and industrialisation should also be explained.

(viii) An effective network for Muslim business communities needs to be established to facilitate the exchange and conduct of business information, technical knowledge and marketing opportunities.

(ix) There is a need to encourage a more active participation of women in industrial development.

The higher level of women participation, not only as workers but also as managers and entrepreneurs in relevant fields will increase the pool of Muslim resources.

(x) In financing industrial activities, Muslims should look for capital and savings beyond personal or community confines. It is important to tap resources even from the global perspective. However, in this regard, the issue of interest rate arrangement has to be expeditiously resolved in relation to the concept of usury which is prohibited in Islam.

(xi) Within the context of mobilising funds in the form of equity financing to promote entrepreneurship, it is suggested that the method of "cash wakaf" could be instituted.

(xii) A seminar should be held to resolve the issue as to whether it is feasible/viable to have two financial systems running parallel to each other, i.e. the Islamic financial system with particular reference to riba', and the conventional financial system.

(xiii) Financing through venture capital vis-a-vis Islamic financing principles warrants further study in order to identify the most feasible manner in which it could be institutionalised in Malaysia's financial system.

(xiv) A more comprehensive Islamic financial intermediary system needs to be established to meet the rapidly growing demand from the Malaysian population who are increasingly more appreciative and understanding of the Islamic financial system.

(xv) Ways and means of using investment platforms such as the ASN, ASB and ASJ (Amanah Saham Johor) should be studied so that Muslim funds can be further mobilised.

The immediate task of IKIM will be to document the proceedings of the conference into a book form as soon as possible. Subsequently, smaller workshops among various agencies and institutions will be organised to pursue the proposal and issues which I have just mentioned.

Finally, I wish to extend my appreciation to all who have made this conference a success. Thank you and wassalamu'alaikum.