

# **THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC GOVERNANCE IN PROMOTING NATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: THE CASE OF MALAYSIA (2010-2020)**

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## **Abstract**

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic country where maintaining peace and security is a top priority for the government. Allowing any form of violation and insecurity in society threatens political stability and national order. Considering these challenges, the Malaysian government adopted moderate policies such as Wasatiyyah, Maqasid Sharia, and Rahmatan Lil-Alamin to promote communal harmony and social peace. In line with government initiatives, Malaysia's religious institutions and Islamic bureaucrats are actively involved in peace and security enhancement. In this aspect, the role of the Islamic Development Department (JAKIM), the Sharia courts, the Ulama, and Da'wa organization in social peace are mostly apparent. Therefore, a thorough investigation is necessary to determine how Islamic governance in Malaysia fosters national security and social peace. Contemporary literature endeavours to explain these issues in several manners. However, their explanations are limited and based on different perspectives. There is a need to understand how Islamic governance defines peace and security and how the religious administration in Malaysia is working towards that. This study aims to fill this literature gap. Data are gathered from primary and secondary sources using qualitative research techniques. Quran, hadith, government publications, websites, newspapers, and the opinion of experts are among the primary sources. The secondary data consists of credible academic books, articles, and journals. For the data analysis, the study initially explores the theoretical foundation of Islamic governance in promoting peace and security. Second, it presents the functional mechanism of Islamic administration in Malaysia. Third, it examines the government's policies toward social peace and security. Fourth, it discusses the role of religious agents and institutions in Malaysia who are involved in peace and security management. And finally, it ends with analysing prevailing challenges and critical remarks. This research discovers that the Islamic governance in Malaysia plays a commendable role in promoting peace and security. The government policies are encouraging and timely. The religious institutions are attentively performing their assigned responsibilities. However, the policies and execution strategies need further improvements.

**Keywords:** Malaysia, Islamic governance, peace and security, society,

## INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, major publications have portrayed Islam and its political arrangement critically. This is due to a number of factors, including the Iranian Revolution, the Rushdie Affair, the Afghan Revolution, and the most recent resurgence of extreme ideology such as ISIS which all raised serious concerns in western society. According to academic viewpoints, it is difficult to comprehend the true and ingrained philosophy of Islam's universality while using oriental approach to define Islam. We are referring to that aspect of Islam that is constantly an advocate for world peace, justice, individual liberty, social security, and overall welfare. The representation of Islamic governance by ISIS or other extremists is not the true picture of Islam but rather a fabrication that does not reflect the teachings of mainstream Islam.

The primary concern of Islamic governance is *amr bil ma'ruf wa nahi anil munkar*, (Surah Aal Imran 3:110), which is encouraging and ensuring good acts such as peace, justice, security of human life, blood, progeny, money, and status, as well as removing any element that threatens social peace and security. So, it is important to understand the theoretical ground of Islamic governance and how Islam advocates for peace and security, and which basic principles and guidelines of Islamic governance support social peace and security. Furthermore, it is also essential to comprehend the practical aspect of Islam and how Islamic governance is applied from modern perspectives. In this case, Malaysia is a practical example where Islam is applied in governance mechanism. Malaysia is a multi-religious, multi-racial, and multi-cultural country in which religious tolerance is recognized by many but disputed by few.<sup>1</sup> Political leaders, religious clergy, and government policies, as well as religious teachings contributed to promoting a moderate, tolerant, and harmonious society in Malaysia. Furthermore, Malaysia's constitutional framework ensures the rights of all citizens, regardless of religion, culture, or race even though special rights for the Malay community are legally enshrined. The legal system applies to all Malaysians; however, the Islamic legal system is reserved for Muslims only.

Islamic teachings and Islamic institutions are continuously encouraging to maintain peaceful order in society. Therefore, the question arises of how the Islamic governance in Malaysia is contributing to peace and security. This study aims to carry out this responsibility. It first explains the direction of Islam in promoting peace and security even in the multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural societies. Secondly, it discusses the main functional principles of Islamic governance as guided by the Quran for the theoretical guidelines of this study; third, the role of Islamic governance in promoting peace and security in Malaysia. But before this section, the study presents analysis on the nature of administrative structure in performing Islamic affairs in Malaysia that will help to understand the function of Islamic governance in Malaysian perspectives. This study is noteworthy for a number of reasons. The Malaysian model of Islamic government will inspire other Muslim countries to establish and use their religious institutions to promote peace and security in their respective countries. They will have practical evidence regarding how zakat-based economic assistance may promote economic stability and communal harmony for all individuals. They will also understand how religious institutions might help to reduce crime and other forms of violence that endanger

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<sup>1</sup> Abubakar, Ibrahim. "The religious tolerance in Malaysia: An exposition." *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2013): 90-97.

society's peace and security. Finally, it will make a contribution to the academic area in a variety of subjects. Furthermore, this study is part of a larger movement by recent scholars to shift the academic gravity on Islamic studies away from the supposed Muslim heartland in the Middle East. In other words, Malaysia as a Muslim country has much to offer in terms of localizing Islam.

Islamic governance in Malaysia has been examined from a number of perspectives. Such as waqaf management,<sup>2</sup> zakat management,<sup>3</sup> corporate governance and Islamic financial institutions,<sup>4</sup> religious pluralism in multiracial society,<sup>5</sup> managing peace in Malaysia,<sup>6</sup> the functions of Islamic institutions such JAKIM, and Islamic bureaucracy,<sup>7</sup> Islamic legal system and its functions.<sup>8</sup> However, there is less study that discusses the contributions of Islamic governance in promoting peace and security in Malaysia. This study aims to fulfil this literature gaps. This is a qualitative study that relies on primary and secondary sources. Quranic verses, tafsirs, exegesis from credible *mufasssirin*, the authority of qur'anic commentary, hadith, prophetic narrations and traditions, experts' opinion, Malaysian constitution, government rules and acts, national dailies, and personal observation were among the data sources. It also looks at referred books, articles, and journals that are relevant and related to this investigation. The following section discusses the guidance of Islam in promoting peace and security.

## Islam in Peace and Security

"Islam" as a noun or a verb maintains several meanings in different verses of the Qur'an. The origin of the term Islam, *silim*, means "creating peace, living in a mutually peaceful atmosphere, greetings, rescue, safety, security, finding peace, obtaining goodness, comfort, and favour, abstaining from difficulties and devastations, surrendering the self and obeying, respect, distancing from wrong." Indeed, salaam and salaamat imply "to attain salvation," and its rubai version (with four radical letters) aslama means "to surrender, become Muslim, and make peace". Islam is defined as the "submission to God, acknowledging His authority, and executing His instructions"; "complete devotion to God and serving only Him"; and "embracing and abiding by the messages of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)". Therefore, a Muslim is someone who lives under the peaceful and secure umbrella of Islam. God desires that a Muslim lives in a safe and peaceful environment and work to propagate and sustain peace. As the scripture says, "O you who believe! All of you, come in full surrender to God (without permitting any conflict among you for worldly reasons), and do not follow in the

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<sup>2</sup> Daud, Dalila. "The role of Islamic governance in the reinforcement waqf reporting: SIRC Malaysia case." *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research* (2019).

<sup>3</sup> Wahab, Norazlina Abd, and Abdul Rahim Abdul Rahman. "A framework to analyse the efficiency and governance of zakat institutions." *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research* (2011).

<sup>4</sup> Sulaiman, Maliah, Norakma Abd Majid, and Noraini Mohd Ariffin. "Corporate governance of Islamic financial institutions in Malaysia." *Asian Journal of Business and Accounting* 8, no. 1 (2015): 65-94.

<sup>5</sup> Harding, Andrew. "Malaysia: Religious pluralism and the constitution in a contested polity." *Middle East Law and Governance* 4, no. 2-3 (2012): 356-385.

<sup>6</sup> Shamsul, A. B., & Yusoff, A. Y. (2011). *Managing peace in Malaysia: A case study*. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Institute of Ethic Studies (KITA).

<sup>7</sup> Sani, Mohd Azizuddin Mohd. "Islamization policy and Islamic bureaucracy in Malaysia." In *Islamization Policy and Islamic Bureaucracy in Malaysia*. ISEAS Publishing, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Mohamad, Maznah. "Making majority, undoing family: Law, religion and the Islamization of the state in Malaysia." *Economy and Society* 39, no. 3 (2010): 360-384.

footsteps of Satan, because he is a plain adversary to you (trying to persuade you to rebel against God with dazzling promises)” (Qur'an, 2:208).

All Muslims are brothers and sisters to one another, according to the Qur'an, and if there is a disagreement among them, they resolve it peacefully (Qur'an, 49:10). In every phase of their lives, they support one another in abstaining from what God forbids and maintaining their religious awareness (Qur'an, 5:2); they carry out significant tasks following shura, or consultation (Qur'an, 3:159; 42:38); and they always bear witness honestly and justly, even if it is in opposition to their close relatives (Qur'an, 4:135). A real Muslim, as stated in the Qur'an, takes the straight path. That implies, he or she is trustworthy, morally upright, and just. It also implies that they rightly observe religion guided by reason. (Qur'an, 1:6-7; 11:112). So, the search for straight path commands leading a reasonable life that promotes good connections with everyone and being totally genuine and honest in all situations. Islam holds that every human life, regardless of genealogy, race, or language, is a gift from God, and should thus be carefully protected. Islam's central tenet is worship of the Almighty (Qur'an 1:1; 6:45) and compassion for all of creation. According to the Qur'an humanity is the finest creation (17:70), and has the highest status, (95:4). Since everyone is deserving of respect by nature, it is right to treat them with compassion, tolerance, and humility. Therefore, avoiding hostility and exhibiting tolerance are vital for mankind.

Islam in social perspective provides significant directions. According to Islam, the right to life is an inalienable right. The Qur'an says, killing a soul (apart from legal punishment for murder or for causing chaos on earth) is equivalent to killing all human beings. Conversely, saving a life is equivalent to saving the lives of all human beings. When the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) described Islam's potential to contribute to social safety and peace, he said, "a rider will travel from Sana'a (a city in Yemen) to Hadhramaut (a region in the southwest of the Arabian Peninsula) fearing none but God, or a wolf in regard to his sheep."<sup>9</sup> It was at the period, when the entire Arab world was facing the age of ignorance, the idea of a female rider or a wealthy person traveling with holiness and resources was unthinkable.

The Prophet instructed to preserve social unity and collaboration, to open our hearts to our brothers and sisters, and to always aid one another. He stated, "Do not sever ties with one another! Don't turn your backs on one another! Do not breed hate among yourself! O ye who serve God! Turn become brothers and sisters!"<sup>10</sup> The Qur'an urges to settle conflicts peacefully and to avoid future disputes, clashes, and confusion; also, individuals are encouraged to take a balanced attitude and seek justice (Qur'an, 8:1; 49:9-10). Humiliating the peace and tranquillity is prohibited, and those who do so face consequences. Peace is better (Qur'an, 4:128), the verse was revealed expressly to eliminate arguments between spouses, may be applied to all types of human relationships. Islam advocates for a cohesive and mutually beneficial society, and this ideal encompasses not just national but also international ties.

The Quran teaches Muslims to live in harmony with non-Muslims and to treat them with fairness and kindness. "Allah does not forbid you from dealing kindly and fairly with those who have neither fought nor driven you out of your homes. Surely Allah loves those who are fair." (60:8) and "Allah only forbids you from befriending those who have fought you for 'your' faith, driven you out of your homes, or supported 'others' in doing so. And whoever takes them as friends, then it is they who are the 'true' wrongdoers." (60:9). Shabbir Ahmad

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<sup>9</sup>Bukhari, Manaqib, 25, Ikrah, 1; Abu Dawud, Jihad, 97; Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad, V, 110-111.

<sup>10</sup> Sahih Muslim, Birr, 23.

Usmani explains the verse as follows: "Some Makkan non-Muslims neither accepted Islam nor harbored any animosity or hostility towards Muslims. They didn't fight against them for their practice of Islam, and they didn't support those who were torturing and driving them away. Muslims are commanded to treat such non-believers with respect and affection rather than harshness and hate, according to Islam. Islam forbids Muslims from using the same standard to judge non-Muslims at war and those who are not fighting them. It is against justice, wisdom, and common sense to treat both equally." (Commentary on Tarjamah Shaikhul Hind in the footnotes).

## Islamic Governance in Peace and Security

In Islam, Allah is regarded as the primary source of contentment and safety. He promises to provide prosperity to those who meet two requirements: believe in Allah, and conduct all of their activities in fear of Him or in accordance with His commands. The Quran states "and if only the inhabitants of the cities had believed and feared Allah, We would have opened bounties from the heavens and the earth, But they refused [the messengers], so We grabbed them for what they were earning." (7:96). In terms of practicing *taqwa* (God fearing) in government mechanism, the Quran guides the rulers to follow some basic responsibilities to establish a society or a nation based on peace and security. "(Allah will undoubtedly assist) those who, if We bestow authority on them in the country, will institute Prayers, render Zakah, enjoin Good, and forbid Evil. Allah is the final arbiter of all affairs." (Surah Al-Hajj: 41). It is clear from the verse that the authority of Islamic governance has four basic responsibilities: (1) establishing salat (five times compulsory prayer) into the entire Muslim society that signifies the eternal relation with the Almighty, the source of all peace and security and welfare of the society; (2) institutionalization of zakat that provides economic security and emancipation of the entire community as zakat collection and their proper distribution ensure meeting collective basic needs of the society and economic freedom that consolidate social inter-dependency and cohesion; (3) *amr bil ma'ruf*, institutional support for disseminating and educating people towards welfare of the whole community that ensure social peace and security; and, (4) institutional maintenance for preventing *munkar*, all kinds of harmful deeds.

Furthermore, *Amr bil ma'ruf wan ahi anil munkar* (encouraging good and forbidding evil) are basic the pillars of establishing social peace and security. "You are the best ummah created for mankind. You command good and you forbid evil and you believe in Allah." (3:110). Islam advocates Muslims some essential obligations for promoting peace and security in performing *amr bil ma'ruf*. These included: justice, altruism brotherhood, good friendship, reconciliation for peace making, good character and morals, patients. The example of *nahi anil munkar*, prohibiting evils are idolatry and polytheism, sorcery, oppression and aggression. Allah stated: "The fault is exclusively against those who oppress men with injustice and impudently cross over into forbidden works, disobeying right and justice; for such persons there will be a painful consequence." (42:42). The examples of transgression include hostile treatment of relatives, including parents and children, fornication, adultery, slander, gambling, stealing, robbery, illegal process of achieving property and resource, torture, power abuse, false treating for selling goods and price monopoly, contract betrayal and violation of trust, and hatred. Therefore, Holy Quran states "Help yet one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour, fear Allah, for Allah is strict in punishment"(5:2). In addition, the Quran declares, "O you who believe! As witnesses to Allah, stand firmly for justice even when it comes against to you, your parents, your relatives, and whether it be (against) the wealthy and the poor (Q4: 135); and "... to fair dealing, and let — for it is nearest

to piety." (Q5: 8). Thus, according to the Islamic idea of peace, justice should take precedence above all other considerations, including those of race, religion, and faith.

Islamic governance institutionalizes to follow the Quranic directions in encouraging good and forbidding evil through public institutions and several mechanisms. Imam Khomeini describes the role of guardianship in leading public institutions in Islamic governance. He asserts that "propagation and instruction" are the two core duties of Islamic governance, and that the role of the Fuqaha (Islamic jurists) is to "promulgate religion and instruct people in the doctrine, ordinances, and institutions of Islam to lead society for the execution of Islamic law and building of Islamic institutions."<sup>11</sup> From the above analysis, the Quranic injunction for the function of Islamic governance is very clear. This study can develop a framework of analysis through following Quranic model (1) Mosque development for wider practice of salat (2) institutionalizing zakat for economic security (3) promoting religious institutions for daw'a, or amr bil ma'ruf and (4) Islamic legal institutions for preventing *munkar*, the elements of violating social peace and security. The following section analyses how Islamic governance contributed in promoting peace and security in Muslim-majority Malaysia by following the four responsibilities. But before that it is essential to explain the institutional structures of Islamic governance in Malaysia. The following section will address this.

## Islamic Governance Management in Malaysia

Malaysia is comprised of 13 states and 3 federal territories. These states include Negri Sembilan, Perak, Pahang, Perlis, Penang, Selangor, Kedah, Johore, Kelantan, Terengganu, Malacca, Sabah and Sarawak. All states in West Malaysia, with the exception of Malacca, Penang, and the Federal Territories of Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya are governed by Sultans (the Rulers). While the Yang Di Pertua Negeri are in charge of Malacca and Penang (who enjoy the same status as the Sultan). The Federal Territories, on the other hand, are governed by the Federal Government. The country's official religion is Islam. As a result, the government plays a significant role in propagating Islam and establishing Islamic ideals among Muslims. The Federal and State governments' engagement demonstrates the centrality of Islam in creating the Malaysian society. Muslims make up more than 60% of the population. Malaysian society is heavily influenced by Islam, although it also embraces religious diversity and tolerance. Malaysia's Federal Constitution delineates the power of the Federal government and the State governments with regards to the administration of Islamic affairs. The power of the State government is restricted to the administration of Shari'ah Laws and the administration of Islamic affairs in each state. The Constitution's Ninth Schedule clearly stipulates that State governments are responsible for managing state mosques and Malay traditions. As a result, each state has its own legislation for governing the management of Islamic affairs and the practice of Malay traditions. Because of this, there may be variances in how the Shari'a Laws are applied and upheld, as well as how Islamic matters are managed across Malaysia's states.

The Islamic Religious Council (IRC) and the Islamic Religious Department (IRD) are two crucial organizations that manage Islamic matters in each Malaysian state. IRC is in charge of creating policy while IRD is responsible for policy execution. IRC council advises the rulers on all matters pertaining to Islamic administration. Apart from counselling rulers on Islamic

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<sup>11</sup>Ruhollah Khomeini, "Governance of the Jurist (Velayat-e Faqeeh): Islamic Government." *The Institute for compilation and publication of Imam Khomeini's works*. p. 78. Disponible sur: [http://www.iranchamber.com/history/rkhomeini/books/velayat\\_faqeeh.pdf](http://www.iranchamber.com/history/rkhomeini/books/velayat_faqeeh.pdf) (1970).

matters, most IRC members are actively involved in economic arrangements that assist Muslims in the state such as zakat collection and distribution. The IRD works in fostering and advancing Islam in every state including planning, organizing, and carrying out Islamic programs as guided by the IRC. For the benefit of the community, the IRD offers fundamental infrastructure such as mosques and religious institutions (at the primary and secondary levels). The administration of the IRD is often divided into sections that are in charge of doing research and development, promoting Islamic doctrines, running mosques, and conducting religious instruction.

The Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM) at the federal level supervises the uniformization of the management of Islamic matters in every state. JAKIM was established by the Federal government in 1968 to reduce any discrepancies in Islamic affairs in Malay states. As a central organization, the department is also responsible for establishing, standardizing, and coordinating the application of Shari'a law, the management of Islamic affairs throughout all states, and the execution of those laws.<sup>12</sup> The following section discusses the role Islamic governance in promoting peace and security.

## **Masjid development**

Mosques are normally associated to Islamic religious practices including salat, dhikr, and dua. Physically, they are regarded as universal places of worship for Muslims and are seen as the best venue to celebrate Islamic festivals. It is important to note that the term "*ibadah*" (religious rites) itself does not just refer to the act of worshiping God. Its scope is far broader and encompasses all actions that must be taken in accordance with Islamic etiquette in every area of life.<sup>13</sup> In Malaysia, mosques are more than centres of prayers, but they act as community institutions that enable Muslims to come together and support the development of the Muslim economy. Members of the management committee, made up of capable members of the community, are tasked with running the mosque successfully to guarantee that it is used effectively by the worshippers.<sup>14</sup> Currently, there are roughly 6,464 mosques and 17,564 prayer locations in Malaysia, according to the Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM, 2021). As a result, it is estimated that these mosques oversee roughly 6,464 mutual charity organizations, also known as "*khairat kematian*" in Malaysia. The conditions, rules, procedures, and management of mutual charity may be essentially informal and differ from mosque to mosque.<sup>15</sup> Mosques are classified into four types: State Mosques, Royal Mosques, Jameq Mosques, and Kariah Mosques. The Jameq Mosques are the main mosques that receive funds from government, corporate, and public donations.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Sulaiman, Maliah. "The internal control procedures of mosques in Malaysia." *Revista Universo Contábil* 3, no. 2 (2007): 101-115.

<sup>13</sup> Omar, Nizaita, at. el. "Framework of Empowering Mosque Institution in Malaysia." *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES* 9, no. 9 (2019).

<sup>14</sup> Abd Hamid, N. A. "The Governance Practices of Mosques: A Study of Public Perception in Selangor." *Australian Journal of Basic & Applied Science* 9, no. 31 (2015): 14-23.

<sup>15</sup> Ibrahim, Sharifah Norhafiza Syed, at. el. "Good Governance Practiced By The Malaysian Mosque Committees In Managing Mutual Benevolence: Member's Perception." *Journal of Fatwa Management and Research* 26, no. 2 (2021): 50-62.

<sup>16</sup> Mohamed, INTAN SALWANI, at. el. "Mosques Fund Management: A Study on Governance and Internal Controls Practices." *Recent Advances on Finance Science and Management* (2015).

In general, state mosques in Malaysia have little autonomy in terms of financial management. State mosques receive funds from two sources: state government allocations and public contributions. The monies collected from the state government are mostly utilized for mosque maintenance and religious activities. Donations from the general population are utilized to fund religious and social activities that are not financed by the government.<sup>17</sup> The government recruits mosque's officers who are paid salary. These officers are often appointed by the IRD or the IRC. The Imm Besar (Chief Cleric), the Imm (Cleric), the Khtib (Friday sermon reader), the Bill (called to prayer), and the Siak are the officers of state mosques (mosque keeper). Except for the Siak, who is in charge of the mosque's cleanliness, these officers mostly conduct religious tasks. These officers' responsibilities include, among other things, ensuring that the mosque's programs and activities are properly arranged.<sup>18</sup>

The British administration first passed a legislation requiring Muslims to pray in mosques on Fridays in Perak in 1885. This is when the legal history of mosques in Malaysia began. Muslims were subject to penalty under the law if they failed to attend the masjid on Friday for their prayers.<sup>19</sup> Section 3 of the Enactment administrative law stated: "Any male person over the age of sixteen years residing within three miles of a Masjid presided over by a Priest of his own Muzahaf who, without reasonable excuse to be communicated to and allowed by the nearest Assistant Kathi or Trustee of the Masjid, shall fail to attend Prayers at such Masjid on every Friday or who after Saalam shall fail, except with the permission of the Kathi, to remain for at least one hour in the Masjid to hear the teaching of the Imam or Ulama shall be liable on conviction before the Court of a Penghulu to a fine not exceeding fifty cents for every such offence."<sup>20</sup>

Several mosques in Malaysia provide a variety of facilities and services and are active throughout the day and night in promoting Islam to the Malay community. Some of the conveniences include: Friday gatherings, morning lecture, Zohor talk, Qur'an study, Islamic class, Arabic language class, Qiyam-ul-Lail, hospital visitation program, single mother's program, complete academic curriculum, nursery school, youth school vacation program, basic religious education program, health-care program, cooking class, flower-making workshop, aerobics class (fitness class), blood donation campaign, Iftar and Sohur programs, cow slaughtering program for Eid-ul-Adha, Friday Bazar, and funeral preparation program.<sup>21</sup> When a Muslim dies, the other Muslims are obligated to appropriately handle his or her burial. Funerals are administered by mosque committees and paid via mutual generosity. This fund's administration adheres to the 'ta'awun' idea as outlined in the Holy Quran (5:2), "<sup>22</sup> Some of the important functions of Malaysian Masques are presented in the following figure

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<sup>17</sup> Sulaiman, Maliah. "The internal control procedures of mosques in Malaysia." *Revista Universo Contábil* 3, no. 2 (2007): 101-115.

<sup>18</sup> Sulaiman, Maliah. "The internal control procedures of mosques in Malaysia."

<sup>19</sup> A. Aziz, S (2007). Islamic Criminal Law In The Malaysian Federal Structure: A Constitutional Perspective, 15 IIUMLJ 101

<sup>20</sup> Cited in Miskam, Surianom, and Nurhani Salwa Jamaluddin. *Current Legal Issues Concerning Masjid in Malaysia*. 2014.

<sup>21</sup> Afridi, Muhammad Adil Khan. "Contributions of mosques towards building Malay society: case study on masjid Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur." In *International Conference on Islamic Civilization and Malay Identity*. 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Ibrahim, Sharifah Norhafiza Syed, at, el. "Good Governance Practiced By The Malaysian Mosque Committees In Managing Mutual Benevolence: Member's Perception."



**Fig: 1. Mosque Initiatives for Promoting Peace and Security in Malaysia.**

Educational	Social	Economic	Welfare	Judicial	Others
Religious education	Zakat collection and distribution	Market and shops	Social welfare includes	Law, (Sharia)	Recreational such as playing zone for children's and youth
Non-formal education for children, adult, female and intellectuals.	Services: Health facilities: (hospital, clinic, medical treatment, and nursing).	Restaurants and café, exhibition space,	Rehabilitation centre, Orphanages, burial services.	Divorce issues	Leisure activity facility, parks, Museum,
Training for <i>imams</i>	Accommodation for travellers.	Rentable room for Muslims.	Economic: Charity, relief, poverty alleviation, donation	Fatwa issue	activities for welcoming non-Muslim for mutual understanding and learning about Islam
Facilities: library, classroom, certification, scholarship centre, publication.	Disaster management programs,				Digital portal for mosque,
	Marriage programs				Da'wa programs

These multidimensional efforts of mosques are contributing social peace in Malaysia. The following section will discuss the zakat management.

## Zakat For Economic and Social Peace

Zakat contributes significant role in Islamic society throughout its history. It is a financial mechanism prescribed by the Quran that intends to purify the soul and the resources of zakat payers. Every zakat payer would not only receive pleasure from Allah SWT for fulfilling the requirement, but they would also receive blessing for the assistance they provided to other Muslims. Performing zakat generates individuals who uphold religious obligations while also being attentive and caring to society. Zakat works to free people from the misery of poverty by providing temporary or permanent means of subsistence to build a successful and peaceful community. Islam encourages adherents to ensure the less well-off may lead secure lives. Furthermore, zakat attempts to aid individuals who experience unexpected financial and material crises such as debts, diseases, and natural calamities who are normally not in the list of zakat recipients.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Meerangani, Khairul Azhar. "The Role of Zakat in Human Development." *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Syar-i* 6, no. 2 (2019): 141-154.

The explanation of eight *asnaf* who are qualified to receive zakat are: (1) Needy: a person who does not have any property and source of income, or, if he/she has a source of income it would not fully meet his/her basic needs. (2) Poor: a person who has property or means of livelihood but is not able to meet his/her own needs or that of his/her family members. This individual is not required to perform Hajj and zakat, but instead is entitled to receive zakat and fitrah. (3) Amil: a person who is involved in the management of charity, whether as an officer or management support staff at all stages. He/she is entitled to acquire certain portion of the earnings from zakat as wages. (4) Mualaf: a non-Muslim who recently converts or 'whose heart is made inclined' to Islam. It is believed that giving zakat to mualafs can be seen as a recognition and reward for choosing the right path and as a way to show the beauty of Islam. (5) Ar-Riqab: Muqatab is a slave who desires for independence. (6) Gharimin: an individual who qualifies for zakat because they have been declared bankrupt or are excessively burdened by debt. (7) Fisabilillah a person engaged in a "battle" or making an attempt to support, preserve, and advance Islam and Islamic beliefs. (8) Ibnu Sabil: a traveller who confronts running out of money while leaving the nation in which they were born and living and whose trip is beneficial to Islam.<sup>24</sup>

The State Council of Islamic Religion, or Majlis Agama Islam Negeri (MAIN) manages zakat in every state of Malaysia. Under MAIN, specific administrative institutions are operationalized to handle and properly distribute zakat that opened a new horizon of zakat management in Malaysia. The first centre of zakat collection or Pusat Pungutan Zakat (PPZ) was founded in 1991 in Wilayah Persekutuan (Federal Territories) that continuously followed by other states such as the Selangor Zakat Board or (Lembaga Zakat Selangor (SZB)) previously known as the Centre Zakat of Selangor (Pusat Zakat Selangor) and the Central Management of Zakat or Pusat Urus Zakat in Pulau Pinang (Ahmad Shahir & Adibah, 2010). The Zakat Distribution Centre is responsible to assist *asnaf* who are in a dire circumstance so that their daily burden is reduced.

The management of the nation's zakat (tithe) has been improved through the corporatization of the Federal Territory Islamic Religious Council's Zakat Collection Centre (PPZ-MAIWP). The growth in zakat donations and the number of zakat donors each year serve as evidence for this. Such an accomplishment greatly aids the *asnaf* (zakat recipients) in completing the zakat system cycle.<sup>25</sup> According to MAIWP Chairman, the Islamic religious council of Federal Territory is eager to follow any effort to gradually boost zakat collection in the Federal Territory. "PPZ-MAIWP through various programs and promotions and close collaboration with all parties, let it be the public, corporate sectors and the NGOs as well as the media will be able to contribute towards the enhancement of zakat awareness among Muslims in Federal Territory."<sup>26</sup> The PPZ collects zakah primarily on the basis of wealth. The following things are classified for zakat collection: (i) employment, (ii) income, (iii) savings, (iv) business, (v) gold and (vi) silver, (vii) shares, and the collected fund of (viii) Employers' Provident Fund or EPF (MAIWP Annual Report, 2010: 36). Figure 2 depicts the data of zakat collection performed by the PPZ on behalf of the MAIWP from 2010 to 2020. This entire zakat collection is based on the categories of total property or wealth as defined above. It shows that

<sup>24</sup> Embong, Mohd Rodzi, Roshaiza Taha, and Mohd Nazli Mohd Nor. "Role of zakat to eradicate poverty in Malaysia."

<sup>25</sup> MAIWP Annual Reports 2018. P.6.

<sup>26</sup> MAIWP Annual Reports 2018. P.13.

the amount of zakat collection has significantly increased that enhanced the capacities to support more asnaf and several activities related to that.

**Figure 2: Zakah Collection from 2010 to 2020**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Zakat collection in million RM</b>	<b>Number of payers</b>
2010	336.70	89,110 payers.
2011	394. 10	100,497 payers
2012	451.30	114,442 people
2013	517.30	128,061 people
2014	532.9	141,748 people
2015	557.6	153,996 people
2016	580.6	161,141 people
2017	615.2	169,372 payers
2018	651.2	180,958 payers
2019	536.69	189,211 people
2020	584.31	359,661people

Data Sources: MAIWP Annual Reports 2010-2020

## **The Benefits of Zakat in the Social Peace and Security**

According to the MAIWP Annual Reports (2010-2020) zakat distribution is done via 28 zakat aid schemes administered through the Baitulmal Division. These schemes are categorized into four aspects: social, economic, education, and welfare. In term of social contribution, the overall goal of the social development activity is to assist the zakat beneficiaries who are muallaf, al-ghrimin, faqr, and miskin. Through a number of programs, such as monthly financial assistance provided to the groups of faqr, miskn, and muallaf for a year, MAIWP helps zakat beneficiaries meet their basic necessities. The housing support help with down payments, rent payments, home building and remodeling. Al-ghrimn (aid for the needy) is provided to people who are indebted to meet their basic necessities such food, clothes, shelter, and education, as well as medical assistance.

In terms of economic significance, The MAIWP works to support and inspire zakat beneficiaries to produce their own sources of income through business and entrepreneurship so that they can lead a comfortable life. The help includes business support that might come in the form of cash, or in the form of tangible resources, like equipment supplies and other things. By providing a deposit payment for the purchase of taxi cars, MAIWP's hire purchase deposit for taxi aid aims to assist taxi drivers in becoming the owners of their own taxis. The renting

of taxi cars won't be a hardship for the cab drivers as a result. In education perspective, MAIWP develops many educational programs that include basic and secondary school levels of study, as well as school fees and equipment for students. Scholarships are also available for undergraduate and postgraduate courses at the university level. In welfare perspectives, MAIWP provides aids to those who have been affected by disasters such as flood, fatal accidents, landslide, fire, burglary, and storm. It also has funds to encourage Qur'n memorization; aid for non-governmental organizations (NGO) for their efforts in spreading dawa to society, religious and educational institutions, and aid for marriage in order to prevent and overcome social problems such as zina or adultery, assistance for ibn al-sabīl and takāful coverage.

Thus, Malaysia demonstrates effectivity in institutionalizing zakat and taking advantage of technology to calculate zakat, provide payment, and introduce alternatives for monthly payments. Several locations, particularly Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, have collected the zakat money and distributed it online in achieving trust. This enables individuals to follow and keep an eye on the zakat collection and distribution process. Additionally, there are yearly reports that provide explanations and demonstrate where and how zakat was spent. The Malaysian experience has so far been quite helpful to others, but there is still room for improvement.<sup>27</sup> The authority should include the name of the beneficiaries into a database to detect persons who receive benefits from many institutions above what is necessary, and this would allow for the possibility of more people receiving benefits. Such a database would improve coordination between state and federal agencies. The distribution of zakat can be channelled following certain problem identified each year such as helping student from low income households, refugees, or those who are in debt. Another year can be focused on other important crisis.<sup>28</sup>

## **Amr bil m'aruf or Islamic Da'wa**

In governing Islamic da'wa in Malaysia, it is important to consider the reality, evaluate the challenges, and create strategies that will prevent societal peace and security from being threatened. Malaysia's population is highly diverse, with many ethnic groups and religious connections such as Taoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism, Sikhism, Bahai, and ancestor worship although the primary religion in Malaysia is Islam. Thus, Malaysia is home to people of many faiths. However, Islam influenced all area of Malays' life, including politics, society, business, and culture. This enormous expression is the product of decades of consistent Islamic da'wa activities. Political leaders, ulema, Islamic scholars, religious organizations, educational institutions, bureaucrats, and government policies all worked together to expedite Malaysia's Islamization process and enhance societal harmony and peace. Thus, Islamic da'wa in Malaysia is operationalized through an umbrella approach in which government, Islamic political parties, ulama, and civil society all come together to a similar vision of Islamization. These collaborative efforts produced effective results in the Islamization of society.

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<sup>27</sup> Migdad, Abdalrahman. "Managing zakat through institutions: case of Malaysia." *International Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies* 5, no. 3 (2019): 28-44.

<sup>28</sup> <sup>28</sup> Migdad, Abdalrahman. "Managing zakat through institutions: case of Malaysia."

The government of Malaysia performed the function of *amr bil ma'ruf* following several processes such as policy formulation, institutional approaches and legal supports, influencing *da'wa* mechanism to inform the real ideology of Islam and earn a behavioural and attitudinal transformation in the social interaction to prevail a congenial atmosphere for peace and security. In terms of policy development, the Najib administration embraced the Wasatiyyah policy, which emphasized a balanced approach in public services and social interactions,<sup>29</sup> and Maqasid Sharia, which focuses on safeguarding human society's basic human rights.<sup>30</sup> The Pakatan Harappan (PH) government followed with the Rahmatan Lil-Alamin policy which focuses on a broader practice of love, compassion, and harmony<sup>31</sup> in order to achieve communal harmony and societal peace.

In the *da'wa* method, the real message of Islam on social peace and security has been conveyed through Islamic *da'wa*, which supports community harmony in a multi-religious society. The ulema in mosques through their lectures and Friday sermons disseminate the messages of Islam for religious tolerance and communal harmony. The Quran clearly states that "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy bond that never breaks and Allah hears and knows all things." (Baqarah 2: 256). Since Islam inspires people to convert to Islam voluntarily, the Quran explicitly prevents Muslims from enforcement. Rather, their conversion to Islam should only depend upon their wills and faiths in Islamic beliefs and practices or in Islamic teachings.

The Quran guides believers to approach potential converts to Islam in one of three non-violent ways considering their situations, the level of knowledge and education. The three approaches are (1) *hikmah*, (wisdom) (2) *maoi'ja* (good advice and encouragement) and (3) *muzadallah* (well arguments and conversation). According to the Quran, "invite 'all' to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord 'alone' knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is 'rightly' guided." (Nahl 16: 125, Sahih Translation). If none of these three approaches succeed in persuading a non-Muslim to convert to Islam, Muslims must seek another instruction or guideline specified in the Koran which states, "For you is your religion and for me is my religion" (Kafirun 109: 6). This implies that if any non-Muslim has been counselled to embrace Islam and they have been unable to persuade him, they should be allowed to continue practicing their own religion. This Islamic framework of *da'wa* is prescribed in Islam which guides Islamic *da'wa* in Malaysia.

In terms of governments legal initiatives, in Malaysia, administration of Islam and non-Islamic faiths are distinct. Federal and State jurisdiction of Islamic law and administration are

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<sup>29</sup> Ibrahim, Mazlan, Jaffary Awang, Latifah Abdul Majid, Haziya Husin, Muhd Najib Abdul Kadir, and Abur Hamdi Usman. "Wasatiyyah discourse according to Muslim Scholars in Malaysia." *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2013): 6-15; Hanapi, Mohd Shukri. "The wasatiyyah (moderation) concept in Islamic epistemology: a case study of its implementation in Malaysia." *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 4, no. 9 (2014): 1.

<sup>30</sup> Asutay, Mehmet, and Astrid Fionna Harningtyas. "Developing Maqasid al-Shari'ah Index to evaluate social performance of Islamic Banks: A conceptual and empirical attempt." *International journal of Islamic economics and finance studies* 1, no. 1 (2015): 5-64; Rabe, Noor Suzilawati, Mariana Mohamed Osman, Syahriah Bachok, and Alias Abdullah. "Quality of life: review on an approach integrating Maqasid al-Shariah." *Advanced Science Letters* 23, no. 4 (2017): 2718-2721.

<sup>31</sup> bin Ahmad, Abdul Mua'ti Zamri. "From inculcating Islamic values to 'Rahmatan-lil-alamin': Promulgating various approaches of Islam in Malaysia." *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2019): 29-48.

distinct under the constitution. Each of the peninsula's eleven governments has its own legislative framework for the implementation of Islamic law. The provisions of these laws allow the traditional ruler of each state to assign responsibilities among members of the religious council (majlis agama), the Islamic judiciary, mosque employees, and registrars of Muslim marriages and divorces, as well as instructing the Islamic judiciary on legal procedures without violating the shari'a's substantive law. Except for the Federal Territory, the federal parliament has no legal authority over the administration and law of Islam in the several states. Islamic religious department also implemented a number of specific laws to control the Muslim moral such as khalwat (close proximity).<sup>32</sup>

The position of Islam and other religions' rights to be practiced in peace and harmony across Malaysia are spelled out in detail in the Federal Constitution of Malaysia. Article 3(1) of constitution defines "Islam is the religion of the Federal; but other religions may be practiced in peace and harmony in any part of the Federation." According to this constitutional clause, followers of all religions are free to follow their religious beliefs and practices in peace and harmony in any Malaysian location. Nevertheless, a Malay who is born as a Muslim may face difficulties or even unsuccessful bids to convert from Islam as shown in the most well-known case of Lina Joy. Article 8 (2), of the Federal Constitution further defines, "Except as expressly authorized by this Constitution, there shall be no discrimination against citizens on the ground only of religion, race, descent or place of birth in any law or in the appointment to any office or employment under public authority." The job employment open for all races regardless of religion and form of identity except the recruitment that is directly related to a particular religion such as the recruitment of imam or leader of a mosque has to be a Muslim, Christian for a church, Hindu in Hindu Temple, and Buddhist for Buddhist temple.

Malaysians are also not required to pay religion taxes under the Federal Constitution of Malaysia. According to Article 11 (2). "No person shall be compelled to pay any tax the proceeds of which are specially allocated in whole or in part for the purposes of a religion other than his own." Religious levies for religious reasons are imposed on religious members by their respective religious bodies. For example, Muslims in Malaysia can exclusively levy religious taxes on Muslims. They are not permitted to levy religious levies on non-Muslims. Non-Muslims in Malaysia are likewise prohibited from levying religious charges on Muslims. As a result, any religious group in Malaysia is free to levy any tax or fee on its members.<sup>33</sup>

In terms of Institutional approach, the Islamic institutions such as JAKIM, IKIM, and Islamic studies department of several universities organise civilizational dialogue for mutual understanding, and they also publish several research to guide social peace and communal security. The department of National Unity and Integration under the prime minister's office arranges several programs and conducts research for national unity. JAKIM has taken responsibility for carrying out action plans and has furthermore guided other Islamic institutions in Malaysia's interreligious activities. JAKIM provided counter narrative against extremist's ideological definition of jihad. It has established the Jihad Concept Explanation

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<sup>32</sup> Lee, Raymond L.M. and Ackermann, Susan E., *Sacred Tensions Modernity and Religious Transformation in Malaysia*, US: University of South Carolina Press, 1997. P. 137.

<sup>33</sup>Abubakar, Ibrahim. "The religious tolerance in Malaysia: An exposition." *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences* 7, no. 1 (2013): 90-97.

Action Committee to eradicate misconceptions on jihad at various social groups and institutions, including schools, universities, mosques, suraus (community prayer areas), and the Internet. the Action Committee is represented by The Civil Defence Department, the National Security Council, the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM), the Institute of Islamic Understanding of Malaysia (IKIM), and Al-Hijrah Media Corporation.<sup>34</sup>

During the COVID-19 pandemic, JAKIM and the Federal Territories Islamic Religious Department (Jawi) initiated the idea of *Musadah* to financially support people fighting against COVID-19. Both institutions are under the prime minister's department, and through their several agencies allocated RM25.6 million in the form of zakat funds up until March 24, 2020. They also provided several food items to needy people and distributed medical equipment to the frontliners working to combat COVID-19.<sup>35</sup>

## **Nahi anil munkar, preventing evils**

The principal goal of Islamic governance is to prevent fasad, or evil. To stop people from participating in immoral or illegal activity that jeopardizes social peace and security, the government must maintain a careful eye on individuals. Given this, the respective Islamic departments of different states have taken it upon themselves to act as so-called "Sharia police". This team is typically made up of four or five (mostly male) personnel from the Islamic department who are given the authority to apprehend Muslims who breach Islamic principles as outlined in each state's Syariah Criminal Offences Act. The Syariah Criminal Offences Act criminalizes a wide range of actions that might jeopardize Muslims' social, spiritual, and physical well-being and undermine Islam's sacredness.

These included

- (a) transgressions that damage a Muslim's *aqidah* or faith (e.g., wrongful worship; false claims to prophethood; spreading false doctrines);
- (b) offences that violate the sanctity of Islam and its institution (e.g., insulting Islam; displaying contempt for Qur'anic verses; belittling the fasting month of Ramadhan by selling food to Muslims or eating in public; alcohol consumption; gambling); and
- (c) "(c) various offenses" (e.g., providing false evidence, information, or statement; tempting a married woman; instigating a husband or a wife to neglect [marital] duties). The section in the Syariah Criminal Code Act 1997 referring to "offenses relating to decency" is relevant to our discussion here (Federal Territories),<sup>36</sup>

The offenses are enlisted from section 20-29. These are: incest, prostitution, pimping, sexual intercourse out of wedlock, an act of preparatory to sexual intercourse out of wedlock, anal

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<sup>34</sup> Jani, Muhammad Haziq Bin. "Countering violent extremism in Malaysia: Past experience and future prospects." *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 9, no. 6 (2017): 6-10.

<sup>35</sup> Azril, Annuar, Malay Mail report, Here's how Jakim, Jawi have utilised over RM25m to aid Covid-19 fight. 25 Mar 2020. <https://www.malaymail.com/news/malaysia/2020/03/25/heres-how-jakim-jawi-have-utilised-over-rm25m-to-aid-covid-19-fight/1849867>

<sup>36</sup> LAWS OF MALAYSIA, ACT 559, SYARIAH CRIMINAL OFFENCES (FEDERAL TERRITORIES) ACT 1997, Incorporating latest amendment - P.U.(A) 251/2002. [http://www2.esyariah.gov.my/esyariah/mal/portallv1/enakmen2011/Eng\\_act\\_lib.nsf/858a0729306dc24748257651000e16c5/bced11b697691518c8256826002aaa20?OpenDocument](http://www2.esyariah.gov.my/esyariah/mal/portallv1/enakmen2011/Eng_act_lib.nsf/858a0729306dc24748257651000e16c5/bced11b697691518c8256826002aaa20?OpenDocument)

intercourse, (*liwat*), sexual relation between women (*musahaqah*), illicit proximity (*khalwat*), male person impersonating as woman, indecent acts in public place.<sup>37</sup> These Islamic prohibitions on all forms of homosexuality and pre- and adulterous heterosexual intercourse are "haram" offenses and these major legal violations are subject to governmental punishment. Although the Syariah Criminal Offences list is largely alike across all of Malaysia's states, the penalties for the same violation might vary from state to state. For instance, the maximum punishment for *khalwat* in the Federal Territories (which include Kuala Lumpur) is a fine of RM 3,000, up to two years in jail, or both. The punishment for the identical act in Kelantan is far less severe and is set at rm 2,000 in fines, a year in jail, or both.<sup>38</sup>

Malaysian Syariah law is founded upon the Quran, Hadith, (prophetic narrations), Sunnah, (prophetic tradition) and the interpretations of these sources from fuqaha (experts of the Islamic jurisprudence).<sup>39</sup> The function of *nahi anil munkar* is operationalized through several government institutions. In this aspect, JAKIM took the main responsibility for preventing evil. It supported a fatwa that forbade Muslims from doing yoga. In order to prevent zina, it has urged Muslims not to celebrate Valentine's Day and has outlawed women from acting as men to prevent lesbianism. It has ordered all performers and filmmakers to avoid nudity in films, issued rules for concerts, carnivals, and condemned the sight of a group of Muslim women in a widely circulated video clip in which they were embraced by a Korean band member during a concert. JAKIM threatened the organizers with legal action if they do not follow its requirements.<sup>40</sup>

For preventing HIV and AIDS in Malaysia, JAKIM jointly worked with the Ministry of Health, the Malaysian AIDS Council and other relevant public institutions to design a practical strategies and intervention program that support to reduce HIV infection. JAKIM also dedicated to social awareness among Muslims in Malaysia by encouraging to practice Islamic ethics and guidelines to prevent HIV disease.<sup>41</sup> Beside JAKIM, a non-judicial Islamic bureaucratic entity, the Sharia Courts and the Judiciary pursue the goal of encouraging virtue and prohibiting evil. Malaysia's Sharia court takes the lead in implementing Sharia rules in this area. Sharia courts, which have been adjudicating Islamic affairs since the early 1970s, have been updated, resulting "the elevated status of Shariah courts on par with civil courts" in 1988 as a consequence of constitutional revisions passed by the Malaysian parliament.<sup>42</sup>

## FINAL REMARKS

Islamic governance in Malaysia performed significantly which provides an empirical example for other Muslim countries. Since Islam guides for peace and security, the government's

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<sup>37</sup> LAWS OF MALAYSIA, ACT 559, SYARIAH CRIMINAL OFFENCES (FEDERAL TERRITORIES) ACT 1997.

<sup>38</sup> Jani, Muhammad Haziq Bin. "Countering violent extremism in Malaysia: Past experience and future prospects."

<sup>39</sup> Nurul Huda Mohd. "Intimacy Under Surveillance: Illicit Sexuality, Moral Policing, and the State in Contemporary Malaysia."

<sup>40</sup> Malaysiakini "K-Pop fiasco is why Islam forbids such concerts", 12 January, 2015. <https://www.malaysiakini.com/news/286088>

<sup>41</sup> Sern, Tham Jen, and Hasmah Zanuddin. "Affirmative religious response culture to HIV and AIDS: Understanding the public relations role of JAKIM in curbing the epidemic among young Muslim couples in Malaysia." *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 13 (2014): 8.

<sup>42</sup> Mohamad, Maznah. *The Divine Bureaucracy and Disenchantment of Social Life*. 90.



authority rightly followed the four basic elements of Quranic governance which include prayer management through developing mosques, zakat management, encouraging good acts, and preventing wrong in society. The mosque as an institution executed several functions such as religious teachings, social counselling on Islamic affairs, and arrangement for non-Muslims for mutual understanding. In zakat governance, the religious institutions collected a significant amount of money and distributed it among several classes of the society as directed by the Quran. The government implemented numerous policies, used several practical techniques, upheld the constitution that governs citizens' rights, and upheld legal function for maintaining social harmony to carry out *amr bil ma'ruf*, or performing good. The government engaged religious bureaucrats who are committed to upholding peace and security in Malaysia and carried out numerous strategies and legal acts to prevent evils.

However, some improvements are still required, such as the digitalization of zakat recipients, where their names will be enlisted with current information about their identities. Zakat distributors should clearly disclose full data on how many clients got financial assistance and which categories of zakat reception they fall into. These will provide a more complete picture of zakat administration. More cooperation and coordination from the federal government to the state government is required to encourage good and prohibit evil in society. Moreover, the service channels of the government should be shortened to avoid bureaucratic complexity. More importantly, as a government of a multi-racial and multi-religious society, the priority of Islamic governance is to ensure peace and harmony not just among Muslims but across all communities. *Maqasid Shariah*, with its emphasis on human rights and justice should be the main guide as opposed to literal interpretation that could cause fissures when the implementation pivots away from Islamic values of maintaining peace. Islamic governance has the framework for national peace and security, but the execution has to be improved so that Malaysia becomes a peaceful nation to everyone regardless of faith or skin colour.