

Muslims as One Ummah Should Celebrate Eid at the Same Time

News

In Malaysia, this year's Eid falls on Saturday 22nd April 2023. In the past week before the announcement of Eid, there has been a polemic stance amongst Muslims in Malaysia on the issue of when Eid will fall – there was fear that there will be another 'sudden Eid' or in Malay, 'Raya terkejut'. This is when the Eid is announced to fall the next day and many are worried if this is the case, there will not be enough time to prepare for the celebration. Last year, Malaysia celebrated Eid (in 'raya terkejut' mode) one day earlier than Singapore even though the distance between the tip of Malaysia and Singapore is only about 2 km!

Comment:

Year in year out, the same problem of difference in Eid celebration arises everywhere in the world because each Muslim country applies different methods in determining the dates of fasting and Eid. If a Muslim country uses the *ru'yah* method, there will always be Muslim countries that refuse to accept or acknowledge news of *ru'yah* from other countries. In Malaysia, Muslims have been continuously advised to obey the government's decision regardless of the *ru'yah* (or non-*ru'yah*) decisions of other countries even if the country is less than a day's journey away. Until today, each Muslim country in the world still adheres to its respective decision in determining the arrival of Ramadhan and Eid. In the past, when Muslims were still under the auspices of the Khilafah (Caliphate), they were united in celebrating Eid even though various regions were separated by great distances. During the Uthmaniyyah Khilafah for example, Muslims in Istanbul, Cairo, Makkah and Baghdad celebrated Eid simultaneously.

After the collapse of the Khilafah on March 3, 1924, Muslims are divided into more than 50 countries, each with its own sovereignty. Since then, various arguments have been used to defend the "boundaries of *assabiyyah* and *wataniyyah*" formed by the infidel imperialists so that each country can sustain its 'independence' in adopting its own method in the determination of Ramadhan and Eid and refuses to accept proof of *ru'yah* from other Muslim regions in the world. Among the arguments that are often highlighted is based on the "difference of *matla*". This in essence is an Islamic opinion but when this opinion is motivated not by the true understanding of regional distances, but is based on false national borders, the stance falters. Furthermore, with the progress of today's telecommunications systems, the argument of *matla*' difference may be contested, especially when false nation state borders form the basis of *shar'i* rulings!

Based on the clarity in understanding the *shar'i* ruling and the sophistication of modern communication systems, the global determination of Ramadhan and Shawwal (global *ru'yah*) is not a complicated issue. Hence, what is preventing the

rulers of today's Muslims from agreeing to celebrate Ramadhan and Shawwal on the same day? The fact is, it is not the problem of *ru'yah* nor astronomical differences nor technology that constitute the main obstacle. The main problem is that each Muslim country clinches jealously to its sovereignty which is based on false nationalistic boundaries that divides the *ummah*. The *aqeedah* no longer forms the basis of unification. And it is certainly very sad to see that every Muslim country thinks they have been correct in adopting an Islamic decision - on the basis of nationalism - even though they say that every Muslim is a brother of another. The borders of nation states created by kuffar colonialists seemed to have taken deep roots in the souls of Muslims even in simple issues like the determination of fasting and Eid. Although there have been efforts and cooperation between Muslim countries in Southeast Asia to solve the problem of determining fasting and Eid, for example, by the establishment of MABIMS (abbreviation for the Informal Annual Meeting of Ministers of Religion - Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore), until today the problem has not been resolved. The failure of MABIMS is, in fact, caused by efforts that are not based on the true concept of Muslim unity. MABIMS still relies heavily on the concept of nation state which is the very framework of the problem that it is trying to solve!

It is inevitable to conclude that the problems of Muslims can only be fully resolved with the establishment of the Khilafah. By uniting Muslims under the umbrella of the Khilafah, all concerns and differences regarding the affairs of Muslims will be resolved. A *shari'a* method states that the order of an Imam/Khalifah will eliminate any differences/discord. Therefore, with the Khilafah, problems such as determining the start of Shawwal for all Muslims, including in Malaysia, will be easily resolved. One crescent, wherever it is seen, is enough to coordinate Eid around the world. Muslims are one nation - one body, one book, one belief, one Qibla and one faith in Allah (swt), The Almighty.

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