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WAQF AND ZAKAT IN POST INDEPENDENCE INDONESIA

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ASSESSMENT OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES
IN INDONESIAN ISLAMIC EDUCATION INSTITUTION

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MEANING REVEALED:
GREBEG BESAR IN DEMAK CENTRAL JAVA

Siti Muawanah

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Document

New Leadership at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

Idris Thaha

In mid-October this year (17 October 2006), the University Senate at the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University (UIN) Jakarta was convened with the task of electing a new rector for the University. The meeting, presided over by the outgoing rector Dr. Azyumardi Azra, was attended by eighty members of the University Senate. This number comprised of lecturers, assistant lecturers, and department head. Those in attendance included Dr. A. Malik Fajar (former Minister for Education), Dr. Din Syamsuddin (Head of Muhammadiyah), Professor M. Atho Mudzhar (Head of the Research and Development at the Department of Religion), Dr. Husni Rahim (Secretary of the National Higher Education Accreditation Board), and one of the leaders of MUI, Dr. Huzaemah Tahido. Amongst the more prominent of those absent – due to work commitments – were Dr. Quraish Shihab, Dr. Nasaruddin Umar, Dr. Said Aqil Husain al-Munawwar, and Dr. Yunasril Ali.

Three candidates were deemed eligible for election by the UIN Election Committee, namely Dr. Komaruddin Hidayat (Director of Postgraduate Studies), Dr. Masykuri Abdullah (Deputy Rector [Academic Affairs]), and Dr. Suwito (Deputy Rector [Institutional Development]).

The three candidates above were selected through a two-phase process. In the first phase, the Committee sends out forms to 31 prospective candidates viewed as having met the conditions of selection. As it turned out, only six of those sent forms responded, while only three of those continued through to the next phase; the other three pulled themselves out of the running for the position.

At the above-mentioned senate meeting, each member was given the opportunity to place his or her vote in favour of one of the three candidates. In the end it was Dr. Hidayat who came out on top, gaining 61 votes. The runner-up was Dr. Abdillah, who received 16 votes, while Dr. Suwito received 2 votes. This result means that Dr. Hidayat will now take up the chair of Rector of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta for the 2006-2010 period. He will replace Dr. Azra, who has held the position for two consecutive terms.

Striving for Change

Dr. Komaruddin Hidayat will follow the footsteps of a long line of prominent rectors that have led this university from strength to strength over time. Established 1 June 1957, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah started off initially as a Government Academy for Religious Studies (Akademi Dinas Ilmu Agama [ADIA]). Three years later, ADIA became an institute, that is, Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. It wasn't for another 42 years that IAIN finally became the Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University, otherwise simply known as UIN Jakarta. In particular since its change to a university, UIN Jakarta has undergone a number of significant and positive changes, including in academic affairs, administration and finances, student affairs, institutional development, and partnerships with other parties.

With regards to academic affairs, the university's development is evident from the number of study programs at UIN, which now totals 52. These programs are run under ten faculties as well as the Postgraduate Faculty. By the end of Azra's term as rector, 27 study programs had received accreditation from the National Higher Education Accreditation Board (Badan Akreditasi Nasional Perguruan Tinggi [BAN-PT]). Further to this, a number of study centres and research institutions (around 30 in total) have been set up, all of which have contributed to the overall development of the university. These include the American Corner, the Iranian Corner, the Turkish Corner, the Ching Kun Corner, while the China Corner is currently being completed.

UIN's first-class infrastructure and facilities clearly make it one of the most prestigious universities in the country, as it possesses top facilities, offices, laboratories, student accommodation buildings, amongst others. UIN's development is further being spurred by rising standards of its human resources. The level of education generally held by teaching staff continues to rise, with most holding at least a Masters or PhD. In fact, UIN Jakarta can boast of having 65 professors who teach on campus. UIN Jakarta has also established partnerships with over 90 other institutions, both government and private, domestically and internationally, including in the Middle East, America, Australia, and China.

In addition, during his time as rector, Azra introduced a number of international programs which use Arabic or English as the medium of instruction. These include: a program run by the Faculty of Islamic Studies in cooperation with al-Azhar University in Cairo; a study program on comparative religion in the faculty of Syari'ah and Law; a Management and Accounting program; International Relations program in the Faculty of Economics and Sosial Studies; Information Technology and Information Systems program at the Faculty of Science and Technology; and the Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies Program at the Postgraduate Studies faculty. In order to promote this atmosphere of internationalism, signs and postings throughout the campus (including the titles of each faculty) are written in three languages; Arabic, English and Indonesian, while the Friday sermon at Masjid al-Jami'ah is held in English and Arabic. News on University activities and events, published through Akhbar al-Jami'ah, UIN News and on the internet at Web UIN (www.uinjkt.ac.id) is presented in three languages.

The Road Ahead

The achievements of Azra during his time as the Rector of UIN Jakarta, provides Dr. Hidayat with the perfect foundation on which to build on. One of Hidayat's biggest tasks will be to make UIN a world-class research university that is competitive and holds prestige on the world stage. Hidayat himself acknowledged the importance of such a huge mission. When he was chosen as the Rector of UIN Jakarta, he reiterated his commitment to finishing off that which had been started by past rectors.

Hidayat has revealed his vision and mission for UIN Jakarta for the next four years. First, Hidayat seeks to make UIN Jakarta a source of inspiration for other tertiary education institutions in Indonesia. Second, he wishes to look at ways in which UIN Jakarta can help build the capacity of schools, pesantrens, and madrasahs which have been marginalized; students from these schools, he hopes, will thus be able to play their role in the development of Indonesia, be it academic, cultural, economic, or religious.

Hidayat would also like to see UIN Jakarta produce alumni that become the leaders of Indonesia who possess a commitment to the values of Islam as well as social development. As is well-known throughout Indonesia, a sizeable number of UIN alumni have become very prominent figures in the fields of politics and religion, for example.

Komaruddin Hidayat: A Glace at his Rise to the Top

Hidayat's commitment to the continued success and progress of UIN Jakarta cannot be viewed separately from his own personality. Hidayat is a reflective and rational individual who places a great deal of importance on seeing the true message of religion, namely its moral appeal. Hidayat's ideology and outlook are evident in a number of books that he has authored, including Agama Masa Depan: Perspektif Filsafat Perennial (Paramadina, 1995), which he co-authored; Memahami Bahasa Agama: Sebuah Kajian Hermeneutik (Paramadina, 1996); Tragedi Raja Midas: Moralitas Agama dan Krisis Modernisme (Paramadina, 1998), Tuhan Begitu Dekat: Menangkap Makna-makna Tersembunyi di Balik Perintah Beribadah (Paramadina, 2002); and Psikologi Kematian: Mengubah Ketakutan Menjadi Optimisme (Hikmah, 2005).

Hidayat's penchant for expressing himself and presenting his ideas through his writings was something that began during his time at Pondok Pesantren Pabelan, Muntilan, in Central Java. In later years, while he was studying at IAIN Jakarta for his Bachelors degree, his writing career was given a boost when he was invited to become a reporter for the magazine Panji Masyarakat. It was then that Komarruddin's star began to rise. Hidayat later went on to continue his postgraduate studies in the field of philosophy at Ankara's Middle East Technical University (METU). As soon as he returned to Indonesia, he continued to write with great fervour.

However Hidayat's ideas are not only conveyed to us through his writings, but also through education. He has held a number of teaching positions, including lecturer at Sekolah Tinggi Filsafat (STF) Driyakara, Jakarta (1993), and later at the Postgraduate faculty of Universitas Indonesia (UI) in Depok (1994-1995). Furthermore, because of his expertise in the field of philosophy, in 2001 he was bestowed with the title of Professor by UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Since 2005, he has been the Director of Postgraduate studies at this university.

Besides this, Hidayat has also held positions on the Supervisory Council for the Paramadina Foundation, as Executive Director for Pendidikan Madania, and Director of the Development of Islamic Higher Education Institutions at the Directorate for the Development of Islamic Institutions (Binbaga), within the Department of Religion.

In the world of politics, Hidayat headed up the supervision of 2004 General Elections as Head of Panwaslu, the official supervisory committee for the Elections. Under his direction, the 2004 General Elections – which were taking place for the first time in Indonesia – were a complete success; they were universally acclaimed as being safe, transparent, and peaceful.

Hidayat's knowledge and understanding of Islam, which he has studied since his pesantren days, are also not doubted by the world community. With great ease, he is able to explain the development of Islamic doctrine, including in Indonesia, on the world stage. To date, Hidayat has given talks on Islam and Indonesia in around thirty countries. In September and October 2005, for example, he gave talks in Australia on the growth and development of Indonesian Islam. Hidayat's international success, however, had very humble beginnings; he himself admits that his pesantren education provided him wider perspective and insight into both national and international issues.

There is no doubt that a great deal of responsibility rests on the shoulders of Dr. Komaruddin Hidayat, and that he will face many challenges. However, he has taken on this responsibility with great zeal and is committed to making UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta a world-class research university.