

***DA^CWAH TO ABORIGINES AT LUBUK LEGONG, SIONG
BALING KEDAH***

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I hereby declare that the work in academic project is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

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Grateful to Allah SWT, most gracious and most merciful. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the universe. May peace and prayers be upon and His final prophet and messenger.

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All praise be to Allah! May He accept my work for His sake alone.

ABSTRAK

Menurut kajian aktiviti dakwah perlu sentiasa dilaksanakan. Kajian ini merupakan kajian aktiviti dakwah kepada Orang Asli Kensiu di Lubuk Legong, Siong Baling Kedah. Selama empat bulan ke atas sekumpulan subjek-belia berumur 25 hingga 40 tahun di Lubuk Legong. Kajian ini bertujuan melihat perkembangan dakwah di kalangan subjek yang dikaji. Untuk memperolehi data, kajian ini menggunakan dua metodologi kajian iaitu kajian perpustakaan dan kajian lapangan. Beberapa teknik kajian telah digunapakai iaitu pemerhatian, temubual dan meneliti dokumen yang berkaitan. Hasil kajian telah menunjukkan bahawa Orang Asli Kensiu adalah beragama Islam keseluruhannya dan diberikan tenaga pengajar dari Jabatan Agama Islam Malaysia. Dapatan dari hasil kajian juga menunjukkan aktiviti dakwah perlu diteruskan bagi membendung gejala murtad dan ketipisan ilmu agama.

ABSTRACT

Da'wah activities must proceed as planned. This research is based on the study of *da'wah* activities carried out at an *Orang Asli Kensiu* communities in *Lubuk Legong, Siong, Baling, Kedah*. The researcher spent a time of 4 months, with them, for purpose of observing and collection of data and information about the *da'wah* activities. The study are focus on their acceptance of Islam and the activities of *da'wah* that were specially programmed for them by the Islamic Development of Organization of Malaysia (*JAKIM*). To fully achieve the objectives of this research, the researcher used two different method, namely literature review and field study. Several study technique have been applied, namely non-participation, observation, interview and documentary analysis. The researcher comes up with them. Conclusion, that this *Kensiu* aborigines group have already fully embraced the religion of Islam and being guided in the religion practices by the offices of *JAKIM*. But, there is still room for improvements to make the *da'wah* activities and approaches more effective and efficient.

ملخص البحث

ومن الملاحظ، أن نشاط الدعوة أمر مهم، وهذا البحث يدور حول نشاط الدعوة إلى السكان الأصليين كينسو، في لوبوق لعكوغ، سيوع، باليع، قدح. لمدة أربعة أشهر تركيزاً على الأصليين من سن الشباب بين ٢٥-٤٠ في هذا المكان. ويهدف هذا البحث إلى التعرف عن مدى نشأة الدعوة لديهم. لذا، يسير هذا البحث سيراً خاصاً وهو دراسة مكتبية وميدانية. وفي جمع المعلومات يسير هذا البحث وفق عدّة قواعد منها الملاحظة والمقابلة وجمع المعلومات من مصادرها الأصلية وجمع المعلومات الثانوية. وفيما يترتب من هذا البحث يخلص القول إلى أن السكان الأصليين كينسو كلهم من المسلمين بشكل عام ولديهم المسؤول الخاص من لجنة الدين الإسلامي بماليزيا. ومن الجدير بالذكر، أن نشاط الدعوة نشاط مستمر لحماية المجتمع عن قضية الردة وقلّة التعاليم الإسلامية السامية.

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GLOSSARY

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Aborigines (Orang Asli) | A new expression introduced by the Malaysian government to replace the words “Aborigines”, “ <i>Sakai</i> ”, “ <i>Orang Darat</i> ” and other terms once used by the British ruler to refer to this community |
| Bintang Tiga | Malayan Communist Party. |
| Cenoi | The symbol of power that exists between the normal human beings and ‘Orang hidup’. |
| Da ^c wah | Asking for help, praying’ guiding, inviting, welcoming, summoning, and requesting. |
| Halak | A mediator between normal human beings and figures of divinity. |
| Orang hidup | The existence of supernatural power or the spirit of the soul |
| Penghulu | A residential unit under the leadership |
| Tok Batin | Symbolize the divine creatures in their belief |
| Ukhwah | The concept of building rapport |

ARABIC WORDS TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM

TRANSLITERATION TABLE

1. ALPHABET

| <u>Arabic</u> | <u>Latin</u> | <u>Example</u> | <u>Transliteration</u> |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| ء | , | فأر | fa'r |
| ب | b | برد | burd |
| ت | t | تلّ | tall |
| ث | th | ثوب | thawb |
| ج | j | جدار | jidar |
| ح | h | حليب | halib |
| خ | kh | خادم | khadim |
| د | d | ديك | dik |
| ذ | dh | ذهب | dhahab |
| ر | r | رفيق | rafiq |
| ز | z | زميل | zamil |
| س | s | سلام | salam |
| ش | sh | شعب | sha'b |
| ص | s | صخر | sakhr |
| ض | d | ضيق | dayq |
| ط | t | طالب | talib |
| ظ | z | ظالم | zalim |
| ع | ʿ | عقل | ʿaql |

| | | | |
|---|----|------|--------|
| غ | gh | غلام | ghulam |
| ف | f | فيل | fil |
| ق | q | قلب | qalb |
| ك | k | كلام | kalam |
| ل | l | لبّ | lubb |
| م | m | مال | mal |
| ن | n | نجم | najm |
| ه | h | هول | hawl |
| و | w | ورق | waraq |
| ي | y | يَمّ | yam |

2. Short Vowel

| <u>Arabic</u> | <u>Latin</u> | <u>Example</u> | <u>Transliteration</u> |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| _____ | a | كتب | kataba |
| _____ | i | علم | °alima |
| _____ | u | غلب | ghuliba |

3. Long Vowel

| <u>Arabic</u> | <u>Latin</u> | <u>Example</u> | <u>Transliteration</u> |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| ي ، ا | a | عالم ، فتى | °alim, fata |
| ي | i | عليم ، داعي | °alim, da°i |
| و | u | علوم ، أدعو | °ulum, ad°u |

4. Diphthong

| <u>Arabic</u> | <u>Latin</u> | <u>Example</u> | <u>Transliteration</u> |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|------------------------|
| و | aw | نوم | nawm |
| ي | ay | ليل | layl |
| يَّ | iyy | شافعي | shafi'iy (ending) |
| وَّ | uww | علوَّ | 'uluww (ending) |

5. Exemptions

5.1 Arabic letter ؤ (hamzah) found at the beginning of a word is transliterated to the letter “a” and not to’.

Example: أكبر transliterated to: akbar (not ‘akbar)

5.2 Arabic letter ة (ta’ marbutah) found in a word without ال (al) which is coupled with another word that contains ال (al) at the beginning of it is transliterated to the letter “t”.

Example: مكتبة الإمام transliterated to: maktabat al-imam

However if the Arabic letter ة (ta’ marbutah) found in a word with ال (al), in a single word or in the last word in a sentence, it is transliterated to the letter “h”.

Example: المكتبة الأهلية transliterated to: al-maktabah al-ahliyyah
 قلعة transliterated to: qal'ah
 دار وهبة transliterated to: dar wahbah

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| JAİK | Jabatan Agama Islam Kedah |
| JAKİM | Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia |
| JHEOA | Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli |
| KEMAS | Kemajuan Masyarakat |
| NGO | Non Government Organization |
| PERKİM | Pertubuhan Kebajikan Islam Malaysia |
| RISDA | Rubber Industry Smallholders Development |
| RTM | Radio Televisyen Malaysia |

CHAPTER

I

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Islam is a divine religion of Allah, which is transcended from Allah to human being. (This religion use force pen to human). Therefore, the decency of this religion must be preached with wisdom and willingness (hikmah).

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ
أَحْسَنُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious; for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance (Al-Qur'an. Al-Nahl 16:125)

The prophet acts as a messenger of Islam. All Muslims are now carrying out this responsibility in this decade. *Baling* is a district, which is located near the border of *Malaysia* and *Thailand*. Although this place is a secluded area, the responsibility to disseminate the teaching of Islam must be carried out regardless of any barrier. This can be proved by the involvement of aborigines at *Lubuk Legong* in my research.

1.1 Research Background

In the overall view, the meaning of *da'wah* methodology is the method used in conveying the teaching of Islam. In order for the mission to be carried out successfully, the

methodology of *da'wah* used must be suitable with the targeted group; their position and race. This research is aimed at determining the best method in conveying the teaching of Islam to the *Kensiu* aborigines.

There are about 122 families living in *Kg. Lubuk Legong*. This community is assisted and supported by the state government. Each family is provided with a house and is given a job opportunity in a rubber estate. This is done to improve their standard of living. They depend more on the natural resources even though their houses are equipped with running water and electricity.

This is the smallest community in *Baling*, but they also play their part in contributing to the economy. However, this community is lagging behind in technologies and the knowledge of Islam. My supervisor suggested this research. At the same time, I was also interested in this research. Furthermore, this topic gives me a chance to learn more about this community that has been left behind in the fast pace of technology enjoyed by other community in *Baling*. I hope that my research may bring significant changes in this community by encouraging others to do further research in the effort to upgrade their standard of living in terms of technology and Islamic development. This might also help fasten the development of Islam in the Asian region.

If the missionary workers are knowledgeable and are successful in adapting themselves in this community, this problem will not arise. Only Islam can bring people together. This multiracial community in *Baling* will not have any problem living together and can only be protected by laws.

1.2 Significance Of Study

This research can help the multiracial-*Baling* community to better understand the lives of other group that is still very much isolated from the *Baling* community itself. Besides, an effective method might be discovered to approach this group which lagging behind in

accepting Islam. Moreover, this research is very much needed to develop the *Baling* district itself.

1.3 Research Aim

The aborigines in *Baling* are still deprived of the teaching of Islam. Islam is out of their reach compared to the other three races in *Baling*. Through this research, I have gained some knowledge on the standard of living of these two groups. This is my contribution in the effort to gain deeper insights about these groups.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research conducted is aimed at studying a few vital aspects:

- 1.4.1. With the research, I may find a suitable *da'wah* approach to help them free themselves from the deprivation of education and living standard.
- 1.4.2. Identifying the challenges in conveying the teaching of Islam.
- 1.4.3. Analyzing the data on *da'wah* activities.
- 1.4.4. Suggesting new ideas to enhance and widen the teaching of Islam.
- 1.4.5. Helping the *Baling* residents to understand these groups and alleviate their fears to approach the groups.

1.5 Research Scope

This research will be conducted on 50 aborigine families. I divide them into 2 categories; the youths ranging from 25 to 29 years old, and 30 years old and above.

1.6 Literature Review

I refer to the religious books, for example the *da'wah* method and the previous researches in variety of places. By knowing the method of *da'wah*, I may distinguish whether these groups are approachable with that particular method. Besides, the previous researches will expose me to the methods that have been applied to them. The obstacle that I might encounter is the lack of cooperation from them. In order to accumulate the information essential for this research, I will conduct a survey, observation and gather the references about these groups before coming into close contact with them. I obtain my references on these groups from *JAKIM*, and *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli* (The Aborigines Department). The community around these groups claimed that these aborigines prefer the nomadic lifestyle rather than the modern lifestyle.

This research requires a number of essential sources found in distinguished reference materials. A lot of academic books are used as references and also as the sources in the attempt to determine the most suitable method of *da'wah*. These methods include both that have been applied and not. There are a few similar researches that have been conducted in different locations. These researches also touched on the *da'wah* approach. Among the previous references and researches are:

The research written by Malizah bt Mohd Yusuf, Rohani binti Kamis, and Siti Rosilawati binti Ramlan is titled '*Pendekatan dan Metodologi Da'wah kepada Orang Asli di Malaysia, 2003*' (The Approach and Methodology of *Da'wah* to The Aborigines in *Malaysia*, 2003). The writers discussed the challenges and the suitable method of *da'wah* to be used on approaching the aborigines in *Malaysia*. From the discussion, the writers suggested a few moves to tackle the problem of the acceptance of Islam among the aborigines in *Malaysia* to ensure the effectiveness of the *da'wah*.

According to *Othman bin Haji Ibrahim* (1995), the missionaries' knowledge in the cultural aspects of the targeted group, their taboos, sensitivities; line of thinking, psychology, beliefs etc. is vital. Besides that, a missionary has to be logical in giving

explanation, and not by using al-Quran and al-Hadith solely. This is because the non-Muslims do not regard these two sources as divine.

The revelations given can help evaluate the real side of the aborigines, which shall not be taken lightly by the missionaries. By suggesting profound ideas in the approach of *da'wah*, the missionaries have to learn from all the aspects presented.

The information about the aborigines in *Lubuk Legong* is obtained from *JHEOA. Kensiu* is an aboriginal tribe rooted from the *Semang-Negrito* races that are now residing only in the village of the aborigines in *Lubuk Legong, Baling, Kedah (Perkampungan Orang Asli Lubuk Legong)*. It is located about 13km away from *Baling (JHEOA Grik, Perak September 2001)*. This information is acquired from the *JHEOA* itself. Continuous research is conducted aiming at helping them improve their standard of living.

1.7 Conclusion

Based on the information obtained, it can be concluded that *da'wah* has been carried out on the aborigines of *Lubuk Legong*. However, further action has to be taken to curb some immoral activities.

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To ensure that this research can be conducted smoothly, a few methodologies have to be applied. Among the methods that I will use are surveys, interviews, observations, and references from the library or articles about these groups, which are published by the organizations responsible in managing these groups in *Baling*.

The interviews are conducted to gain more information from the *JHEOA* officers in that area of research. The information gathered includes the latest data on the case studied. A number of missionaries are also interviewed to identify the *da'wah* methods that have been implied.

The writer has visited the area of research to do an observation and forge an alliance with these *Kensiu* Aborigines. In order to carry out this research thoroughly, a few methodologies are used. Research methodology is explaining how a research is conducted.

2.1 First Data

Among the methodologies used in this research are interviews. These are done in the early stages of the research. Informal interviews with a few individuals who are well informed about the aspects related to this research are conducted to elicit some information as well as the accurate background before the research is conducted further. A face-to-face interview was held with En. Abd. Muin b. Malik, a resident around *Kg*.

Lubuk Legong. Among the information obtained are the background, origin, the leader among the aborigines themselves, and even about the person who is most influential in that community. In addition, a follow-up interview was held with Pn. Rohani, an officer with the *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli (JHEOA)*. The information obtained is completely fulfilling. She explained most about the problems faced by the aborigines in *Lubuk Legong*. Puan Rohani even gave the research that was done by the *JHEOA* itself. Another methodology used is observation. From my own observation, the aborigines in *Kg. Lubuk Legong* are basically very deprived of the knowledge of Islam despite the fact that they are Muslims.

2.2 Second Data

Majority of the second data is obtained from the library. The data secured comes from books, journals, magazines, newspapers, and websites. Most of the printed references used discussed about the *da'wah* methodology that have been applied and the approachable methods for the non-Muslims. Other than that, these books are also intended to find the meaning of *da'wah*. There are six different views on this matter. Among the libraries used for this research are the libraries of Islamic University College of Malaysia, National Library, Public Islamic Library, *Gombak* Library of The Aborigines, and the Public Library of *Kedah Darulaman*.

CHAPTER III

CHAPTER 3

DA^CWAH TO ABORIGINES AT LUBUK LEGONG

3.1 Introduction

Every Muslim realizes that the strength and progress of Islam are triggered by the contribution and involvement of every individual, the Muslims community itself, and the government-appointed bodies. Lately, the Muslims community has realized the reality of the problems, but is still driven away by fantasies, oblivious to the fact that there are still some people who are isolated from the beauty of Islam. We should not be driven away by our pleasant fantasies for a religion is evaluated from the examples set by its devotees. Islam is divine and beautiful, but its own devotees, who decline to change for the better, tarnish the reputation.

3.2 Kg. Lubuk Legong's Location

There is only one aboriginal residence in *Kedah*, which is *Kg. Lubuk Legong*. It is situated in the *Siong* province and its distance from the town of *Baling* is around 13 km. The aboriginal tribe residing in this area is the *Kensiu* tribe from the *Negrito* group. They are the only *Kensiu* tribe that exists in the Peninsular. Apart from that, their descendants can also be found in *Rai* village in *Yala, Thailand*.

The aboriginal community has been residing in the land numbered 3623 since 1957. This land, measuring up to 428 acre, has been declared as the Aboriginal Reserve Land in 1958 (file reference PTB (A) 3/68). Before this was done, it is believed that they came

from *Kuala Kedua* and *Ulu Legong*. In 1941 or 1942, most of them fled away for the fear of Japanese occupation to places such as *Parit Panjang*, *Kg. Bendang Man Sik*, *Sg. Celak* and *Kg. Tiak Kupang*. To date, there are 216 aborigines in this reserve land. 42 of them are married couples. All of them are lead by a leader named *Itam bin Daram*. Their economic activities include rubber-tapping, hunting for forest resources, and there's also a number who work in the factory or as agricultural laborers (JHEOA, 2000).

3.3 Background

Kensiu is the aboriginal tribe rooted from the *Semang-Negrito* races, which are now residing in the aboriginal village of *Lubuk Lenggong*, 13 km from the town of *Baling*. Apart from that, they also have familial connection in *Kg. Rai*, *Yala*, and Southern *Thailand*. This tribe is the smallest and oldest tribe in *Negrito* group in Peninsular *Malaysia*. To date, there are 212 of them from 44 families (JHEOA Grik, Perak, September 2001).

Their residential area is now provided with a *musolla (surau)*, a multi-purpose public hall, a kindergarten, and there are 46 houses owned by the resident that was built by *JHEOA*, and a house belonging to a *JAKIM's* worker. This residential area is also provided with electricity and running water by the Water Supply Department (*Jabatan Bekalan Air*).

According to M.W. Tweedie, a historian, in his book "Pre-History", those living in the Peninsular are known as the *Negritos* and have been in existence since 8000 B.C. They lived in cages and hunted animals in the Mesolithic period. These *Negritos'* physical attributes are hard to determine as they exist in 4 *Kensiu's* sub-group known as *Mos*, *Nakil* (or *Dalem*), *Hetot* and *Tanjen*. Typically, they have smooth-curly hair, dark complexion, wide nose and round eyes resembling the Eastern African, with height around 5 feet and below, and most of them are like the New Guinea aborigines; the Papuans (Nazaruddin & Ma'arof Redzuan & Asnarulkhadi & Ismail,2002). The *Negritos* posses their own identity and this can be seen through their culture, materials,

and life. They showed little or no sign of agricultural activities. This was due to their completely nomadic lifestyle. Their culture and materials included the practice of nose-piercing and building temporary shelter from wind and bad weather. The *Negritos* traveled from one place to another to hunt and collect food and wood's resources. They would move to another place if the recent place were not productive anymore. They did not practice agriculture. Till the year 2000, 118 *Kensiu* are Muslims while the rest still cling to animism.

3.3.1 Economic System of *Kensiu* Community

Even though the government, through *JHEOA*, has established villages and permanent residential areas along with economic projects such as the *Mini Estate of Lubuk Legong I* and II in the year 1980 and 1982, with approximate income of about RM400 a month, this tribe inclination towards finding forest's resources and hunting animals is still perfectly intact. They prefer to search for rattan, bamboos, herbs, and animals such as tortoises, monkeys, squirrels and etc. All of these will be sold to the Chinese traders in the nearby town.

3.3.2 Marriage and Family Ties

The living concept that places much importance on equality and compatibility reflects the whole aspect of living in this community. Most of the members of this village *Kensiu's* community are close to each other. There are only two of them who married a Malay woman from *Kampung Baru* and an Indonesian. The Muslims in *Kensiu* community married according to Islamic law. Their marriages are carried out by a religious officer from Kedah Islamic Department (*Jabatan Agama Islam Kedah*). For those who follow the animistic belief, their marriages are held according to their belief. There are no events, or parties held in conjunction with these marriages. When a youth wants to get married, all he needs is the consent of the woman, not her parents. When the woman accepts the

proposal, the man will present her father with cloth, tobacco and knife, as a sign that the marriage between this man and the woman will occur soon. Then, they will live together, signifying that they are married. In the family system of the *Kensiu* community, there are still some taboos that continued to be held on to till today. Daughter-in-laws of the family are denied encounters among each other, as well as the son-in-law with another son-in-law in the family. The son-in-law is prohibited from interacting with the mother-in-law. On the other hand, men and women who are singles are not allowed to interact with each other, even to call each other by the names. They will resort to a mediator to help represent them if there is a need to interact with father-in-law and in-laws. The traditional concept of living that is still preserved today is relationship of avoidance to prevent solidarity. In this type of relationship, an individual in the group will try to avoid any encounters with the in-laws, especially those from different gender.

3.3.3 Social Organization

In the traditional life of the *Kensiu* community, the combination of 5 or 6 families will form a group. In most aspects, all of the family members in the same living quarters or camp usually share a very close relationship. Every group will be lead by the eldest member but there is no specific title given to the leader. A group leader is elected based on some factors such as age, experience, and knowledge in choosing the right living spot. The migration time and other similar aspects are still confined to the views and advices of the group members. Generally, leadership concept is not viewed as very important in the group level. They place more importance on the concept of egalitarian and solidarity. The vital element in a social organization is the nucleus family, comprising a husband, a wife and children. For the *Negritos* who practice nomadic lifestyle, their residence is better known as “*kumpulan tabir angin*”; that is the community who live under the attap as temporary shelters. This group brings their children along when they move from one place to another. They will carry these children according to turn. Every group has a wife, a husband and children, but only those who are still small live with them. For children aged 7 and above, a shelter will be built for them not far away from where their

families are, while the daughters will live with the elderly and separated by fireplace lighted up in the middle of their bed. All leadership matters are under their fathers' obligation, who determine the decision made regarding the family life (Rashid, 2000). With reference to the *Kensiu* community in *Baling*, this type of social organization has changed a lot. They have lived in *Kg. Lubuk Legong* for a long period of time and nomadic lifestyle is rarely practiced. This is because a permanent residential area was set up by *JHEOA* and is monitored by all of the agencies interacting directly and indirectly with them. Group organization has changed and is replaced by a village as a residential unit under the leadership of a leader called "*penghulu*". '*Penghulu*' is still similar with the traditional leader in terms of his obligations.

3.3.4 Beliefs

The belief system of the *Kensiu* is similar to that of the other *Negrito's* community. However, most of their beliefs are the traditional *Kensiu* community faith. Among the symbol in their belief or 'doctrine' are '*Tok Batin*', '*Karei*', and '*Menoi*'. These three symbolize the divine creatures in their belief. These symbols of their belief are often regarded as immortal and have always been referred to as the existence of supernatural power or the spirits of the soul that are known as '*orang hidup*'; human beings who are immortal. The symbol of power that exists between the normal human beings and '*orang hidup*' is known as '*Cenoi*'. '*Cenoi tapn*' is among the symbols that have always been regarded as God or The Majesty. The characteristics of '*Cenoi tapn*' resemble that of a species of monkey; or better known as '*mawas*' (*tawo*). The upper part of its body is still young while the lower part of the body is already old. '*Cenoi tapn*' is said to have control over the life of the *Kensiu* community and will materialize its anger through thunder and lightning (*Kaei*). This system is controlled by '*Halak*' that serves as a mediator between normal human beings and the figures of divinity according to their belief. Apart from that, '*Halak*' also play the role as a traditional healer. Both of these systems of doctrine and healing interact in a ritual called '*panoh*', that involves singing and dancing. Another ritual held for the same reason is '*sawan*', which also combined singing and dancing.

The fanaticism and devotion towards these two systems are reflected through the respect of taboos, values, and norms of the community. The experts in this belief held on to by the *Kensiu* community are known as ‘*Halak*’ or ‘*tok pawang*’. They are believed to be able to interact with the outer-world or the world of the spirits when they are in a trance. These experts or ‘*tok pawang*’ are said to have the ability to be in contact with ‘*Chinoi*’. They also act as the mediator in seeking help from this spirit to assist them in their agricultural activities (Zainal, 2002). However, all of the members of the *Kensiu* community have embraced Islam during the royal visit of the Sultan of Kedah there. The problem now is their devotion for Islam. This is because their ancestral belief has long been practiced and it seems to be an indispensable element in their life.

3.3.5 Structure of Organization

The management of *Kg. Lubuk Legong* aborigines is under the administration of ‘*Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli*’ (Department of Aboriginal Affairs) *Perak* and *Kedah*. Its main office is in *Ipoh, Perak*. For management in the district level, it is under the control of Department of Aboriginal Affairs of *Hulu Perak* district and *Baling*, which operates in *Gerik, Perak*.

Apart from that, as mentioned earlier, in the village level, the leader is appointed among them and a village committee (*JKKK*) was established to help the government bodies concerned. The *JKKK* established functions greatly as expected of it.

3.3.6 Development Projects

a. Social Development

In order to provide comfort for the aboriginal community, the government has supplied the basic living necessities in the village. Among them are:

Table 1: Social Development

| No. | Year | Type | Unit | Cost | Executor |
|-----|------|--------------------|----------|-------------------------|----------|
| 1 | 1965 | DHIA House | 22 units | RM 132,000.00 | JHEOA |
| 2 | 1966 | Public Hall | 1 unit | RM 28,000.00 | JHEOA |
| 3 | 1980 | Melati House | 10 units | RM 70,000.00 | JHEOA |
| 4 | 1991 | Melati House | 3 units | RM 35,000.00 | JHEOA |
| 5 | 1992 | TBK Building | 1 unit | RM 22,000.00 | JHEOA |
| 6 | 1997 | Melati House | 3 units | RM 35,700.00 | PDB |
| 7 | 1997 | Musolla | 1 unit | RM 60,000.00 | PDB |
| 8 | 1995 | Shops | 1 unit | RM 15,000.00 | JHEOA |
| 9 | | Water supply | - | Not functioning wholly. | |
| 10 | | Electricity | - | Unaffordable for some. | |
| 11 | 1997 | Multi-purpose hall | 1 unit | | UPEN |

Source: *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli, Gerik, Perak 2003*

b. Economic Development

The main purpose for economic development is to determine the economic growth resulting from the effort to upgrade the economic standard of the aborigines. These programmed include land development, subsidy aid etc. Among them are:

Table 2: Economic Development

| No. | Year | Project | Unit | Cost | Executor |
|-----|------|----------|-------------------|---------------|----------|
| 1 | 1965 | Orchard | 4 acres | RM 11,600.00 | JHEOA |
| 2 | 1982 | Orchard | 10 acres | RM 20,000.00 | JHEOA |
| 3 | 1980 | Rubber 1 | 48.31 hectares | RM149, 442.29 | RISDA |
| 4 | 1982 | Rubber 2 | 42.68 hectares | RM182, 279.79 | RISDA |

Source: *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli, Gerik , Perak 2003*

The Mini Estate Rubber 1 and 2 that have been carried out by *RISDA* are considered successful as the dividend obtained is about RM 5,000.00 per month. The aborigines benefit from it as they are given the benefit amounting to RM 300.00 per month for every family (42 families). The letdown here however is the fact that only 13 aborigines work as rubber-tappers in the estates.

3.3.7 Education

The low education level is prevalent among the residents here where only a small number of them are educated. In 1998, only 39 children registered at the nearby schools as stated below.

Table 3: *Sekolah Kebangsaan Siong* (Siong Primary School)

| Standard 1 | | Standard 2 | | Standard 3 | | Standard 4 | | Standard 5 | | Standard 6 | | Total | |
|------------|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|---|-------|----|
| M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 16 | 21 |

Source: *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli, Gerik, Perak 2003*

Table 4: *Sekolah Rendah Jenis Kebangsaan Lalang* (Lalang Vernacular Primary School)

| Standard 1 | | Standard 2 | | Standard 3 | | Standard 4 | | Standard 5 | | Standard 6 | | Total | |
|------------|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|---|------------|---|-------|---|
| M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | 2 | |

Source: *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli, Gerik, Perak 2003*

3.3.8 The 1998 Development

In 1998, less allocation was provided. A sum of RM 11,000.00 was spent to renovate and enlarge a shop house owned by a resident named *Harun bin Abu*.

Kemas has also assisted in the establishment of a fishpond belonging to *Mr. Awang Besar s/o Jali* with the cost of RM 4,000.00.

3.3.9 Village Reshuffling Plan

A village reshuffling plan is being molded with the help of the Department of City and Rural Development of Kedah (*Jabatan Perancangan Bandar dan Desa Kedah*). Its focus is on specific objectives that are:

- i. To renovate or build a new housing area in the current place and provide additional area.
- ii. To establish a solid organization in gearing up the development. It is also intended to ensure the continuity of this community without demolishing its decent life values.
- iii. To reform the aboriginal residence of *Lubuk Legong* into a tourist spot by making full use of the existing sources such as culture (art or tradition).
- iv. To enhance the integration with surrounding residents in the attempt to build a more intimate and harmonic relationship, reflecting the multi-racial community of *Malaysia*.
- v. To plan and execute the development of the reserve land of the aborigines in the effort to enhance its usefulness to the optimum level. (Department of Aboriginal Affairs 1998: 3-7).

Figure 1: The Village Sports Facilities (Badminton Court)



Source: Researcher Collection 2003

Figure 2: Jakim House in the Village



Source: Researcher Collection 2003

Figure 3: *Melati* House with belong to a villager



Source: Researcher Collection 2003

Figure 4: The Village *Tabika*



Source: Researcher Collection 2003

Figure 5: The Village *Musolla*



Source: Researcher Collection 2003

Figure 6: The Village Public Hall



Source: Researcher Collection 2003

CHAPTER
IV

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

The need for *da'wah* to be disseminated to the multi-ethnic community and various beliefs devotees in the context of Malaysian community nowadays is essential. Furthermore, this should be the first and foremost agenda in the missionary circle. The obligation to execute the essential agenda of attracting the aborigines towards learning about Islam should be the first agenda of all missionaries for the survival and the dynamic and progressive development of Islam.

Starting in 1950, the term '*Orang Asli*' (aborigines) was introduced to acknowledge the status of the aborigines as the native people of this country. Even though it is said that the ancestral line of these aborigines originated from other countries, this group is confirmed as the first to be found as early as the first sign of habitation was discovered.

This group also pictures the Malays of 50 years ago. This was the lifestyle of the Malays, who originally lived in a very dire state but has succeeded in paving the way towards a much better life. Datuk Anthony Ratos agrees with this statement.

The lifestyle of the '*Orang Asli*' (aborigines) today is similar to that of the Malays 50 years ago be it from their homes, lifestyles, and daily diet (Anthony Ratos, 2003).

Allah has created man as the most superior creature on earth. Allah said:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

We have indeed created man in the best of moulds. (Al-Qur'an. At-tin 95:4)

From the above verse, it is evident that every Allah's creation is the best and this too applies to the cognitive level, social, and interaction of the aborigines. Therefore, it is obvious that we have the ability to help change and guide the aboriginal community towards more developed lifestyles.

History shows that Japanese occupation in Malaya was very enduring, torturing, and mercilessness occurred regularly. The Japanese occupation left the impact on the aboriginal community where the *Kensiu* aborigines in *Kedah* fled and separated from each other in their frantic attempt to save their lives.

During the shifting of Japanese occupation to United Malay Nation in 1945, Malaya was ruled by the communist ('*Bintang Tiga*') for a period of 3 months and 10 days. Even though the ruling period was short, it did not lessen the brutality and oppression occurred throughout that period. This mercilessness was even worse in the state like *Kedah*, which neighbors was *Thailand*. *Baling* itself has written history when the peace talk between the government of Malaya and Malayan Communist Party was held there. This historic meeting happened in 1955. These are the factors for the separation of the *Kensiu* aborigines in *Kedah* (Mohamed Roselan Abd Malik, 1998).

During the ruling of Malaysian government, the aboriginal rights are upheld. In order to assist the upgrading of the life of this community, the government resorted to assemble all of them in the assigned villages that are *Lubuk*, *Legong*, *Siong* and *Baling*. The establishment of the *JHEOA* is aimed at protecting the aborigines and their lifestyles from the fast-developing civilization and exploitation. It is also aimed at providing the necessity for education and development that is compatible with them.

The changes and assistance have changed the lifestyles of the aborigines. They do not practice nomadic lifestyle anymore but live in a permanent residence, a village. Apart from that, they are also offered jobs as rubber-tappers in various economic projects such

as the Mini Estate of *Lubuk Legong* I and II projects in 1980 and 1982 with estimated income of about RM 400 a month. Besides the job offered by government, they still practice the traditional economic activities such as searching for rattan, forest's plants and animals.

During the royal visit of the Sultan of *Kedah* to the village, majority of the aborigines have embraced Islam. This however does not indicate that Islam will stay in their hearts as the only true religion or Islam being declared as the official religion in the aboriginal community. The writer's visit to the village also confirmed the fact that Islam is not fully practiced in this community. Plus, there are a number of them who still cling to the animistic belief (Rohani, 2003)

Many efforts have been done to ensure that Islam will stay in their hearts. One of those is by placing an educator from *JAKIM*. Among the activities and teaching done are:

1. The teaching of reciting Al-Qur'an
2. Teaching of *Fardhu Ain*

The government bodies and NGOs also contribute towards *da'wah* activities. Among the organization involved are:

1. *PERKIM*
2. *Tabligh*
3. New Brothers of Sungai Petani (*Saudara Baru Sungai Petani*)
4. Islamic Department of Baling (Rohani, 2003)

However, if the number of aborigines, which is 216, comes into consideration, it is possible for *da'wah* activities to be carried out smoothly. The small number is an advantage in ensuring that Islam will be practiced thoroughly. As previously acknowledged, the aboriginal community lives together despite their different beliefs. Furthermore, the aborigines respect the oldies among them. The influence from these old people causes them to doubt Islam. The older community still sticks to the animistic belief even though they have embraced Islam some times before.

The ignorance of the aborigines towards the teaching of Islam causes '*murtad*' to happen. It is not their fault if this happened, but it is part of our responsibility. Our apathy allows this to happen and leaves them alone without any fulfillment of Islamic spirituality.

Even though there is a view stating that the aboriginal community is sensitive and shy, this is not an excuse to neglect our responsibilities of teaching them about Islam. Allah rewards human beings with the brain to think, so the missionaries should think of a more effective approach, suitable to their lifestyles, perception, and belief. The attitude of hastening every process to make the aborigines embrace Islam and promising reward for them is not acceptable for a missionary. Sadly, this is the reality, helping them to embrace Islam but desert them after that, without any guidance and assistance.

Even though the government has provided missionaries from *JAKIM*, these existing workers are incapable of teaching and guiding the aborigines thoroughly. Assistance from other bodies is very much needed in ensuring that the *da'wah* activities will be going on for every day.

A lot of activities are conducted that involved the aborigines such as the program to build good characters among aboriginal youths (*'Program Jati Diri Belia Orang Asli'*), but this kind of activities can be said to be seasonal. Even though the teaching of Islam is ongoing, the effectiveness of the teaching is undetectable. How could one expect to see the aboriginal children attending The Koran classes that are dull without any initiative to vary the teaching technique if their attendance in school is already comparatively low?

From the writer's observation, '*da'wah*' effort among the aborigines should be continuous without any exemption. Finding the right missionary who is look up to in the community would be a very wise move or just simply prepare the missionary who is interested to approach this community.

CHAPTER

V

CHAPTER 5

SUGGESTION TO RECTIFY AND WIDEN *DA'WAH* FOR THE ABORIGINES

5.1 Introduction

Every human born into this world has the desire to adhere to a belief as a mean of guidance in life. Only religion can help lead mankind to the right path, with guidance for their perception, attitude and as something to be held to. It is also without doubt that Islam is the only true religion and is embraced by various races. Islam is the real religion that is accepted by Allah and is blessed by Him. Allah said in the Koran:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعٌ

الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٩﴾

The Religion before Allah is Islam (submission to His Will): nor did the people of the Book dissent therefrom except through envy of each other, after knowledge had come to them. But if any deny the Signs of Allah, Allah is swift in calling to account. (Al-Qur'an. Al-Imran 3: 19)

That itself provides a reason for us to acknowledge that only Islam can change and free humans from ignorance.