

The Islamic Principles and Guidelines to Household Solid Waste Management

Mohamed Yayah Jalloh - Wan Sidi Adibah Wan Dahalan - Rasyikah Md Khalid

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Mohamed Yayah Jalloh¹
Wan Sidi Adibah Wan Dahalan²
Rasyikah Md Khalid³

Abstract

Islam is a progressive religion that covers all aspects of human life, including social, economic, and the environment. The Islamic traditions in numerous occasions have called for environmental protection, waste management (including household solid waste), and appreciation of resources. It is obvious that part of the environmental crises and waste of resources mankind is facing today, is due to his spiritual malaise, and the failure to account for the God-given resources. To this effect, this paper analyses the Islamic instructions and principles, and their application to household solid waste management. The paper adopted content analyses of primary resources (Qur'an and Sunnah), commentaries of exegetes and jurists, and relevant Islamic principles and Islamic legal maxims to address the issue at hand. The paper concluded that the shared vision and wisdom of the Islamic teachings and tradition should reflect our common values and commitments to the welfare of the people and the environment. On this occasion, the paper recommends that the Islamic teachings on the subject matter can make a distinctive contribution to that vision by infusing man's preservation of the natural environment particularly to the management of household solid waste with transcendent (revealed) values and ethics that look toward the common interest and welfare of humanity as a whole and the environment.

Keywords: *Islam, Principles, instructions, Household solid waste, management.*

¹ yahyajalloh37@gmail.com

² wsa@ukm.edu.my

³ rasyikah@ukm.edu.my Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia



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INTRODUCTION

The environment can be characterised as the natural world and one of the greatest creations of Allah s.w.t. This is evidenced in the verse, “Do you not see that to Allah bow down in submission all those in the heavens and all those on the earth, as well as the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, and ‘all’ living beings, as well as many humans, while many are deserving of punishment. And whoever Allah disgraces, none can honor. Surely Allah does what He wills.”⁴ This verse demonstrates the mighty of Allah on His creations and, apart from the protection, shelter, food, rain, and so on, that the environment provides, it also prostrates in submission to the will of its Creator. This message called upon mankind to ponder and reflect on the creation of Allah and abstain from its abuse and degradation. Sayyid Nasir commented on the verse, “Do not corrupt the earth after it has been put right,”⁵ that “There is near total disequilibrium between modern man and nature as attested by nearly every expression of modern civilization which seeks to offer a challenge to nature rather than to co-operate with it”⁶

Mankind by his very characteristics is made of about thirty (30) elements from the environment.⁷ Thus, in order to ensure continuous living in a clean environment and other supportive provisions for human life, man, as the architect master of creation, must take a harmonious, integrated, and balanced approach. Nonetheless, mankind, due to his deficiency in vision and value in his interaction with the environment, has and is continuously inflicting damage on its whole existence and corrupting its content to the extent that it has brought the future of the entire ecosystem to the brink of collapse. Also, due to some unethical behaviour and greed for wealth, mankind has been continuously exploiting precious natural resources, polluting the environment and exhibiting behaviours that are detrimental to human health and the

⁴ Al-Hajj, 22:18

⁵ Al- A`raf, 7:56.

⁶ Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *The need for a sacred science*. Routledge, 2005.

⁷ Haneef, Sayed Sikandar Shah. "Principles of environmental law in Islam." *Arab LQ* 17 (2002): 241.



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environment.⁸This has consequently resulted to global warming and an extreme rise in temperature.⁹

This is further causing life destruction and creating an imbalance in the ecosystem. The Quranic declaration on the protection of life,¹⁰ attaches the utmost sanctity to human life and any circumstances that support it. Unfortunately, modern man's lifestyle has led to the insensitive use of the environment and its resources and has led to an immense environmental problem. This paper, which is basing its arguments on the Quran, Sunnah, commentaries of exegetes, jurists, Islamic traditions, and principles, examines and comes up with solid proof that upholding Islamic instruction and traditions will contribute significantly to proper household solid waste management and that environmental problems are not only caused by materialism but also have moral and spiritual dimensions.

DEFINITION OF SOLID WASTE

Since the beginning of time, waste has been an environmental issue for humans. Waste is often equated with trash, but even before the existence of trash, there was waste. It is pertinent to mention here that the researcher could not find any definition of solid waste or household solid waste in the Islamic literature. Nonetheless, there are a plethora of Islamic instructions on its management. For the purpose of this paper, we shall consider the forthcoming definitions. Several jurisdictions have provided different definitions of waste. There might be several reasons behind such differences, including the fact that there are no inherent characteristics used to determine the nature of waste. The correlation between environmental harm and waste is that unless waste is appropriately managed, there is always the potential for pollution to occur. Solid waste is defined as those materials that are not needed and are economically unusable without further processing. This includes mining waste, industrial waste, and household waste.¹¹ Or, waste is as any substance or

⁸ Beig, F. A., & Nika, F. A. Environmental Protection from Islamic Perspective.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Qur'an, Al-Maidah, 35.

¹¹ _Barupal, Tansukh, Deepali Chittora, and Mukesh Meena. "Solid waste: characterization, assessment, monitoring, and remediation." In *Advances in Waste-to-Energy Technologies*, pp. 1-19. CRC Press, 2019.



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object which the holder discards or intends to discard or is required to discard.¹² Household solid waste, known as domestic waste or residential waste, on the other hand, is defined as disposable materials generated by households.¹³

The Islamic directives on waste management can be observed from various teachings, though not defined. The Qur'an and Sunnah contain important principles for environmental conservation and household solid waste management and emphasise that environmental damage and mismanagement of natural resources are unacceptable. This is in line with the Quranic texts: "Eat and drink; but be not excessive. Indeed, God does not like those who commit excess."¹⁴ "the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful."¹⁵ Based on these verses, conservation and the protection of all natural resources from abuse is a mandatory duty for all adherents of the Islamic faith. In fact, the Qur'an and the practises of the prophet Muhammad s.a.w serve as a proper guideline for household solid waste management.

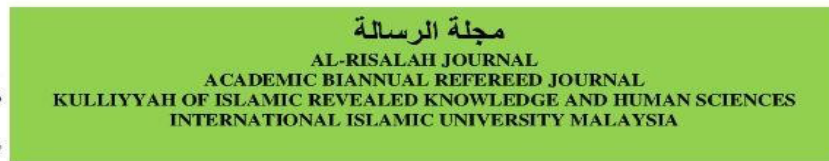
The level of interbehavioral between mankind and the natural environment is that we have been provided with the ability to act uprightly on this earth or otherwise. Though humans are a component of the ecosystem, they possess a spiritual characteristic that elevates their rank to that of the master architect of the environment and its composition. This authority is granted because Allah, the creator, intends for mankind to have a higher destiny, such as being his caliph (vicegerent), only recognising and affirming His existence (monotheism/tawhid), being a bearer of Amanah (trust), acting in the general welfare of mankind (Maslaha), and so on.

¹² Golovko, Liudmyla. "APPROACH TO WASTE MANAGEMENT IN THE EU." *EUROPEAN DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT* (2020).

¹³ "Household waste." Business Dictionary. <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/household-waste.html>. Accessed May 25, 2016.

¹⁴ Al-Quran, 'Al-A'raf' 7:31

¹⁵ Al Quran, 'Al-Isra'' 17:27



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PRINCIPLE OF TAWHID

Among the articles of faith in Islam, the most fundamental is a strict monotheism, the Oneness of God (tawhid), which is manifested in the unity of Allah's creation. The Arabic word '*Tawhid*' is used to describe the deep belief in the absolute Oneness of Allah. Tawhid comes from an Arabic word meaning "unification", "oneness", or "monotheism".¹⁶ Nature, in a sense, participates in the Qur'anic revelation. This sense of shared destiny and common predicament with the rest of the existential world is also manifested in the nomenclature of the chapters (sūrah) in the Qur'ān.¹⁷ Tawhīd underlines the unicity of nature as an ecological principle and a distinctive feature of environmental science. The mineral kingdom supports the vegetables, and they, in turn, support animals, so there is a link of mutual dependence between them. That is, the waste of one is made the food of the other, and an innate process of cleanliness exists in the natural world. There is an infinite chain of gradation and interdependence that points to a common destiny and the ultimate unity of the existential world.¹⁸

The tawhid principle plays an essential role in formulating order in Muslim thinking and behavior. Therefore, creating a positive impact on the environment, (i) it protects the Muslim from narrow-mindedness, prejudices, and the pursuit of selfish interests and ego, because the Muslim sees everything in this world as belonging to Allah, the primary owner, of whom he himself is part of. This conception tediously affects his decisions when dealing with the environment and upholds the equilibrium between celestial and terrestrial demands of life¹⁹ and to be cautious of the environment. (ii) The person envisioned by the tawhidic world view is obligated to live in harmony with the environment because he and the entire universe were created to glorify Allah's oneness. As the text reads, "the seven heavens declare His glory and the earth too and those who are therein; and there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise but t you do not comprehend their

¹⁶ Kamali, Mohammad Hashim. "Environmental Care in Islamic Teaching: A Qur'anic Perspective." *ICR Journal* 3, no. 2 (2012): 261-283.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *An introduction to Islamic cosmological doctrines*. SUNY press, 1993.

¹⁹ Fajrini, Fini, Triana Srisantyorini, Ernyasih Ernyasih, Dina Fadlilah, and Iswan Iswan. "Islam and Mantaining Ecological Health." *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Public Health* 2, no. 1 (2022).



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glorification”²⁰ Accordingly, every creature in this world has an assigned role and function to play, whose loss or extinction may result in environmental crises; (iii) the Muslim belief about the knowledge of God perpetually leads him to do what is good and avoid what is wrong. This kind of awareness and consciousness saves him from irresponsible and abusive use of the environment. Hence, the religious impulse of doing things for the sake of Allah alone motivates Muslims to initiate and undertake constructive and good work for the benefit of all, which assuredly includes serious concern and care for the environment and the proper management of its resources.²¹

The principle of tawhid and the urge to serve Allah have a further function as it motivates Muslims to discharge their assigned duties and obligations. Ibn Qayyim stated to this effect:

Every Muslim has to uphold Ubudiyyah (one of the branches of tawhid) in his pursuit of life, the magnitude of which may vary from one person to another, depending on the position that he hold. A scholar’s Ubuddiyah to Allah is to disseminate beneficial knowledge and expand the frontier of other useful sciences. A ruler’s Ubudiyyah to Allah is to Implement justice in society. And an affluent person’s ubudiyyah to Allah is to fulfil the financial obligations upon his wealth.²²

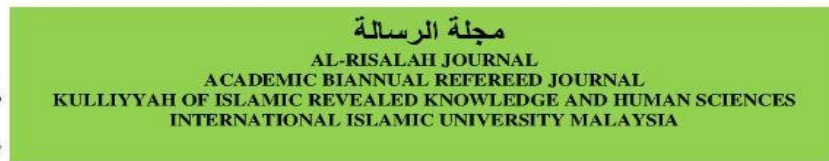
Tawhid could be said to be the bedrock of the Islamic faith. It implies that the whole universe and its resources are created, controlled, and sustained by Allah. Tawhid guides God-man, man-man, man-universe, and man and the environment. This principle provides a unitary vision for Muslims. With this vision, man can see and realise that he and the natural environment are part of the same universe, and both are regulated by Divine law.²³ Thus, environmental protection, waste avoidance, and waste minimization become part of his duties. This principle thus creates a moral and religious motivation. It is also clear that the over exploitation of resources, excessive

²⁰ Al-Isra, 44.

²¹ SAYEM, MDABU. "Islam and Environmental Ethics: A Qur’anic Approach." *Islamic Studies* 60, no. 2 (2021): 157-172.

²² Shams al- Din Abu Abd Allah ibn Q Qayyim al- Jawziyyah, I’Iam a- Muwaqqi’ in An Rrabba lamain, Azhar Maktab al- Kulliyat al Azhariyyah, N.d, Vol. 2p.176.

²³ Abdullahi, Shafiu Ibrahim. "Financing Afforestation in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Countries: What Role for Islamic Economics and Finance?." *Journal of King Abdulaziz University: Islamic Economics* 32, no. 2 (2019)..



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consumption, and environmental degradation are in many ways a reflection of man's spiritual desolation from within.

PRINCIPLE OF TRUSTEESHIP (AMANAH)

The primary source of reference for human trusteeship is the Quran. This is seen in the verse "We did indeed offer the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof; but man undertook."²⁴ Ibn Kathir, a famous scholar and an exegete, in his commentary, draws on the narration of Ibn 'Abbas on the word "*amanah*," which is translated in the English language as "trust, and connotes the meaning of accepting things with obedience. He explains that Allah's creations, including the skies, earth, and mountains, decline the gracious offer made by God of "obedience". Adam, the archetypal man, accepts it, knowing that his acceptance will yield reward if he does good and result in punishment by God if he fails in his obligation. Ibn Abbas clarifies that the word "*amanah*" in this verse refers to obligatory duties (*faraid*) such as daily prayers, fasting, and alms giving. In this case, heaven, earth, and mountains choose to decline responsibly out of fear (if they fail to meet the terms). This was the view of most Muslim exegetes, including Mujahid, Sa'id ibn Jubayr, and others.²⁵

According to Sayyid Qutb, creations such as heavens, earth, and mountains are mentioned in the previous verse to highlight the concept of trusteeship because of their greatness and magnificence, and because of their voluntary submission to Allah without the least effort. They choose to follow the divine law by their very nature and their inherent natural system, which causes them not to fail or follow any other option. Mankind, on the contrary, is a relatively small creation, and perhaps insignificant compared to the greatness and magnificence of the earth and the skies.²⁶

Mankind has been endowed with the ability to learn, to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, and as such, he has been entrusted to bear *amanah* (obligatorily duties) and bring

²⁴ Al-Ahzab(33): 72

²⁵ Ibn Kathir, Vol.3, 457.

²⁶ Özdemir, Sayyid Qutb's "Understanding of the Universe as a Living and Meaningful World. In *Islamic Perspectives on Science and Technology*" Springer, Singapore. (2016). (pp. 85-100).



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about progress as ordained by Allah s.w.t.²⁷ The acquisition of knowledge, freedom of will, and the willingness to be accountable constitute the attributes that distinguish man from other creations. Scholars have deduced the term "amanah" with reference to human ability to reason and, as such, highlight the components of reason, intellect, and faculty of volition which are required for free will in making choices between good and evil.²⁸ This demonstrates that man has been entrusted with the ability to undertake the affairs of this earth, including the protection of natural entities from misuse, which is a religious obligation in light of the Quranic messages, which basically intend to produce humans with the qualities of selflessness, generosity, mutual understanding, and cooperation of good. In other words, mankind is duty bound to be moderate in his interest in the use of natural resources and the protection of others' vested interests.²⁹

Ainul Jaria stated that humans are appointed as caretakers on earth; the resources and their utilisation for all. The trusteeship on earth and all that happens therein is of prime importance as it embraces the message that man is given the trust to safeguard the rights of the earth's community and its natural resources not only for his own sake but also for the other human beneficiaries.³⁰ As a result, in the next world, humans will be held accountable to their creator for their actions and deeds, as well as the resources and wealth they have been given,³¹ particularly with regard to the responsibility of trusteeship. Neglect or failure to execute the role of trusteeship in accordance with the instructions of Islamic law will eventually render mankind liable for punishment. This responsibility is described in the Qur'an and Sunnah, with specific reference to human accountability for the wealth he has been given. It is thus noted that, from the Quranic prescription,

²⁷ Wagoner, Phillip B. "In Amīn Khān's Garden: Charitable Gardens in Qutb Shāhi Andhra." In *Garden and Landscape Practice in Pre-colonial India*, pp. 98-126. Routledge India, 2020.

²⁸ Wansbrough, J. "Muhammad Asad (Tr.): The Message of the Qur'ān. Translated and explained by Muhammad Asad. x, 998 Pp. Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus Ltd., 1980. £16.50. (Distributed by E. J. Brill, 41 Museum Street, London WC1A 1LX.)" *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 43, no. 3 (October 1980): 594-594. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0041977x00137565>.

²⁹ Ainul Jaira Maidin, "Religious and ethical values in promoting environmental protection in the land use planning system: Lessons for Asian countries" in *Issues in Islamic Law*, edited by Abdual Haseen Ansari (New Delhi: Serials Publications, 2010), 194-195.

³⁰ Maidin, Ainul Jaria. "Environmental Protection in Land Use & Development Control System in Malaysia." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2015082>.

³¹ Qur'an, At-Takathur, 102:7



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human conduct and activities in connection with the exploitation of nature will not end here in this world. It has consequences in the hereafter.³²

With the above disposition, Nasr maintains that mankind, as God's vicegerent (khalifa), must nurture and care for his natural resources and the wealth he has been provided with, and care for natural ambience in the same way that God has sustained and cared for it. He further argues that mankind who holds firm to the "trust" (*amanah*) which he accepted when he bore witness to God's lordship in the pre-eternal pledge (*al-mithaq*) as recorded in the Quran (7:172) shall certainly have no attempts to abuse the care of natural resources and pollute the environment, which affect public health and cause diseases.³³ In terms of application, *amanah* practically stands for fulfilling one's responsibility in all aspects of life. This can be seen how prophet Muhammad emphasize the concept of Amanah in the hadith,

“Everyone of you is a guardian and everyone will be asked about his subject. A man is a guardian of the persons in his household. He is answerable about them. A woman is a guardian of her husband's house. She will be asked about her responsibility. The servant in the guardian of the article of his master. He is answerable about the responsibility of his.”³⁴

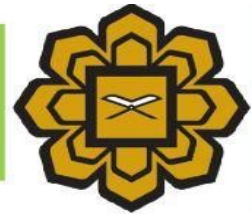
This hadith succinctly outlines the comprehensive face and various applications of *amanah* in people's lives, and this includes the *amanah* of not polluting the environment. Other evidence from the Quran and Sunnah specifically addresses other applied instances of *amanah* in Muslims' lives, both personal and social, and in dealing with the environment. The Quran lucidly made this clear,

“That has created pairs in all things, and has made for you ships and cattle on which you ride, in order that you may sit firm and square on their backs, and when so seated, you may celebrate the favour of your Lord, and say, “ Glory to Him who has subjected these to our

³² Nur Afifah binti Abas, and Mohd Nizam bin Sahad. “A Comparative Study Between Reflexive Thematic Analysis in Social Sciences and Qur'anic Thematic Analysis in Qur'anic Sciences.” *Ma'ālim Al-Qur'ān Wa al-Sunnah* 17 (December 20, 2021): 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.33102/jmq.v17i2.326>.

³³ Mascall, E. L. “Seyyed Hossein Nasr. The Encounter of Man and Nature. The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man. Pp. 152. (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968.) 30s.” *Religious Studies* 6, no. 1 (March 1970): 103–4. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s003441250000123>.

³⁴ Fazlul Karim, *mishat al-masabih*, new Delhi, Islamic Book Service, 1992, 3rd edn, vol. 2, pp. 567-568



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use, for we could never accomplish this by ourselves, and to our Lord, surely, must we turn back.”³⁵

The idea of an inevitable turning to Allah in the verse shows the concept of accountability in relation to the benefit that mankind derives from the ecosystem. Mankind's failure to fulfil this trust renders him committing *khiyanah* (which indicates betrayal of trust). This may lead him to be devoid of a sense of duty, untrustworthy, and neglectful of his duties to Allah and the natural environment. It is clear that the *khiyanah* (distrust) committed against the environment is grave and massive, almost rendering it to the brink of annihilation, including the human race itself, thereby amounting to self-destruction, which has been categorically prohibited.³⁶ The Quran reads '... and make not your own hands contribute to your destruction, but do good; for God loveth those who do good’³⁷

Given the truth of this value, it can be said that an individual should be instilled with the principle of trusteeship in every aspect of his life (including his daily activities and the accountability to properly manage household solid waste and avoid reckless and irresponsible dumping). This value of trusteeship is a crucial element of the ethical domain for household solid waste management. An upright Muslim should, as far as possible, avoid harming and degrading the environment and ensure that his surroundings are clean and convenient. He should also be aware of the consequence of polluting the environment for the sake of maintaining God's command on trusteeship.

PRINCIPLE OF JUSTICE(ADL)

According to Khan, the word '*adl*', with its various forms that repeat twenty-eight times in the Quran, has been used with four different meanings, such as, due proportion, ³⁸ equality,³⁹

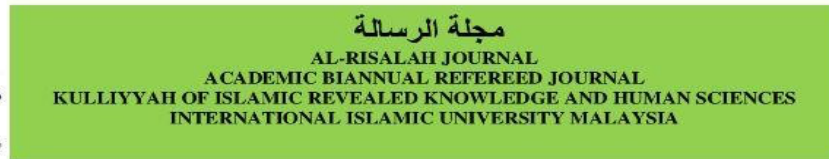
³⁵ Qur'an, Al-Zukhruf, 12-14.

³⁶ Haneef, Sayed Sikandar Shah. "Principles of environmental law in Islam." *Arab LQ* 17 (2002): 241.

³⁷ Qur'an, Al-Baqarah, 195.

³⁸ Qur'an, Al-Infitar, 82:7

³⁹ Qur'an, Al-An'am 6:1



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compensation,⁴⁰ and justice.⁴¹ Its synonym is *qist*, denoting the importance of justice, and it appears in the Quran in twenty-five different places. Its literal meaning in Arabic is 'adl'. This includes the words mean, straighten, equalize, put in order, set right, and treat equally. The term "adl" denotes justice, equal treatment, and giving someone his due right while taking away from him what constitutes the other's right. For the technical meaning, *adl* refers to the maintenance of every individual's divinely approved rights, whether social, religious, economic, or environmental.⁴²

The following Quranic verse explains God's command over the Madyan people to act on the principle of justice using the words "al-mizan" and "qist," "O my people! Give the full measure and weigh with fairness. Do not defraud people of their property, nor spread corruption throughout the land."⁴³ Asad explains that belief in the One God and justice in all dealings between man and man are always placed together as the twin postulates of all righteousness. For him, it is impossible with regard to God, unless one is righteous in both the moral and social sense of this world, that is, in the realm of human relationships as well. God's command in verse 84 to "do not give short measure and weight" is restated in verse 85 in a positive injunction, "O my people! "Give full measure and weight (al-mizan), with equity(al-qist) and don't deprive people of what is so rightly theirs," explains the insistence of the earlier prohibition.⁴⁴

Asad informs us in God's commands that, "do not deprive people of what is rightfully theirs," is an expression which applies to physical possessions as well as to moral, social, and environmental rights,⁴⁵ including the right to live in a healthy and decent environment that is free from pollution. In the context of carrying out justice towards other fellow humans, Badakar maintains that mankind should take every possible means to ensure the interests and rights of all other creations are subjugated under his self-dominion. As discussed earlier, environmental resources upon which the earth's community depends have been created by Allah as a "trust" to

⁴⁰ Qur'an, Al-baqara 2:48

⁴¹ Qur'an, al- Nisa 4: 58.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Hud, 11: 84-85

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.



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mankind. Therefore, it should be prudently used and preserved.⁴⁶ According to legal interpretation rules, Izzi Dien explains that the text of this hadith is unrestricted and should thus be expanded to cover all elements of the environment. He elucidates that the elements of life are not necessarily restricted to the three resources mentioned in the hadith, but to all the elements of the environment and other vital resources available in the natural environment.⁴⁷ Central to this proposition is that humans should consider the environment as a joint usufruct that everyone shares and should not be abused or polluted by any sort of waste.

Ibn Khathir commented that the verse, “And give the relative his due and to the poor and to the wayfarer. But not spend wastefully in the manner of a spindrift”⁴⁸, upports the institution of justice in Islam, as well as encourages a fair and generous attitude. This al-adl commentary corresponds to the principle of justice, which advocates wealthy people assisting the poor by sharing their wealth and resources. Also, the violation or infringement of others' rights has been strongly prohibited, as we can see in this text, "And you devour the inheritance (of others) with devouring greed."⁴⁹ This verse indicates prohibition of any practises that violate the rights of others, including eating their property unjustly, acts of pollution, and resource depletion, and at the same time encourages the acts of resource preservation, sustainability, just appropriation of resources, allocation of wealth, and building the earth. According to al-Qaradāwī, "those industrial installations and factories should be removed from residential quarters so that people are safe from their harmful emissions, smoke, smell, and other pollutants simply because Islam outlaws their infliction of harm."⁵⁰

⁴⁶ “Notice: Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas: The Law of Mother Earth, Edited by Elizabeth Kemf. Published 2 November 1993 in Association with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN).” *Environmental Conservation* 21, no. 1 (1994): 90–91. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0376892900024395>.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ “Die Astronomischen Tafeln. H. Suter, Muhammed Ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, Maslama Ibn Ahmed al-Madjriti, Athelhard von Bath, A. Bjornbo, R. Besthorn.” *Isis* 4, no. 3 (April 1922): 502–3. <https://doi.org/10.1086/358078>.

⁴⁹ Qur’an, al-Fajr, 89:1

⁵⁰ According to al-Qaradāwī, Ri’āyat, 72-73, iḥyā’ al-mawāt is regulated by detailed fiqh rules, but one that may be mentioned here is that reclamation should be with the approval of government just as the latter is authorised to repossess the land from one who fails to build it after two or three years and assign it to someone else who can develop it.



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Ali Ibn Abi Talib said that he once said to a man who reclaimed barren land, "partake of it gladly, so long as you are a benefactor, not a despoiler, a cultivator, not a destroyer."⁵¹ On this note, it is observed to maintain harmony between man and the environment and to sustain ecological balance. Allah has further reminded humanity to keep the natural balance, as He expresses, "And the Firmament has He raised high, and He has set up the balance (*al-mizan*) in order that ye may not transgress (due) balance. So, establish weight with justice (*al-qist*) and fall not short in the balance."⁵² In conformity with this Quranic point of view, Muyibi stated that the principle of justice in Islam warrants individuals not to exterminate living things or cause irreparable damage to the environment.⁵³

The Quran acknowledges that humans are the best creatures to govern the earth. Nonetheless, this does not imply any preference or dominion, as each life has its own specific role and function that represents a unique entity of the Divine's will. If the justification for environmental conservation is based on the "benefit to mankind" per se, humans should not have any valid reason for its abuse and overexploitation of resources or cause any pollution to the environment. Izzi Dien emphasises that the protection of the environment will stand on more solid ground when it is based on the moral value that all the environmental components are seen as signs of Allah's existence, grace, and mighty power.⁵⁴

PRINCIPLE OF *MASLAHA* (PUBLIC INTEREST)

Maslahah(public interest) is the process of achieving good and removing harm within the boundaries of what Islam considers to be morally good and correct.⁵⁵ Izzi Dien stated that *Maslahah* is not determined by people's perception of what is beneficial; rather, it is considered

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Qur'an, al Rahman, 55: 7-9

⁵³ Muhamad, Asmawati, Abdul Halim Syihab, and Abdul Halim Ibrahim. "Preserving human-nature's interaction for sustainability: Quran and Sunnah perspective." *Science and engineering ethics* 26, no. 2 (2020): 1053-1066.

⁵⁴ Ouis, Soumaya Pernilla. "The Environmental Dimensions of Islam." *American Journal of Islam and Society* 19, no. 2 (April 1, 2002): 113–16. <https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v19i2.1945>.

⁵⁵ Abd Razak, Abd Hakim. "Multiple Sharia'board directorship: a Maslahah (public interest) perspective." *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 11, no. 3 (2020): 745-764.



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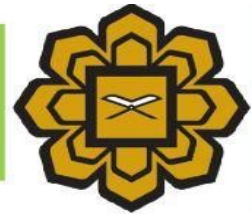
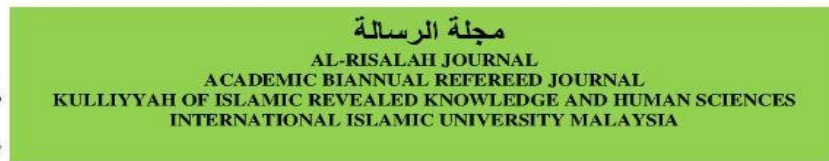
based on what Islam views as an 'interest'.⁵⁶ According to Laldin, there is no specific or direct text from the Quran or Sunnah that indicates Maslaha terminology. Nonetheless, there are several Quranic texts and practises of the Prophet Muhammad *s.a.w.*, which can be quoted as the basis of *Maslaha*. The Quran reads, "We sent thee not, but as a mercy (*rahmatan*) for all creatures. Laldin opined that the general explanation of the word "*rahmatan*" in this verse refers to whatever offers benefit to mankind, prevents harm, and is harmonious with human needs.⁵⁷ Izz Dien relates that the Quran acknowledges the public interest as a basis for determining the practical daily lives of individuals. In the verse, "it is He Who hath created for you all things on this earth," he explains that the generality of the meaning of this verse indicates that everything on this earth is given to all its occupants to be enjoyed responsibly and courteously. He also stated that this expression is revealed in its general sense to serve a public interest purpose.

The preceding verse, in regard to food consumption, for example, is left open so that people would not find difficulty in consuming what has been created by God and left at their disposal. The interest could be further expanded to cover the protection of health, lives, and properties, since mismanagement of household solid waste affects all these categories. It can be argued that the adoption of the principle of Maslaha on household solid waste management will, among other things, protect the environment from pollution and improve public health. The protection of human lives is a major interest accorded and guaranteed in Islam. Ansari maintains that in Islam, life is one of the most important trusts in Islam. The right to life must be seen in its total perspective, which includes the right to a healthy environment.⁵⁸ Izz Dien is of the same idea that protection of life extends to include the protection of all circumstances that would cause all forms of life to continue in a healthy and safe condition. Thus, this notion expects individuals to protect the environment by properly managing their household solid waste and to adopt punitive measures such as punishments for pollution activities and civil remedies accordingly. When it comes to

⁵⁶ Adam, Kassim. "Islamic Law and The Environment: What Can We Learn from Islamic Perspectives on The Environment to Resolve Climate Change?." PhD diss., Dissertation, 2018.

⁵⁷ Djafri, Fares, Mohamad Akram Laldin, and Abdelkader Laallam. "The Global Perspective of Islamic Finance and the Potential for China to Tap into the Islamic Finance Market." *Journal of Islamic Business and Management (JIBM)* 11, no. 01 (June 30, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.26501/jibm/2021.1101-002>

⁵⁸ Ansari, Abdul Haseeb. "Right to a Healthful Environment: An Established human Right in Islam." *Religion and Law Review* (2003): 2003-2004.



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protecting property, it may mean protecting the natural environment and public places from the effects of household solid waste.

Another important facet of *Maslaha* is the protection of the human mind to facilitate the purpose of building awareness. The relevance of the protection of the mind to environmental consideration is that healthy minds need a clean and healthy environment. As such, the reckless dumping of household solid waste and its mismanagement can be regarded as a violation of the right to life and personal liberty. A hygienic environment is an integral component of the right to a healthy state of physical body and mind, and it is impossible for a person to live in harmony without a healthy environment.⁵⁹

The legislative measure taken by the Prophet, peace be upon him, to preserve the environment can be expanded to include all modern forms of pollutants that are harmful to the environment and public health and thus affect their interests. The Islamic approach towards the environment is not only based on the prohibition of overexploitation but also on sustainable use and consumption. The Islamic ethical aspects have several implications for businesses and industrial sectors, particularly those with high environmental impact, such as minimising hazardous and non-hazardous emissions and waste to the lowest possible rate. Thus, people are encouraged to be environmentally conscious and supportive of environmental quality and pay attention to any harmful activity to the environment.⁶⁰

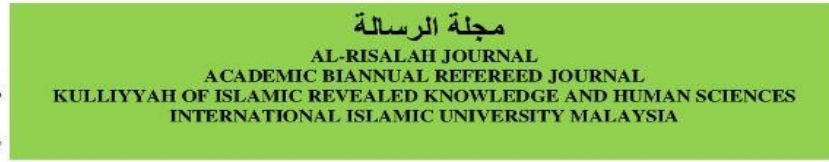
Furthermore, the underlying principles behind household solid waste management could be centred on the idea of averting evil or harm before it occurs or materializes. This is again embodied within the principle of *Saad al-dharaai* (blocking the means), that is, blocking the means to an undesirable end.⁶¹ Also, the principle that stated that 'preventing an evil takes precedence over securing a benefit'.⁶² Most importantly, the community's interests, society's interests, and the

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Helfaya, Akrum, Amr Kotb, and Rasha Hanafi. "Qur'anic ethics for environmental responsibility: Implications for business practice." *Journal of Business Ethics* 150, no. 4 (2018): 1105-1128.

⁶¹ For more detailed discussion of the principle reer mohd. Hashim Kamali, principles of Islamic Islamic jurisprudence, 2nd ed., Ilmiah publisher Sdn.Bhd., Kuala Lumpur, 1998, pp3.310-320.

⁶² Ibid., p.312.



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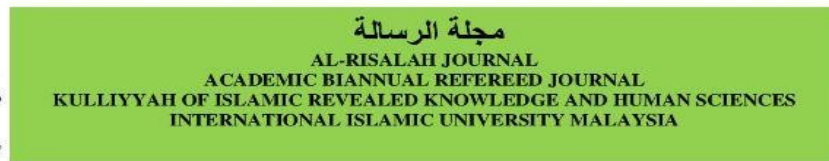
public's interests take precedence over groups or individuals' interests. This implies that the wellness of the public and the safety of the environment should not be compromised for the sake of an individual's interest. The prophet was reported to have prohibited a person from relieving himself in stagnant water or polluting the pathway of pedestrians or in the shade; the underlying value of this injunction is understood to be applied to any form of harmful pollution that brings inconvenience to the environment and public health, including household solid waste.

ELIMINATION OF HARM PRINCIPLE(*AL-DARAR*)

The Islamic principle "*Al-darar yuzal*," that is, harm must be eliminated, is one of the leading maxims in Islamic law, which is derived from a hadith "*la darar wala dirar*," meaning that "Harm shall not be inflicted nor reciprocated."⁶³ To ensure precision in evaluating harm and its remedial measures, the law should provide additional guidelines for action. Islamic law empowers relevant authorities to regulate all activities that are considered harmful to the environment and public health. The Islamic religion is very expressive of a great deal of concern for the welfare of the environment and the people. Therefore, encouraging and calling for measures to be taken to retrain any prejudicial activities and ensure proper management of household solid waste.

The concept of harm suggests that to preserve the environment and the proper management of household solids, spiritual development is needed by the people rather than only focusing on the physical aspects or legal aspects. Attention should not be merely given to developing advanced facilities but also spiritual and religious development, such as awareness of neighbors' rights, individual rights, the importance of sharing, the impacts of solid waste on the environment and people's wellbeing, and the responsibilities towards societies and communities in general.

⁶³ [508] Cf., Zaydan, 'Abd al-Karīm Zaydān, *Al-Wajīz fī sharḥ al-qawā'id al-fiqhiyyah* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah Nāshirūn, 1425 AH/2004), 86.



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PRINCIPLE OF CLEANLINESS (*ṬAHĀRAH*)

The Islamic religion is very expressive on cleanliness, and in some narrations, cleanliness has been regarded as part of *imaan*(faith). As we read in this hadith, “cleanliness is a part of the faith (of every Muslim).”⁶⁴ This implies that personal cleanliness, clean clothes, and ablution are part of the daily requirements of all Muslims, and there is much attention to details in the Qur'an,

“O believers! When you rise up for prayer, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of ‘full’ impurity, then take a full bath. But if you are ill, on a journey, or have relieved yourselves, or have been intimate with your wives and cannot find water, then purify yourselves with clean earth by wiping your faces and hands.”² It is not Allah’s Will to burden you, but to purify you and complete His favour upon you, so perhaps you will be grateful.”⁶⁵

Also, the tradition of Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. on such matters as the requirements of ablution and bathing; regular brushing of one’s teeth; cutting of hair and nails; washing of hands before and after meals; and observance of hygiene when drawing and drinking water from wells and springs. It is recommended that one make a special effort in personal hygiene when attending the mosque’s congregational prayers as well as in the upkeep and cleanliness of the mosque environment.⁶⁶ Cleanliness is an integral part of the Islamic faith. The Prophet was reported to have said that: “Allah is beautiful, and He loves beauty.”⁶⁷ Commentators have held that the reference here is to one’s body, living quarters, and surrounding environment. It is reported in another ḥadīth that when the Companion Abū Barzah asked the Prophet, "O Messenger of God! "Remove obstructions (and litter) from the path of Muslims," the Prophet replied. ”⁶⁸ Samūrah b. Jundab reported that “The Prophet ordered us to build mosques in our living quarters and ordered us also to keep them clean.”⁶⁹ Other ḥadīth reports provide details on the prohibition of spitting and the release of body

⁶⁴ Al-Nīshābūrī, Mukhtaṣar, ed. al-Albānī, ḥadīth no. 120.

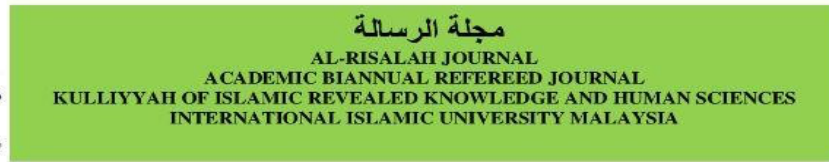
⁶⁵ Qur’an, al-Maida, 5:6

⁶⁶ Fikriyati, Ulya. "Interpretasi ayat-ayat “pseudo kekerasan”: analisis psikoterapis atas karya-karya tafsir Ḥannān Laḥḥām." PhD diss., UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2018.

⁶⁷ Al-Tirmidhī, Sunan, ḥadīth no. 2,800.

⁶⁸ Tasgheer, Aqsa, and Muhammad Junaid Anwar. "An Islamic Perspective of Animals'." (2021).

⁶⁹ al-Sijjānī, Sunan, transl. Ahmad Hasan, ḥadīth no. 456; also in Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, Musnad, vol. 5, ḥadīth no. 17



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fluids in the vicinity of mosques and under the shade of trees, occasioned by people for relaxation and shelter.

The Qur'an warns people to take personal responsibility for their own health and well-being. "O people! The excesses you commit will harm only yourselves. Enjoy the (lawful) pleasures of this world."⁷⁰ The following hadith conveys a similar message: "He who goes to bed at night with his hands unclean should only blame himself (if he falls ill)."⁷¹ Personal and environmental hygiene are thus a shared responsibility of individuals and communities. Personal and environmental hygiene are thus a shared responsibility of individuals and communities. Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him has maintained cleanliness and advise his companions to the same. He was also concerned about cleaning the streets and public places and removing harmful objects from pathways. He was reported to have stated that "whoever harms Muslims in their pathways, their curse shall be upon him." This hadith subsumes all sorts of harm, including the waste that has been dumped in public places, roads, drainages and so on. The Prophet s.a.w. also regarded the act of removing trash and harmful objects from pathways among the seventy branches of faith (*Iman*).⁷²

Prophet Muhammad was also reported to have prohibited the urination into a stagnant water,⁷³ this is to prevent health complications that might arise from consuming or using contaminated water, and to maintain environmental and public health. The prohibition in this hadith could be expanded to include any activities that are prejudicial to public health and the environment. Going forward, the Islamic approach towards the environment teaches the principle that the natural environment is not evil but neutral and good (*ṣāliḥ*) in itself.⁷⁴ The natural environment functions in accordance with natural laws, which are firmly perfected (*wa wada'a al-mizān*) by the Divine power of the Almighty, Allah (s. w. t.). In chapter 55, verses 7–10, the Qur'an

⁷⁰ Yonus, 10:23

⁷¹ Al-Khaṭīb al-Tabrīzī, *Mishkāt*, ed. al-Albānī, vol. 3, ḥadīth no. 4,209; also quoted in 'Abd al-Jawād, *Al-Manhaj*, 103

⁷² Omar, Suhaila Mohd, Ahmed Jalal Khan Chowdhury, and Abdurezak Abdulahi Hashi. "Islamic ethics of waste management towards sustainable environmental health." *IUM Medical Journal Malaysia* 17, no. 1 (2018).

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*



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"demonstrates that everything in the universe was created to operate with a unified purpose and that each element is critical to maintaining the balance and functioning of the universe." This balance and perfection of nature should not be altered; thus, all necessary steps should be taken to avoid environmental degradation.

As stated in the hadith, the Islamic legislative measure on environmental protection from household solid waste could be further governed by the principle of *taharah* (cleanliness and purification), which occupies a central position within Islamic instruction and makes pollution avoidance an integral part of the Islamic faith...to practically put the above imperatives in place,

- (i) do not pollute the water, as we read: "None of you must pass urine in still water which does not flow and then take bath therein"⁷⁵
- (ii) do not dispose of natural waste on earth. As he stated "Beware of the two acts that bring curses: passing a stool in the path of people or in the shade of trees"⁷⁶ and also his commands requiring the dead to be buried deep inside the earth, this is to prevent a stench from polluting the atmosphere.⁷⁷

The above legislative measures are to protect the environment from being polluted. By analogy, they can definitely be extended to cover all contemporary forms of pollutants which are more offensive and hazardous based on the principle of *Qiyas al-awla* (analogy of higher order).⁷⁸ Furthermore, it is expressly prohibited to inflict harm on others by causing them inconvenience. This is an established law in principle within the Islamic religion, which states that "harm must neither be inflicted nor reciprocated."⁷⁹

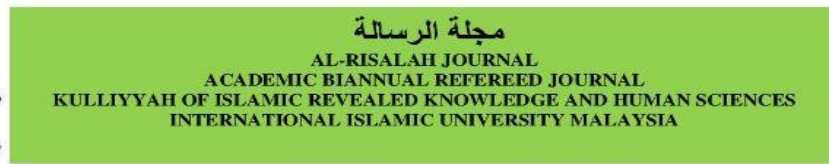
⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Sulayman ibn Ah'ath, Sunan Abi Dawud, Karachi: Kitab Khana Markaz 'ilm maadab, n.d., Vol. 1, p.5.

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Drea, Breda Josephine. "Disproving the Claim of Inherent Incompatibility Between Islamic Criminal Law And International Human Rights Law." PhD diss., Trinity College Dublin. School of Law. Discipline of Law, 2022.

⁷⁹ Fatkhi, Rifqi Muhammad. "Hadith Dalam Hegemoni Fiqh: Membandingkan Sahih Ibn Hibban Dengan Sunan Ibn Majah." JOURNAL OF QUR'AN AND HADITH STUDIES 1, no. 1 (June 20, 2012): 145–79. <https://doi.org/10.15408/quhas.v1i1.1338>.



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It is pertinent to mention here that Islam prohibits wasteful behaviour and the culture of exceeding the limits of normality in consumption. In the meantime, it promotes a culture of moderation in consumption. The Qur'an praises the behaviour of "those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes)."⁸⁰ This is because the extravagance of one person leads to the deprivation of another, and the excess of one person limits the accessibility of resources to another. The basic guideline for resource utilisation and spending is moderation, which avoids both extremes of niggardliness and extravagance.⁸¹ Instruction on this is found in the ḥadīth advising moderation in eating, even to the extent that one should finish the food one takes on one's plate. Moderation is also advised in clothing, which should not indulge in extravagance and self-glorification.⁸²

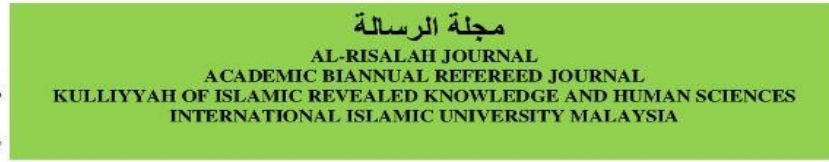
CONCLUSION

Based on the discussions above, we can conclude that solutions to environmental pollution as a result of the improper household solid waste management can hardly be expected to come without addressing mankind's spiritual malaise and a rediscovery of the vision and wisdom that must inform mankind's responsibility on earth as a vicegerent of God. The Islamic instructions entail an ethics and metaphysics of the environment, rooted in the revelation and Divine law (Quran and Sunnah), which concern the duties and responsibilities of mankind towards the non-human realms of the created order. By sharing the wisdom of the Islamic tradition regarding environmental matters and learning from the religion, we can contribute to the betterment of humanity in general. The Islamic traditions on household solid waste management as presented earlier, and spiritual wisdom in defense of protecting the environment and human health should be backed by sound national legislation and effective enforcement measures.

⁸⁰ Quran, Al-Furqān, 25:67.

⁸¹ Thus the instruction: "Tie not your hand to your neck nor stretch it to its utmost reach that may then leave you self-blaming and regretful" (Qur'an 17:29).

⁸² al-Albānī (ed.), Ṣaḥīḥ, ḥadīth no. 4,505.



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This paper informs its readers that the Islamic law merits greater attention because it can move the environmental debate from a mere show of concern to an actionable plane that is likely to bear a greater restraining influence on potential violators. When a moral norm is developed into a legal principle, it is indicative of moral progress and thus will lead to proper household solid waste management. According to the article, one can see that the Qur'ān and Sunnah are evidently expressive on environmental care and cleanliness, but honourable exceptions apart, the Islamic scholars hardly voice it out. The Syariah doctrine and principles discussed expounded in this paper and its allied legal maxims merit recognition as far as addressing household solid waste is concerned. The mass media, civil society, Islamic organizations, and institutions should all actively support environmental protection efforts and advocate for the proper management of household solid waste. This effort and campaign also merit spiritual reward. Religious leaders and imams should make environmental care, and household solid waste management in particular, an integral part of their guidance and advice to their congregation and communities. There should be collaboration between communities and authorities to care for environmental safety and the public wellbeing. This fits with the idea of Maslaha (public interest) and most of the other ideas in this article.



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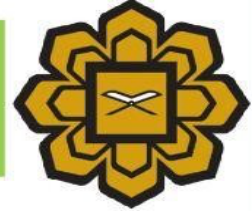
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