

Strategies and Challenges of Da'wah in Chiang Rai, Thailand

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Da'wah is one of the responsibilities entrusted by Allah SWT to Muslims to be spread to all of humanity. A major challenge today is combating the issue of Islamophobia, which is increasingly widespread around the world. Muslims need to devise strategies to correct the misconception that Islam is a religion of terrorism. Chiang Rai is one of the focus areas for da'wah, aiming to fulfill the task initiated by earlier da'is. The da'is of the past worked tirelessly to convey Islam despite lacking sufficient facilities and support. Through their dedication and perseverance, the community in Chiang Rai has gradually embraced Islam as a religion. Today, there are five madrasahs or care centers for Muslim convert children established in the remote areas of Chiang Rai, namely Madrasah Ar-Rahmah, As-Siddiq, Civilai Vithaya, and Pangsa. These centers operate effectively and are respected by the local community, even those of different religions. Each center houses between 70 to 150 residents, consisting of Muslim convert children from various ethnic groups such as Hmong, Karen, Lisu, Lahu, and others. Challenges in delivering da'wah to these ethnic groups include mountainous and elevated geography, remote settlements, communication barriers, security concerns at the Thailand-Burma border, and local government and political protocols. Despite these obstacles, da'wah efforts must continue to enable the remote communities to know God and the true religion. Therefore, Muslims must unite in facing these challenges by sacrificing ideas, material resources, and energy to ensure that Islamic teachings are sustained and da'wah efforts are carried out throughout life.

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