



1	 <p style="text-align: center;">TRUE INDEPENDENCE <i>Special Sermon in Conjunction with National Day & National Women's Day</i> 26 August 2016AD / 23 Zulkaedah 1437H</p>
2	<p style="text-align: center;">الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ وَأَنْعَمَ، وَهَدَانَا بِالْقُرْآنِ لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ،</p>
3	<p style="text-align: center;">قَالَ تَعَالَى: أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمَلِكِ تُؤْتِي الْمَلِكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمَلِكَ مِنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعْزِزُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٦﴾</p>
4	<p style="text-align: center;">أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ،</p>
5	<p style="text-align: center;">اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.</p>
6	<p style="text-align: center;">أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، أَوْصِيكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَطَاعَتِهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ، وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى، وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلِحُونَ.</p>
7	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, Conviction and faith shall free a person from bondage under man towards servitude under the Almighty. Conviction shall also ensure personal freedom from the punishment of Hell towards the blissfulness of Paradise. Therefore,</p>



	let us shape our lives based on our conviction. May true happiness and independence belong to us.
8	With the arrival of the month of August, the people of Malaysia will together celebrate and appreciate the meaning of independence. A variety of activities and events have been planned for Malaysians to show and express their gratitude and blessings of this divine gift of freedom. Thus, in conjunction with Malaysia's 59 th National Day and the celebration of Women's Day this year, the <i>mimbar</i> today shall deliver a sermon entitled: " True Independence ".
9	Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, It is sad to witness Muslims subjugated and suppressed in their own countries. Palestine, Syria and Iraq are battlefields that see thousands of their people killed, especially women, the elderly and children who have become victims of brutality. For us who live in an independent and peaceful country, we should be grateful for the blessings that Allah SWT has bestowed upon us. Gratefulness should be translated into full devotion to Allah SWT through conviction and good deeds in anything that we do in this world.
10	On Thirty First (31 st) of August every year, all Malaysians celebrate the anniversary of our independence. Parades, military displays and marches, cheering of slogans as well as singing patriotic songs and waving flags are exhibited to show our happiness and excitement with our country's independence. But, are all these enough to reflect the true meaning of independence? Are all these displays of patriotism enough to show our thankfulness for the efforts and sacrifices of past leaders and freedom fighters in the struggle for independence?
11	Islam recognizes independence and freedom. Free to submit oneself to Allah SWT is considered independence. Free from the shackles of tyranny and violence is also considered independence. Free to practice the Sunnah of Rasulullah SAW is independence. Therefore, as Muslims, we should understand and appreciate the true meaning of independence through the



	extensive and complete views of Islam.
12	For Islam, freedom is not specifically for Muslims alone, but it is also a right that should be enjoyed by people of all races and religion. As demonstrated by Sayyidina Umar Al-Khattab after conquering Palestine, he allowed the Christians of Palestine to open a church right across from a mosque and to continue practicing their teachings and beliefs.
13	This is the meaning of freedom and independence that is shaped by Islam. Possessing high levels of tolerance, being a formidable force feared by everyone, but remaining humble in the face of God.
14	Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, In the days of early human civilization, women were looked down upon, and considered as an object to satisfy lust and greed. They were denied their rights, and their dignity was constantly violated. For example, under Babylonian laws, if a man kills another man or woman, the man is not punished. Instead, his wife will be put to death.
15	Greek civilization created the myth of a mythical woman called 'Pandora', who is said to be the root cause of misfortune befalling mankind. During their glorious civilization, Rome established the right of a man to take the life of his own wife. Prostitution was widespread among them. In fact, the Arabs, before Islam, considered women as harbingers of misfortune, to the point that many female newborns would be buried alive.
16	Islam arrived to uplift the dignity of women and to free them from bondage and slavery. Women are given the right to testify in a variety of situations, such as financial transactions, criminal cases, property wills, accusation of adultery (<i>qazaf</i>), sighting of the new moon and so on. In fact, the testimony of Sayyidatina Aisha RA was sufficient enough for the acceptance of hadith. This is proof enough that the testimony of a righteous woman can be accepted. Women were also given the right to inheritance.
17	Al-Quran indicated this privilege through Surah An-Nisa, verse 7: لِّلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ



	مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿٧﴾
18	Which means: “From what is left by parents and relatives, there is a share for men and a share for women, whether the property be small or large, and a determinate share.”
19	The requirement of Hijab is also a form of independence for women, as protection from any form of harassment. The Quran mentions that hijab is recommended for women so that they are recognized as modest women and prevents them from becoming victims of sexual abuse.
20	Surah Al-Ahzab, verse 59 records: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْنَّ مِنْ جَلْبَابِهِنَّ ذَلِكَ آدَبٌ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٥٩﴾
21	Which means: “O Prophet! Tell you wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad): that is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”
22	However, some people with cynical views consider hijab as confining women in their garments whereas, as a fact, that is true freedom and true independence, when a woman’s sacred dignity is saved from being the target of abuse and harassment.
23	Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah, We have achieved and enjoyed our country’s independence. But, have we thought about another kind of independence which we should strive for – namely, independence in the hereafter that is eternal? The measure of independence there is when we are saved from the Fire and admitted forever into the Paradise of Allah SWT. We must realize that in order to achieve independence in the afterlife, the journey began the moment we were obliged to act in accordance with Allah SWT’s orders on this earth.



24	We constantly battle with Satan who would whisper evil and lustful thoughts, which would always lead to immorality and <i>syirk</i> , plunging us into the mire of endless sin. Be aware, for the world is a testing ground. Whether we are afforded blessings or tested by adversity, both will be questioned.
25	<p>In a hadith recorded by Imam al-Tirmidhi Rahimahullah and narrated by Abi Barza Al-Sulami RA, Rasullukah SAW was reported to have said:</p> <p>لَا تَزُولُ قَدَمًا عَبْدٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى يُسْأَلَ عَنْ عَمَلِهِ فِي مَا أُفْنَاهُ وَعَنْ عِلْمِهِ فِي مَا فَعَلَ وَعَنْ مَالِهِ مِنْ أَيْنَ اكْتَسَبَهُ وَفِيمَ أَنْفَقَهُ وَعَنْ جِسْمِهِ فِي مَا أَبْلَاهُ. (رواه الترمذي)</p>
26	<p>Which means: "A servant of God will remain standing on the Day of Judgment until he is questioned about his (time on earth) and how he used it; about his knowledge and how he utilized it; about his wealth and from where he acquired it, and in what (activities) he spent it; and about his body and how he used it."</p> <p>Therefore, strive to achieve your afterlife independence. Return to obeying the command and will of Allah SWT and avoid committing actions that could invite His wrath. May independence in the afterlife that we seek be ours eventually.</p>
27	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah,</p> <p>The spirit that soars with the waving of the country's flag during the National Day celebrations should be praised. A deep spirit of patriotism is evidence of our thanks and gratefulness of the graces and blessings bestowed upon us by Allah SWT. Therefore, here are some ways on how we can show appreciation for our independence:</p>
28	<p>First, identify and acknowledge the services and sacrifices of our nation's freedom fighters. Success and freedom did not come easy. It demands the sweat and blood of past fighters. Hence, honours should be bestowed upon them for their services.</p>



29	<p>Second, be grateful to Allah SWT for our nation's independence, as it would not be achieved without His consent. Man can plan and strive, but it is Allah SWT who decides. So, be grateful by having faith, conviction and doing well throughout our lives.</p>
30	<p>Third, continue the development agenda of the country according to the will and guidance of Allah SWT. Follow the instructions of Rasulullah SAW, and his Companions RHM, in developing Islamic regions around the world. Look at how justice, wisdom, transparency, trust and all their <i>mahmudah</i> attributes protected them while they managed their personal affairs as well as the affairs of their country.</p>
31	<p>Fellow Muslims blessed by Allah,</p> <p>To be individuals who understand the true meaning of freedom and independence, let us reflect and ponder upon the following reminders:</p> <p>First: Acknowledge and appreciate the services and sacrifices of our country's freedom fighters, and be grateful with the independence that we have gained, by filling it with acts that are blessed by Allah SWT.</p> <p>Second: Islam raised the dignity and status of women and liberated them from cultures and traditions that patronised and belittled them.</p> <p>Third: The meaning of afterlife independence for the Believer is when he receives mercy and blessings of Allah SWT and be rewarded with eternal Paradise.</p>
32	<p>Reflect on the words of Allah SWT, with regards to the meaning of true independence, in Surah Ali Imran, verse 185:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ</p>



	<p>كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْفُرُورِ ﴿١٨٥﴾</p>
33	<p>Which means: "Every soul shall have a taste of death: And only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the object (of Life): For the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception."</p>
34	<p>بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ بِالْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ الْأَحْيَاءِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْأَمْوَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ.</p>