

The Number Of Muslims In South Korea Is Growing Rapidly

According to the Korean Muslim Federation (KMF), founded in 1967, there are some 120,000-130,000 Korean and foreign Muslims living in the country. Migrant workers from Pakistan and Bangladesh make up the majority of the Muslim population. The number of Muslims of Korean origin is estimated to be around 45,000.

The wealth of racial and ethnic differences in Muslim society in the largely Buddhist country is striking. Muslims from 14 countries, including America, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Uzbekistan all live together there. There are also tens of thousands of Muslims in the region who have come to work or for asylum from South and Southeast Asia.

The Muslim population in the port town of Busan is growing rapidly, and work is being carried out to open a school providing an Islamic education.

Haseeb Ahmed Khan, a businessman of Pakistani origin who has lived in South Korea for some 10 years, says that there were not enough mosques when he first arrived in the country, and adds, "But now there are many mosques in the country."

The country's largest mosque is the Seoul Central Mosque in the Itaewon area of the city. There are mosques great and small in all the country's main cities. There are more than 10 mosques in towns such as Gwangju, Busan and Daegu. Mosques are not just places of worship for Muslims in South Korea. Haseeb says: "The Friday prayer brings people together. And they come together after that act of worship in order to establish a better community. People learn to speak and listen to live and share, during the Friday prayers and sermons." Mosques are a center of community and education. Mosques are also institutions that help those wishing to learn about Islam. Haseeb says that mosques in the region provide written and audio materials and help people who want to learn about Islam. Such people can obtain educational materials free of charge.

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The many colors of Islam in South Korea

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