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HALAL TOURISM AS A WAY OF DA'WAH IN COASTAL MUSLIM
COMMUNITIES OF INDONESIA

Ahmad Sarbini

Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Studies, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati,
Bandung, Indonesia

Syamsuddin

Department of Da'wah Management, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Studies,
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung, Indonesia

Dudy Imanuddin Effendi

Department of Islamic Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication
Studies, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung, Indonesia

Moch Fakhruroji

Department of Communication Studies, Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Studies,
Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: Ahmad Sarbini, Email: ahmadsarbini@uinsgd.ac.id

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Abstract

This article describes halal tourism in coastal areas of Indonesia. Although religious tourism in Islam is perceived as a halal aspect, it is believed to be part of the general religious practice. Basing on this, the present paper examines the extent under which halal tourism is considered an aspect of da'wah practiced within the coastal muslim communities. The authors observed activities related to the implementation of halal tourism in the Pangandaran Beach in the West Java Province. The study drew some conclusions, which have led to the outlining of facts about halal tourism as a way of teaching and facilitating internalization of Islamic norms. This happens in the way that, halal tourism promotes the economic transformation of society and helps to strengthen faith based on religious norms. Secondly, halal tourism has changed the habits of people in the studied coastal areas which are often affected by hedonistic attitudes and materialistic lifestyles, which most times affects people's faith and religious norms. It has been finally established that with the slogan and act of halal tourism, there has been restoration of faith based and Islamic religious based characteristics around most of Indonesia's coastal communities, making it relatively friendly and creating a religious environment which is inclusive for all the community members.

Introduction

Indonesia is one of the largest maritime countries and this geographical condition makes Indonesian people in coastal areas accustomed to depend their lives on marine resources. The pattern of community life towards the marine sector provides its own identity as a coastal community with a pattern of life known as coastal culture (Geertz, 1981: 42). This is not surprising since natural conditions are one aspect that affects the formation of the personality and cultural character of a society (Syarif, 2008: 65). Therefore, the characteristics of coastal communities are different from those of agrarian communities who have a more controlled income because they have a more fixed pattern. Coastal communities have the majority of livelihoods as fishermen who depend on income from non-engineered marine resources.

In the aspect of knowledge, they are also more likely to be based on the practices and experiences that have been carried out by their ancestors who taught them calendars and directions using the constellations. Meanwhile, on the theological aspect, coastal communities in Indonesia, in particular, remain thinking that sea has magical powers so they remain to perform rituals related to the sea. However, along with the entry of Islam through the Arab and Gujarat merchants, the religious patterns of the coastal communities began to absorb the teachings of Islam. In fact, the spread of Islam in Indonesia almost all started from coastal communities.

On the other hand, in the modern context, coastal areas have many tourism potentials with uniqueness and natural beauty that can gain economic benefits. The beauty of hundreds of coastlines in Indonesia has been recognized worldwide along with the cultural richness, making these beaches as tourist destinations that have generally improved the prosperity of coastal communities. Wider and more open employment, construction of public facilities, advancing scientific and technological progress, accelerating regional development, even increasing the country's foreign exchange are some of the benefits felt by most coastal communities in tourist destinations.

However, developing a beach as a tourist area has not only implied the positive impact but also had negative implications shown by the degradation of social, cultural, and even religious behavior of the surrounding community. This is shown by changes in lifestyle, mindset, the behavior of the community around the tourist destinations as a result of direct or indirect contact with both domestic and international tourists (Suryadana, 2013: 35). Some previous studies related to the communities in coastal tourism areas show the development of coastal cities as a result of encouragement by increased commercial activity related to providing accommodation, goods, and services to tourists (Butler, 1980; Smith, 1991). Meanwhile, another study critically discusses public perceptions about environmental and social changes related to tourism development that illustrates a number of changes at the community level (Green, 2005; Hartman, 2006).

Sociologically, one theory that can be used to explain this phenomenon is the irritation index theory. This theory illustrates the change in people's attitudes towards tourists that initially positive will turn into negative along with the increasing tourist arrivals. The irritation process can be identified in four phases of attitude change, namely euphoria, apathy, annoyance, and antagonism. According to this theory, people around tourist destinations will initially experience a kind of euphoria indicated through their acceptance of tourists as it has brought a change in living standards. But after a while, they will experience the apathy stage which is shown by a shift in perspective from what was previously sincere and warmly serving tourists becomes more pragmatic and commercial. In other words, people's interaction with tourists changes from something

like a host and a guest into a more transactional relationship. In the next stage, they experience the annoyance stage where they become increasingly disturbed by the presence of tourists which over time has expanded the social gap between tourists and the surrounding community. The climax is the stage of antagonism which is shown through a shift in the behavior of people who experience boredom and even feel displeased with the presence of tourists which can result in criminal acts. At this stage, the values of religion and local wisdom owned by the coastal community began to erode (Pitana & Gayatri, 2005: 81-85).

Furthermore, social change in coastal communities is also characterized by socio-cultural changes that move to follow the characteristics of modern societies that they assumed more advanced models of society (Sztompka, 2004: 152-153). Since tourists are seen as more advanced and superior, coastal communities in tourist areas are trying to keep up with the flow. However, according to Krisham Kumar, the emergence of modernization in certain societies has given rise to characteristics that show the erosion of religious values and local wisdom, such as strengthening individualistic behavior, rationality-pragmatic views, and commercialization (Sztompka, 2004: 154-166). Even the facts show that modernization in the context of socio-cultural change also has an impact on the depletion of awareness to behave in accordance with religious values or social norms and causing social problems.

However, the emergence of the concept of halal tourism in recent years is seen to have minimized the negative impacts of conventional tourism where the interaction between residents with tourists is managed by using Islamic principles. As one of the practices of internalizing Islamic values, halal tourism can be seen as one of the phenomena of practical *da'wa bi al-hal* because it indicates an effort to internalize Islam with social actions (Sambas, 1995). Coastal communities affected by tourism can avoid negative impacts as assumed by the theory above. Therefore, this paper aims to explore the practice of halal tourism in the Pangandaran Coast region, West Java as a form of *da'wa bi al-hal* since the halal is in line with how Islamic teachings being implemented.

Since halal issues are part of the tourism industry in a worldwide context, many Muslim and non-Muslim countries capture Muslim tourists as a market by providing tourism products, facilities, and infrastructure to meet the needs of tourists (Samori, Salleh and Khalid, 2015). Also, due to stricter rules imposed on Muslim tourists in the West, they shifted their travel destinations to the East. Especially in 2012, there were an estimated 5.44 million Muslim tourists or 21% of the total tourist arrivals in Malaysia and make Malaysia has become one of the most visited destinations for Muslim tourists since 9/11 (Hamzah, 2004).

Most studies on halal tourism are related to the importance of the Islamic teaching base in the administration of tourism. The growth of halal tourism is also assumed to be related to the development of the Muslim population worldwide. However, since halal tourism has emerged as part of the development of the halal industry, the studies also emphasized the fact that any strategy developed for halal tourism products must be guided by Islamic law (*sharia*) (Battour and Ismail, 2016). In line with its development, halal tourism has become more popular in recent years due to the development of the Muslims' interest to visit international tourist destinations, and related to their experiences to admire the beauty and greatness of God (Mohsin, Ramli and Abdulaziz, 2016). However, halal tourism also faces common challenges such as economic and security stability and competition (Priyono, 2018).

Etymologically, "halal" is an Arabic word which means permissible for Muslims, and therefore it relates to the form of consent of a behavior (Mohsin, Ramli and Abdulaziz,

2016). It also means lawful or permissible according to Sharia law (Jafari and Scott, 2014). Therefore, the word halal is not only related to food and beverage products but also includes the types of products and services offered to the Muslim population. With halal principles, Muslims take the position to avoid doubts because some items can be categorized as 'makrooh' or 'shubhah' (questionable or detestable) (Samori, Salleh and Khalid, 2015). Thus, halal tourism is related to Muslim-oriented tourism and is designed for the needs of the Muslim people where tourists are governed by Islamic law through any facilities provided by hosts (Mohsin, Ramli and Abdulaziz, 2016).

Meanwhile historically, halal tourism has been associated with religious trips which have been one of the oldest forms of tourism, including long trips such as pilgrimage (Jafari and Scott, 2014) to trips to religious centers or certain historic religious sites as part of religious celebration or contemplation. In the context of Islam, one of the terms related to the concept of tourism is *rihlah* (journey), which is a term that describes a trip that usually aims for education and commerce (Duman, 2012). However, *rihlah* is also often associated with the journey of a Muslim who visited some other historical places like Jerusalem while they visited Mecca dan Madina for hajj, a journey with religious commitments.

With these characteristics, it is not surprising that Bon & Hussain (2010) argue that halal tourism is one of the subtypes of religious tourism, namely tourism carried out by Muslims by applying Sharia laws because following Sharia law means following the halal way of life. In line with this idea, Rinschede (1992) describes the relationship between religious institutions and tourism where religious tourism can be identified as a particular type of tourism motivated by religious reasons. Halal tourism has given birth to understanding that tourism is not merely as leisure time but also motivated by religious teachings (Vukonic, 1996; Jaelani, 2017).

Although some of the studies that have been described above explicitly describe how the relationship of tourism and religious teachings merged in halal tourism, none of them discuss halal tourism as part of the da'wa activities, especially *da'wa bi al-hal*. As a realm that is continued to develop, halal tourism requires the participation of various parties so that practices can truly be carried out, not least by da'wa practitioners and scientists to see it from the perspective of da'wa. Consequently, this paper outlines the fact that halal tourism is a part of the internalization effort of Islamic norms and teachings which is one of the authentic goals of da'wah.

Methodology

This paper uses case studies that are considered capable to describe facts on the ground about halal tourism practices in Pangandaran Beach, West Java, Indonesia. The study has main foci on exploring the socialization and practices of halal tourism as a new paradigm of tourism so as to provide more positive added value not only to tourists but also to local communities. In addition to halal tourism promotion efforts, the views of residents and community figures were also gathered to find out the response of those affected by halal tourism.

In order to achieve this, data and information were obtained through observation and in-depth interviews with several key informants consisting of related parties. Since this study related to the context of da'wa, informants came from religious leaders and also some people in the tourist areas. In addition, the data was also equipped with a number of documents and other sources relevant to the focus of this study. The data obtained were interpreted and validated using a triangulation technique that aims to check the validity of the data while comparing it with data obtained from other sources. The triangulation process is carried out in three ways, namely using data

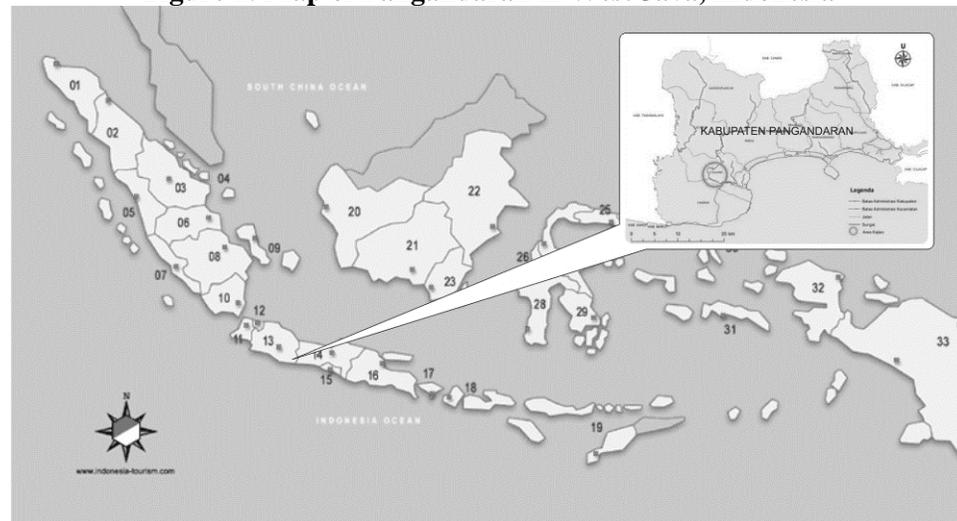
sources, methods and theories so that they can be verified more competently and assumed to be sufficient.

Halal Tourism in Indonesia

As the largest Muslim population country in the world, Indonesia has special attention to the development of halal tourism. Supported by the tourism potential that is spread in various regions, the tourism sector is one of the development targets until 2025 to come. The development of tourism is seen as able to encourage economic growth and enhance Indonesia's positive image in the global context. Not only that, but the tourism sector is also believed to be able to improve the standard of living of the people as it can open up more extensive employment. The development of tourism is done by managing the diversity of natural beauty and maritime potential in several regions.

One of the halal tourism destinations in Indonesia is Pangandaran Beach, West Java. This beach is a leading tourism destination located in the Pangandaran Regency, a new district resulting from the division of Ciamis Regency in 2013. Geographically, this beach is located in the southeast of West Java. Regency. Pangandaran itself is bordered by Ciamis Regency and Banjar City in the north, Cilacap Regency in the east, Indian Ocean in the south, and Tasikmalaya Regency in the west. As it is a border area between West Java and Central Java, it is not surprising that the Pangandaran region uses two main regional languages, namely Sundanese and Javanese with a majority Muslim population.

Figure 1: Map of Pangandaran in West Java, Indonesia



Source: <https://www.indonesia-tourism.com/map/indonesia-map.php>

As residents in the tourism destination area, they regularly interact with both domestic and international tourists with various impacts. Since it has been designated as a halal tourism destination, the Ministry of Tourism and the Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, MUI) has stressed that tourism managers should only provide halal food and drinks around the areas. Although this provision is aimed at managers of tourism such as hotels and the like, this also has an impact on residents around the area as a buffer for tourism activities in Pangandaran Beach and surrounding areas.

Halal standards imposed on tourism products are determined by the Ministry of Tourism and the MUI through certificates while emphasizing that halal certification is not only useful for Muslim travelers, but also by all tourists. Thus, the importance of halal tourism is not only experienced by Muslims. The popularity of halal tourism has

been an opportunity for Indonesia with its various potentials to become a favorite tourism destination. In the context of halal tourism, each destination and manager is obliged to provide halal food, provide easier access to worship, and provide accommodation according to sharia standards. Therefore, halal tourism is sometimes also known as sharia tourism.

However, the introduction of halal tourism in Indonesia not only aims to attract foreign tourists, but domestic tourists also have the same desire to express their needs for halal tourism. Moreover, halal tourism standards which only provide halal food and drinks have added value so that tourists feel comfortable. This is due to the standards that must be met by hosts or organizers, among others; upholding religious norms and cultural values as an embodiment of the concept of life in the balance of relations between humans and God Almighty, the relationship between humans and their fellow humans, and the relationship between humans and the environment; upholding human rights, cultural diversity, and local knowledge; benefits for people's welfare, justice, equality, and proportionality; preserving nature and the environment; empowering local communities; ensuring integration between sectors, between regions, between the center and regions which forms a unity within the framework of regional autonomy, and integration between stakeholders; adhere to the code of world tourism ethics and international agreements in the field of tourism; and strengthen the integrity of the Republic of Indonesia (Jaelani, 2017).

Following the development priorities, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia established nine halal tourism destinations in the country, which entail; West Sumatra, Riau, Lampung, Jakarta, Banten, West Java, East Java, Lombok, and Makassar. These nine locations have been supported by facilities adhering to halal standards set by the MUI (Andriani, 2015). At the practical level, all halal tourism programs prioritize halal standards-based services for Muslims such as providing halal food, places of worship, information of the nearest mosques, and do not provide alcoholic drinks both in hotels and in the neighborhood where tourists stay.

Indonesia's seriousness in promoting halal tourism is proven by the award achieved by Indonesia in the 2016 World Halal Tourism Awards in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates in November 2016 by winning 12 out of 16 contested categories. Whereas the previous year, the halal industry in Indonesia was still lagging behind compared to some neighboring countries, even when compared to non-Muslim countries. The highest rank for halal food-producing countries was controlled by Malaysia, Brazil, the United Arab Emirates and the United States (Hidayat and Siradj, 2015). Therefore, the achievements in the 2016 Halal Tourism Awards event have proven that Indonesia has more open opportunities to become a new center for the world halal tourism.

This is in line with the study of Andriani (2015) who suggested that the Islamic economic sector with the most significant growth is sharia tourism products. This is an important indicator of increasing other economic sectors since tourism is one sector that has an important role in the economic development of a region. The development of the tourism sector can generally encourage the welfare of local communities through the provision of employment opportunities for the community. In addition, the development of tourism can also grow other supporting industries, so as to build an integration between the tourism sectors or with other sectors. Slowly but surely halal tourism has become one of the main areas that supports the economic development of most grassroot Indonesians.

Halal Tourism as Da'wah: Internalizing Islam through Tourism

The word da'wah is an Arabic term which means to call, to invite, or to appeal while terminologically means to call for a better life according to Islamic teachings (Syukir, 1983; Sambas, 1995; Mulkhan, 1996; Fakhruroji, 2017); and believe and practice the aqeedah and Islamic law (Hasjmy, 1983). Therefore at a practical level, da'wa is identical with the process of transmission, transformation and internalization of Islamic teachings using methods, media, and to achieve certain goals (Sambas 1995: 38). Since the goals to be achieved are long-term and multidimensional, the da'wah activities emerge in various dimensions. Some use verbal expressions (*da'wah bi al-lisan*) for example through lectures; with writing (*da'wah bi al-qalam*) through the work of books and other written works, it can also be done by actions (*da'wah bi al-hal*) or Islamic activism (*da'wah bi ahsan al-amal*). The multidisciplinary characteristics of this da'wah study demand that the practice of da'wah also is dynamic and adaptive to the way of thinking and habits of the community as the target.

The basic purpose of da'wah as described above is to spread Islamic teachings so the target can practice the Islamic monotheism and Islamic law. In other words, da'wah is an effort to internalize Islamic principles in daily life which is similarly promoted through halal tourism. The context of conventional tourism has previously been synonymous with a hedonistic and materialistic lifestyle so halal tourism comes as another "choice" so Muslims can travel while gaining new experiences in accordance with Sharia norms as the basic principle of halal tourism. In the framework of da'wa, this is a kind of manifestation of *da'wah bi al-hal* or da'wah by actions. When viewed from the side of the community in tourism destinations area which is more or less accepting the cultural impact of tourism as the implication of their interactions with tourists. Since halal tourism regulates all activities to be in accordance with sharia norms, they also feel that their life has changed as well.

In contrary, the context of *da'wah bi al-lisan* which is mainly carried out by religious preachers, *da'wah bi al-hal* can be done by anyone voluntarily as long as it aims to create positive changes according to Islamic teachings. In this case, those who promote halal tourism are seen to have participated in *da'wah bi al-hal*, both the government and the private sector. Even within certain restrictions, the tourism area community also has the potential to participate in the *da'wa bi al-hal* as it becomes an integral part of halal tourism activity.

Based on the information obtained, some people considered that the promotion of halal tourism was not just a promotion of tourism in their environment, but was also seen as one of the strategic efforts in improving people's behavior in the tourism area, both tourists and local residents. They understood that the tourism sector was previously synonymous with pleasure and hedonism so that it leads to a materialistic lifestyle. This was stated by one of the following informants:

"In the past, alcoholic drinks were easily found here with reasons that they provide for guests (tourists) but in fact, some local residents were also caught drinking (alcohol) several times... however thank God now this is gradually diminishing because of halal tourism programs"

The statement above illustrates their concern about the consequences of tourism which has long been a part of their daily lives. As a Muslim community, they concerned about the impact caused by tourists so that the halal tourism program makes them feel more secure since this program avoids things that are *makrooh*, *shubhah* and *haram* as outlined by Mohsin et al. (2016). The negative influence of tourism activities in their neighborhood while being thankful for the existence of halal tourism was also

recognized by other informants who are community figures in the Pangandaran Beach tourism area:

“Some tourist habits and lifestyle also affect people around here. It’s true that they come here for fun because they pay for it, but indirectly, our neighborhood is also affected. Well, with halal tourism, negative things can be minimized”

Through the above expression, it can be seen that the halal tourism practice has significantly minimized the concerns of residents around the tourist area. Gradually, halal tourism has restored the religious character of coastal communities and this was expressed by a community leader as well as a religious figure,

“The common issue of da’wa in tourism areas is usually related to morals, both residents and the tourists... but the people are usually more related to the influence by the tourists. I certainly welcome the development of halal tourism because it has indirectly introduced sharia norms so that people can live more Islamic”.

The above expression supported the halal tourism program since it is seen as a solution to the problems of da’wa and other social problems that often caused by tourism. Halal tourism is also seen as a constructive effort to introduce religious and sharia norms that are linear with the material of da’wa practices. Community leaders are aware of several factors that make it easy for local people to be influenced by the negative habits of some tourists. Apart from economic factors, the level of education is also becoming a dominant factor so they tend to be easily carried away by materialistic lifestyles. This is as stated by one of the following informants:

“The lack of level of education of the community has resulted in a lifestyle that is more concerned with material things. Since they think that earn money is not so difficult and it is enough to sell to tourists so they potentially forgot what is allowed or not according to their religious teaching. Halal tourism has demanded the people here to understand the rules and principles of Islam. This can be seen from the reoccurrence of Islamic learning activities in majelis ta’lim (Islamic study groups)”.

The activity of Islamic learning in majelis ta’lim has become an interesting point of the description above so that it indicates that the halal tourism program has become a kind of gamechanger in the tourism industry where this practice related to the spiritual life of the people. Therefore, the theological relationship between halal tourism and the practice of da’wa is getting stronger where both are trying to fight for the internalization of Islamic teachings in daily life. Explicitly, this was stated by one of the religious leaders in the following interview:

“We all know that generally, da’wa means to change the habits. As can be seen, this halal tourism has introduced people’s views here on how broad the scope of Islam is, so that tourism has been arranged. I thank anyone who has contributed to this halal tourism so that it can change people for the better person”.

The expression above reveals that the local community of Pangandaran is basically a religious community so the halal tourism program in their area can be easily accepted. Through halal tourism, they not only gain material benefits but also spiritual ones through feeling safe and avoiding things that are contrary to their teachings. Thus, in the context of halal tourism in Pangandaran Beach area, those who gain benefit are not only tourists who come to enjoy the natural beauty along with halal cuisine are framed as an expression of gratitude to God, but also local residents in the area as they can maintain their characteristics as a religious community.

In other words, Islamic values which formalized in the halal tourism framework have become an inseparable part of the efforts the internalization of Islamic norms and

teachings, one of the fundamental objectives of Islamic da'wa activities to create positive changes within the community. In this case, those who promote halal tourism are seen to have participated in *da'wah*, both the government and the private sector, or even the individuals since they also have the potential to participate in *da'wah* because it is an inseparable part of halal tourism activities. For Muslims, religion standardizes all aspects of their lives, both at home and when they are going out in traveling so that halal tourism has given new choices when they travel and what they will do there (Jafari & Scott, 2014).

Conclusion

Therefore, it is important to note that the category of travel in Islam has a special purpose that is different from other trips in general that are motivated by pleasure as leisure time or hedonistic lifestyle. This is what distinguishes halal tourism from tourism in general where it not only aims to have fun but also as part of the manifestation of religious practices.

Although some categorize halal tourism as part of an increasingly developed halal industry in the world as well as Islamic banking and the like, ignoring the relationship between halal tourism and religious practices is impossible. Although in practice halal tourism is more likely to be a cultural activity, it has a strong relationship with the religious doctrines, even the term of halal itself. In simple terms, it can be said that the practice of halal tourism is a logical consequence of the application of sharia principles in tourism practices which makes it assumed by some parties as a subtype of religious tourism. Not only from the elements of how it organized but also in terms of how someone is motivated to be involved in the tour which is more dominated by religious motivation.

At the practical level, local people in the tourism area are generally receiving the cultural impact of tourism as an implication of their interactions with tourists. In conventional tourism which is identical to the hedonistic and materialistic lifestyle has an impact on their daily behavior changes. However, in the context of halal tourism which is based on Islamic and sharia norms, they become parties who also gain spiritual benefits. With various changes in this positive direction, the halal tourism program can be interpreted as one of the activities of *da'wa bi al-hal* that are manifested through efforts to internalize Islamic values in people's lives which in this case is the context of tourism. This can at least be seen from their views and feelings towards halal tourism related to their daily religious life.

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