

## THE CONCEPT OF HALAL TOURISM: BETWEEN BUSINESS OR ISLAMICATION PROCESS?

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### ABSTRACT

Halal tourism is one type of new tourism concept that has adhered to the principle of regularity guided by Islamic teachings. The purpose of this study is to describe the concept of halal tourism. Because the concept of halal tourism which has been proclaimed by the government, is misunderstood by the public. Misguided in understanding the concept of halal tourism in the community certainly raises pros and cons. This type of research belongs to the genre of literature writing, which involves obtaining data and information from library sources such as books, research results, journals, and other reading materials that are still relevant to the research problem. The research findings explain that the concept of halal tourism means the fulfillment of halal service facilities that are friendly for Muslim tourists and in tourist destinations such as restaurant accommodation or halal food. Then there are adequate places of worship and other halal tourism facilities. In essence, the concept of halal tourism emphasizes more on sharia services, not meaning the process of Islamization or crashing into local wisdom.

**Keywords:** Halal Tourism, Business, Islamization, Indonesia

### ABSTRAK

Wisata halal merupakan salah satu jenis konsep wisata baru yang sudah menganut prinsip keteraturan berpedoman pada ajaran Islam. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan tentang konsep dari wisata halal. Karena konsep wisata halal yang selama ini dicanangkan Pemerintah, oleh masyarakat dipabami dengan salah kaprah. Salah kaprah dalam memabami konsep wisata halal di tengah masyarakat tentu menimbulkan pro dan kontra. Jenis penelitian ini termasuk dalam genre penulisan literatur, yang melibatkan perolehan data dan informasi dari sumber perpustakaan seperti buku, hasil penelitian, jurnal, dan bahan bacaan lain yang masih relevan dengan masalah penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan, wisata halal mencakup penyediaan fasilitas layanan halal dan lokasi wisata yang ramah bagi wisatawan Muslim, seperti tersedianya restoran atau makanan halal. Kemudian terdapatnya tempat ibadah yang memadai serta fasilitas wisata halal lainnya. Intinya, konsep wisata halal ini lebih menekankan kepada pelayanan secara syariah, bukan berarti kepada proses Islamisasi atau menabrak kearifan lokal.

**Kata Kunci:** Wisata Halal, Bisnis, Islamisasi, Indonesia



## INTRODUCTION

In today's tourism science, halal tourism is a relatively new concept. Since eight years ago, or more precisely in 2014, the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism has prioritized the development of halal tourism as one of its main programs. The Ministry of Tourism has designated ten provinces in Indonesia as halal tourism destinations since 2016, including DKI Jakarta, Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java (Malang), West Nusa Tenggara, Riau, Aceh, West Java, West Sumatra, and South Sulawesi (Makassar and surroundings) (Aurelia, 2019). The location was chosen because it has a unique socio-cultural relationship that is closely related to Islamic beliefs and is equipped with its natural beauty (Noviantoro & Zurohman, 2020).

As a country that adheres to the largest Muslim belief in the universe, Indonesia's potential to develop halal tourism is certainly quite large. Data shows that Indonesia's Muslim population as a whole is estimated to reach 231.06 million people in 2021. The data for the record comes from The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center (RISSC) in the "Muslim 500" or MABDA report. Based on such a large population, this equatorial country has the potential to become a business actor in the halal industry, including halal tourism.

Halal tourism is part of the world's sharia economic sector, therefore, developing halal tourism can be an alternative for the tourism industry in Indonesia. The halal tourism industry has become increasingly popular since 2016. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Muslim tourists spend the most money in the tourism industry, spending US\$120 billion

in 2015. In 2021 Mastercard-Crescent Rating released the results of the Muslim Travel Index study. The World or Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) where Indonesia is in fourth position under neighboring Malaysia, then Turkey, and also Saudi Arabia which is ranked first. The ranking shows that Indonesia is still consistently in the top 4 of the GMTI over the last five years.

In 2018, the number of Muslim tourists rose 6.3 percent. This means that there is an increase every year. And this could be an opportunity for Indonesia to develop a halal tourism business. With a total of 200 million domestic tourists, Indonesia occupies the fourth position of the country with the most Muslim tourists, with a total expenditure of US \$ 9.7 billion or equivalent to 141 trillion rupiah. Indonesia is currently ranked in the top five halal tourist destinations in the world with foreign exchange earnings of US\$13 billion, which contributes to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$57.9 billion. The tourism industry will be the main source of the country's foreign exchange earnings in 2020 (Sari et al., 2019).

The government has established four main pillars that aim to increase the interest of tourists to come to halal tourist attractions, the four pillars are: Accessibility (accessibility), Communication (communication), Environment (environment) and Service (services) to protect the comfort of halal tourist destinations. The services and infrastructure available for halal tourism are also improved. In travel, communication is the most important tool. Meanwhile, in terms of the environment, the government has begun to encourage environmentally

friendly products and protect nature so as not only to preserve the nature of its services but also the current ecology and culture. In terms of service, halal tourism must provide the best service to visitors (Kusumaningtyas & Lestari, 2020).

Despite the fact that the government created the idea of halal tourism, it seems that many people do not understand what halal tourism is. This is evidenced by the rejection of the labeling of halal tourism that the government wants to implement in the designated areas. For example, what happened in North Sumatra when the government wanted to label Lake Toba tourism as halal tourism. At that time in 2019, Edy Rahmayadi, the Governor of North Sumatra, stated that Lake Toba would be used as a halal tourist attraction. On the other hand, the people of North Sumatra were furious with Edy's statement. Many parties object to Lake Toba being exploited for halal tourism (Syahrianto, 2019).

On Monday (2/9/2019), the Lake Toba Student Care Alliance held a demonstration in front of the North Sumatra Governor's Office, which is located on Jalan Diponegoro, Medan. They oppose halal tourism proposed by the North Sumatra Provincial Government. The Lake Toba Student Care Alliance said it was feared that halal tourism would interfere with indigenous cultural wisdom that has been thriving in the Lake Toba area. They want to make sure the idea doesn't cause problems for the people around Lake Toba (Frengki, 2019).

The rejection of halal tourism also occurred in the Province of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), precisely in Labuan Bajo tourism, in the West Manggarai area, the

western tip of Flores Island. This rejection was conveyed by the Governor of NTT, Viktor Laiskodat. According to him, the concept of halal tourism does not need to be applied in Labuan Bajo, because rebranding tourism in Labuan Bajo is the same as triggering a conflict in the tourism business that can spread to other social conflicts (Keda, 2019).

Apart from the government, rejection also came from overseas Manggarai community groups, West Manggarai DPRD, community leaders, and religious leaders. They assume that this halal tourism will be a bad discourse for Labuan Bajo tourism and is not very contextual with the initial orientation of Labuan Bajo tourism which carries cultural and tourism values that are formed naturally (MediaIndonesia, 2019).

Actions against halal tourism also occurred in Tana Toraja, in 2019. The governor of South Sulawesi, Nurdin Abdullah, aims to make his region a center for halal tourism, particularly in the Toraja region, where the majority of the people are non-Muslims. Nurdin said in an interview with Kemal Pahlevi in Suara Millennial IDN Times that he wanted to develop halal tourism in Tana Toraja so that Muslim tourists could enjoy its culinary delights. However, the plan was rejected by students and the public. This is because it is against the customs and culture of Tana Toraja. The action was carried out by the Toraja Student Movement which held protests for two consecutive days (Abdurrahman, 2019).

The rejection of the concept of halal tourism also occurs in Bali, an area where Islam is a minority. I Wayan Koster, the Governor of Bali, firmly stated that he was not interested in changing the image of Bali

as a halal tourist destination. According to him, Bali already has its own branding in accordance with local wisdom in Bali. Bali is known for its culture-based tourism. With the existence of halal tourism, according to him, it will actually narrow and minimize the type of branding that already exists in Bali, namely cultural tourism. So far, Bali, without a halal label, Koster assesses that many tourists have been able to sort out restaurants or halal-related needs. He also has no plans to designate a certain area as a halal zone (Mardiastuti, 2019).

The desire of Sandiango Uno, as the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, to build and develop halal tourism was met with opposition and rejection from various elements of society. There may be two reasons for this. First, the lack of socialization of halal tourism, causing many people to think, assume, and argue that halal tourism is aimed at enforcing tourist destinations. Second, concerns over the practice of intolerance. If halal tourism is implemented, people may be worried about the establishment of certain religious organizations that may suddenly ban and seal tourist destinations. This concern stems from dissatisfaction with the attitude of government authorities which have been proven to often ignore intolerance behavior in the country (Kurniawan Ulung, 2021).

The fear of rejection is due to fear of intolerance, meaning that some do not understand the concept of halal tourism or halal tourism further. Because actually this concept is open to the public (all religions), all people with different religions can enjoy halal tourism, it could be that their literacy about halal tourism is lacking.

Many researches on halal tourism have been carried out such as (Surwandono et al., 2020) in the *Journal of Islamic Civilization*, they stated that halal tourism is a suitable and relevant idea to describe Islamic tourism. However, if halal tourism is managed exclusively according to commercial and reactionary tendencies, it can result in many distortions in the main idea of halal tourism.

Meanwhile, Sufi in the *Unram Masters of Management Journal* "Halal Tourism: Is Conceptualization Needed?", explained that foreign entrepreneurs and tourists have a good perception of halal tourism, as well as a supportive attitude, and they strongly encourage the growth of tourism based on local wisdom. In terms of the language of halal tourism, the two informants have opposite points of view. As a result, more intense tourism outreach is needed to set standards based on vocabulary that are acceptable to all tourism stakeholders (Saufi et al., 2020).

Furthermore, research conducted by (Battour & Ismail, 2008) entitled "*Islamization trends: Implications for tourism market*". This article begins by explaining the concept of Islamic law. It explains the sources of Sharia as well as its broad objectives. This paper then focuses on the implications of sharia compliance in the tourism and hospitality industry. This is followed by a description of the current phenomena of 'halal tourism' and 'Islamic hospitality' using some examples from selected Muslim countries in Asia and the Middle East. The development of 'Islamic oriented' standards was also discussed giving rise to new concepts such as 'sharia compliant' which refers to aspects such as alcohol free, gambling free and 'Halal' food

offerings. Finally, this paper discusses future trends and challenges related to halal tourism.

In this paper, the author is actually different from previous research, the position of this study aims to analyze how the conception of halal tourism in Indonesia is. Is it aimed at developing a business solely in a designated area, or also as a form of the Islamization process as has been understood by those who reject the existence of halal tourism. So the formulation of the problem in this study are: (1) How is the development of halal tourism in Indonesia?; (2) What is the concept of halal tourism in Indonesia? The importance of this research is to be able to provide enlightenment to the public about the concept of halal tourism, so that people do not misunderstand the concept of halal tourism.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research was conducted using library research methods. Information for this study was collected from two sources: primary and secondary sources. A collection of articles in the media covering stakeholder statements about halal tourism became the main source of this research. While secondary data comes from journals, articles, books, and news about the core problems of halal tourism.

While in this halal tourism research the approach that the author uses is qualitative. Apart from that this research seeks to understand a reality and the meaning behind a reality, there are several other reasons why a qualitative approach is used in this study.

First, the findings generated through this research were not obtained and

resolved by statistical techniques and procedures or by means of quantification. Second, research on the concept of halal tourism would be more appropriate to do with a qualitative approach. Third, this research will focus more on the meaning or something non-sensuous of an existing phenomenon. Things like this cannot possibly be executed through quantitative research (Leksono, 2013).

The purpose of this data collection analysis is to build an abstraction based on the components that have been collected, not to verify the premises. Data analysis is carried out in this scenario by carefully interpreting and collating the data collected (Lexy J. Moleong, 2014). In which the author examines all information, reports, facts, and statements whose sources come from electronic media and tourism literature about the development of halal tourism in Indonesia and the world. After collecting data from the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia in the form of tourism policies and their development, the final step is to conduct an analysis by describing and interpreting the data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Halal Concept

The Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) explains the meaning of halal in three ways, including: 1) Permitted which means (not prohibited by Syara') 2) Obtained or done legally, 3) Permission. Halal in Arabic is defined as something that is good, permissible and legal, according to the website of the Islamic Council of Victoria.

The opposite of halal is haram. And haram refers to anything that Allah has forbidden. Allah forbids it, and those who disobey it will face Allah's wrath or

punishment in the hereafter. In addition, according to the Prophet Muhammad, consuming something that is haram will result in prayer being ignored. Allah SWT will also reject all the deeds of worship that have been done (Gema Rahmadani, 2015).

In Islam, consuming halal, holy and good food and drink is a religious obligation, and the commandments are binding. According to the book *Microeconomics in an Islamic Perspective* (2004), Islam introduces the concepts of halal, haram, and redundant as basic pillars in regulating the needs of human life, be it *dharuriyat* (primary), *hajiyat* (secondary), and *tahsiniyat* (tertiary), including in industry. tourist.

It is stated that there are various commands that must be followed by Muslims, especially in the field of halal and good consumption, one of which is contained in the Qur'an verse 88 in Surah Al-Maidah which has the following meaning: "And eat what is lawful and good from what Allah has provided for you, and fear Allah in whom you believe".

The verse of the Surah is a warning and recommendation for Muslims to consume in a lawful and good way, both materially and non-materially. Everything that is allowed according to Islamic law is halal, and good refers to something that is of good quality and beneficial if consumed. Therefore, Islamic teachings about halal products and safe eating become very clear. In essence, Islamic teachings provide various inputs for Muslims to be more careful in consuming, especially foods that are forbidden by Allah SWT (Nasution, 2021).

In Indonesia, the concept of halal has recently become a fad in the growth of

the Islamic economy. There are various kinds of forms, starting from the emergence of halal products both food and beverages, halal fashion, halal cosmetics, halal lifestyle (lifestyle) to halal tourism or halal tourism.

### **Islamization Process**

The process of Islamization is the most important and most obscure act in the history of Indonesian Islam. This ambiguity is seen, for example, in the debate about when Islam came to Indonesia, where it started, and who was the first to spread the Islamic faith in Indonesia. Historians currently debate some of these issues because they cannot be answered solely on the basis of the evidence gathered and the interpretation of the researcher's own data (Husada, 2016).

The notion of Islamization is an example of how easy it is to invite followers of other religions to accept or obey Islam, namely an invitation or change of religion in matters relating to existing aspects of human life, including science and language. It can be understood as a process.

The process of Islamization itself aims for every human being to embrace Islam as a guide in living life in order to achieve the goal of meeting God himself, and this process of Islamization has occurred since ancient times. Islamization has progressed to this point and we can never just leave it out of our daily lives as human beings. Even in today's rapidly developing society, almost everyone who is Muslim wants or has completed the process of Islamization, not only traders or fishermen as in the past (Setyadi, 2019).

In Indonesia, the Islamization process has six paths, including: trade, marriage, Sufism, education, arts, and

politics. 1) Trade Routes, Muslim traders (Arabic, Persian and Indian) participated in trade from the West, Southeast, and East of the Asian peninsula due to the bustling trading activity in the 7th century. 2) Marriage Path. Since the king, dukes, or aristocrats encouraged the process of Islamization, this marriage route was more profitable if it occurred between Muslim merchants and noble children or the king's son and noble son.

Then 3) Educational Path. Islamization is also carried out through educational channels, both formal and non-formal, such as Islamic boarding schools run by religious teachers, kiai, and ulama. 4) Path of Sufism. Sufism is a "form" of Islam taught to local residents that is comparable to the minds of individuals who previously practiced Hinduism, so that the new religion is easy to understand and accept.

Next 5) Art Track. Through the arts, the most popular channel of Islamization is wayang performing arts. It is said that the most competent figure in this field is Sunan Kalijaga, a member of Walisongo. And 6) Political Path. In the past, the kings of political influence helped spread the teachings of Islam in the regions. The theory of Gujarat, Mecca and Persia is the theory of the entry of Islam into Indonesia. However, to strengthen the existing theory, more ideas should be proposed.

### **Definition of Tourism**

Tourism has developed into a basic need for hundreds of millions of people around the world. Traveling is included in human rights as a necessity, which must be protected by basic rights. As a result, international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the

World Tourism Organization (WTO) have finally recognized or accepted tourism as an integral part of human life, especially in terms of social and economic activities (Wibowo, 2008).

Simply put, tourism can be defined as a group or individual travel activity to a specific location within a specific time frame and destination. Tourism, according to the KBBI, is a group travel activity that aims to entertain, refresh, provide insight, picnic and others. Meanwhile, there are various things, according to Herman V. Schulard, especially those related to the economy that deal directly with certain people through the traffic lanes of certain countries, cities, and regions (Bitar, 2021).

### **Definition of Halal Tourism**

Today the world of tourism in the world, including in Indonesia is experiencing development, from conventional tourism to halal tourism. There were various terms before the emergence of the term halal tourism, such as sharia tourism, religious tourism, and so on. In some countries it is also referred to as Muslim-friendly tourism, which is also referred to as halal tourism globally. Halal tourism is part of the tourism sector that caters to Muslim visitors. Services on halal tourism comply with Islamic guidelines. Since the Muslim tourism market is huge all over the world, this type of tourism is growing (Rahmatian, 2017).

Academics M Battour and M Nazari Ismail explained, halal tourism includes all products or actions that are allowed for Muslims to utilize or participate in tourism businesses based on Islamic teachings. Halal tourism is simply a tourist idea that does not conflict with Islamic teachings in any way,

including food, drink, housing, and tourist attractions (Rais, 2017).

Indonesia seeks to develop the presence of sharia hotels in order to promote halal tourism. The Indonesian government has issued regulations for the construction of sharia hotels through the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy. The sharia referred to here is as stipulated by the fatwa and or has been approved by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) regarding the principles of Islamic law. In 2013, 37 sharia hotels had halal certificates, while 150 hotels were in the process of complying with sharia regulations. Then there are 2,916 restaurants, of which 303 have obtained halal certification and 1,800 are currently undergoing the certification process.

As the name suggests, halal tourism operates under its own set of norms, which are different from the tourism industry in general. According to the world's halal tourism rating agency, the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI), explains halal tourism standards as follows: Quoted from (Fitrianto, 2019)

1	Family friendly destination
2	Tourist destinations must be family and child friendly
3	Security for Muslim tourists
4	The number of Muslim tourist arrivals is bustling
5	Muslim-friendly services and facilities
6	Halal guaranteed food
7	Air transport connectivity
8	Access to worship is good and in good condition
9	Muslim-friendly airport facilities
10	Adequate accommodation
11	Halal awareness and destination marketing
12	Ease of communication

13	Reach and awareness of the needs of Muslim tourists
14	Visa requirements

Many people choose halal tourism because of the universal quality of its products and services. The meaning of universal here is general. As a result, halal tourism incorporates universal values such as cleanliness, health, comfort, and added value, in order to ensure that it is not associated with Islamophobia or Islamization activities that are not in accordance with the social fabric of society.

In halal tourism, tourist objects, tourism products and services, as well as tourist destinations are basically the same as objects, products, services, and tourism destinations in general, but as long as the most important thing is not contradicting Islamic norms and ethics. So that it can be said that Halal Tourism is not limited to religious tourism only (Regina Dewi Hanifah, 2020).

According to Suherlan, the Government, from the center to the regions and other stakeholders, such as the tourism industry sector, has attempted to develop a tourism destination development strategy, including (Suherlan, 2015): first, developing sharia-based family-friendly vacation locations to increase the attractiveness of sharia tourist attractions; second, Tourism Industry Development: advancing sharia tourism business standards: hotels, restaurants, travel agencies and spas and expanding accommodation options for sharia; third, National Tourism Marketing: bring in as many Muslim foreign tourists as possible, increase Muslim Visitor Arrivals; fourth, Tourism Human Resources Development: developing sharia tourism



human resources, increasing efforts to implement Ease of communication.

### **Halal Tourism Concept**

According to Abdul Kadir Din in his book entitled “The Ideal Islamic Tourism Packaging: Identifying its Essential Ingredients”, which is also referred to by Surwandono et al, states that Indonesia has a superior understanding of halal tourism. The Indonesian Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the MUI National Sharia Council (DSN) has set nine standards that are benchmarks for ‘halal tourism’ in the country.

These indicators include the following: 1) profit-oriented for the community, 2) prevention of shirk and superstition activities, 3) orientation towards refreshment and tranquility, 4) protection of the environment, 5) safeguarding trust, security, and comfort, 6) prevention of immoral and immoral activities, 7) safeguarding behavior, ethics, and human values, 8) universality and inclusiveness, and 9) respect for social values, culture, and local wisdom. Tourists, Sharia Travel Bureaus (BPWS), sharia hotels, tour guides, entrepreneurs, and services are all required to follow this rule in tourism governance.

DSN-MUI compiles the notion of halal tourism as a sector that not only provides material benefits, but also has intrinsic value, which is clearly still related to the principles of *maqâshid syar’ah*. The concept of halal tourism is not built without a purpose, this concept is built so that activities that are common to mankind continue to take place in the corridor/religious path or “sharia compliance” (Surwandono et al., 2020).

The Ministry of Tourism developed the concept of tourism after knowing the great potential of Muslim foreign tourists to visit Indonesian tourist destinations. The potential profit that can be achieved by developing halal tourism is very large. The amount can reach up to 4000 trillion rupiah according to the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism. However, to get these benefits is not an easy thing. The reason is that the concept of Halal Tourism has been rejected in areas where the majority of the population is non-Muslim. This is because they believe that the concept of halal tourism offends other religions, as if it is haram and must be permitted.

They also argue that the presence of Halal Tourism will paralyze local wisdom and change the environment or culture that was previously in accordance with local wisdom to become religious. However, what is being said is not true. The problem is the use of the word “Halal” in society, which creates multiple interpretations, especially in Indonesia, where religious issues are very sensitive (Hutagalung, 2019).

The occurrence of misunderstandings that occurred in the community regarding the concept of halal tourism made KH Ma’ruf Amin, who served as the Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia, commented. Ma’ruf Amin assessed that many Indonesian people do not understand the concept of halal tourism. The reason, according to the former MUI leader, is the low level of public literacy, so this is a challenge for the Indonesian government in developing halal tourism. According to Ma’ruf, the public has a wrong understanding of halal tourism, which means that people think that tourism should be ‘regulated’. It is not surprising

that the policy of the halal tourism concept has received opposition in several areas (Pratiwi, 2021).

*“Tentu kami sangat ingin menghapus persepsi yang salah tentang wisata halal atau wisata syariah. Sepertinya ada kesan bahwa wisata halal itu wisatanya akan disyariatkan. Sehingga, daerah-daerah yang telah ditetapkan sebagai destinasi wisata halal menjadi keberatan,”* said Ma’ruf Amin.

Ma’ruf Amin spoke again about halal tourism this time in a virtual meeting of the Global Tourism Forum 2021. He explained the concept of halal tourism in Indonesia, which includes the provision of halal lodging and culinary delights to adequate places of worship (mosques/mushollas)..

*“Bagi Indonesia, wisata halal mengacu pada penyediaan fasilitas layanan halal yang ramah terhadap wisatawan Muslim atau parwisata ramah Muslim dan lokasi wisata, seperti akomodasi restoran atau masakan halal. Tersedia tempat ibadah dan fasilitas wisata halal lainnya,”* Said Ma’ruf.

According to Ma’ruf Amin, the goal of halal tourism growth is to make Indonesia a leader in its field. So that Indonesia can attract a large number of Muslim tourists from all over the world (Khairally, 2021). Besides Ma’ruf Amin, Zainut Tauhid (deputy minister of religion) also talked about the concept of halal tourism. He stated that those (people) who were misinformed about halal tourism needed to be educated, given direction. Sharia tourism or halal tourism, according to him, is not an attempt to Islamize tourism so that all things, including services in the tourism environment, are aligned with sharia values.

According to him again, halal tourism refers to providing facilities for Muslim tourists to carry out their sharia obligations when visiting a tourist destination. For example, the availability of food and drinks at these tourist attractions that are halal-certified, then complete worship facilities (there are ablution places, prayer mats, etc.), the ease of Islamic banking transactions, hotel facilities, and the attitude of businessmen who are friendly to tourists (Ruwaidah, 2021).

Meanwhile, according to Teungku Faisal Ali, Chairman of the Aceh Ulema Consultative Council (MPU), the concept of halal tourism includes not only labels, but also tourism concepts and components. If the toilet is still dirty, the ablution place is not adequate, and there is no call to prayer at that location (mushala) to remember prayer times, then eating and drinking is not halal (Roni, 2021).

Launching news from Okezone.com. Sandiaga Uno, Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy (Menparekraf), once stated that halal tourism is an opportunity and focus for the government to boost the economic sector, especially the creative economy sector. Sandiaga emphasized that halal tourism does not mean that the location must be legalized (Muhammad, 2021).

According to Sandiaga, the concept of halal tourism is more Muslim-friendly based or friendly-based tourism for Muslim tourists. The focus is on the extension of service or other terms are for additional services when traveling. Halal tourism, once again, does not promote destinations or zoning of creative economy centers. It was further explained that pure halal tourism is an additional service that runs three

concepts, namely good to have (good to have), nice to have (happy to have) and must have (must have).

### **Halal Tourism is Not Religious Tourism**

Countries like Indonesia, where the majority of its citizens are Muslims, tend to see that halal tourism and religious tourism are the same thing. Whereas halal tourism is different from religious tourism. As for the difference, when it comes to religious tourism, the main purpose is to worship. While halal tourism, on the other hand, is basically the same as regular tourism. The management structure, on the other hand, is what sets it apart. Halal tourist attractions are specially designed to bring comfort and tranquility to Muslim visitors (Indiekraf, 2021).

Religious tourism is centered on the uniqueness, beauty, and religious meaning of a destination. Visiting beautiful mosques, religious treasures of ancient historical buildings, pilgrimages, and other religious tourism products are just a few examples of them. As a result, religious tourism is often associated with historical tourism, which is under the umbrella of cultural tourism. The field of Historical and Religious Tourism Development is within the Ministry of Tourism, under the Deputy for Cultural Tourism Destination Development (Redaksi, 2019).

Quoted from Republika, Sari Lenggogeni, a tourism expert at Andalas University, highlighted that halal tourism is the acceptance of non-Organizational Islamic Conference (OIC) countries that see the global potential of Muslim growth. Halal tourism is designed to meet the demands of Muslims in non-OIC countries

in terms of worship, such as providing mosques and halal restaurants (Idealisa Masyrafina, 2019).

*“Namun, ketika Kementerian Pariwisata membuat wisata halal, karena diproduksi di negara berpenduduk mayoritas muslim seperti Indonesia, hal itu menjadi salah paham di kalangan masyarakat. Karena sebagian besar umat Islam percaya bahwa semuanya halal, dan wisata halal identik dengan wisata religi,”* Sari explained.

There are three kinds of religious tourism, according to Sari. First, tourism for religious purposes, such as hajj and umrah. Second, Islamic tourism, such as visiting Turkey after performing Umrah to learn about the past of Islamic culture. Third, halal tourism, namely providing facilities for Muslims to practice their religion while traveling, such as the presence of places of worship (mosques/mosques) and the availability of halal food.

Halal tourism, although still based on Islamic teachings, is certainly different in concept from religious tourism. One type of religious tourism is pilgrimage. Pilgrimage can etymologically refer to both the living and the deceased, but in a public sense, pilgrimage refers to a visit to an individual who has died. Grave pilgrimage is another name for this activity.

Halal tourism is not a one-sided experience as both Muslims and non-Muslims can benefit from halal services. Halal tourism includes not only pilgrimages and religious locations, but also the provision of additional services such as sharia restaurants and hotels, as well as places of worship.

According to Jaelani in the journal (Ma'rifah et al., 2020), The purpose of developing halal tourism is to attract

tourists from all religions, be it Muslim or non-Muslim communities, so it is quite vital considering the many benefits that will be received. However, it is important to note that, while this concept is available to everyone, the convenience of Muslim worship is an important consideration in any standard tourism offering. This means that both Muslim and non-Muslim tourists will be able to enjoy the convenience without having to share it with others, thereby potentially increasing the number of visitors.

Halal tourism can introduce Islam in a fun way. Through halal tourism, people, especially non-Muslims, will know more about Islam. Islam is defined as a religion that is in harmony with fitrah and sunnatullah. It is called Islam because it teaches how to live in harmony with nature and the rhythm of the sunnatullah in order to have a peaceful life. Islam demands to be a person who is constantly seeking peace and tranquility. In the life of the nation and state, including in matters of travel, the Islamic community is a society that upholds peace, tranquility, and prosperity both individually and collectively (Zainuddin, 2015).

Sharia principles in tourism management, as well as polite and pleasant treatment to visitors and the environment, are part of the concept of halal tourism. Halal tourism in practice chooses tourist locations that adhere to Islamic sharia norms, which is a crucial assessment. Every halal tourist location in Indonesia that is designated as a destination must be guided by Islamic norms.

Therefore, to make Indonesia a mecca for halal tourism in the world, cooperation between stakeholders is

needed, especially between scientists and the government. Collaboration between scientists as problem map makers and the government as those who develop plans for halal tourism development and promote it is very important. Some things that are needed include promoting, structuring infrastructure, preparing human resources (HR), in particular increasing the capacity of tourism business actors and making halal tourism one of the main programs of the Ministry of Tourism (Noviantoro & Zurohman, 2020).

Muslims will certainly travel to avoid places of immorality, or also avoid foods that smell haram, women who are not partners, gambling and alcoholic beverages. Not the other way around. Even for people other than Islam, there are also many who avoid haram activities, because religion has outlined good instructions. Halal in the context of tourism, has more connotations of products eaten or drunk by tourists. Food that applies to a Muslim. Do not eat pigs, snakes, dogs, bats or any other prohibited animal. Including alcoholic beverages of any kind are not provided in tourist destinations.

Absolutely, the halal dimension implied in it is not just food. However, every lodging place applies Islamic law, where those who will stay are not allowed to rent a room before they are married. So that hotel room rental places, from small to large ones, apply an Islamic room rental system. Their service at the hotel must also be friendly, the hotel has cleanliness and food that is commensurate with the price paid by consumers (Lenggogeni & Elfindri, 2017).

In addition, Muslim tourists' trips will feel comfortable and highly dependent on the availability of halal product and

service facilities in accordance with Islamic sharia principles, such as prayer rooms and separate ablution places between Muslims/Muslims in tourist attractions, Qibla directions, separate ablution places between muhrim, restaurants that guaranteed halal, or swimming pools and beach zoning are separated between men and women, the comfort of tourists dressing according to Islamic rules and norms without any potential interference with “racist” treatment due to Islamophobia (Lenggogeni & Elfindri, 2017). So this shows that Muslim tourists will travel to get comfort in worship.

If the government is serious about promoting halal tourism, it will have a positive impact on other sectors, especially on the progress of the halal industry in the country. Halal tourism, according to President Jokowi, is the key to driving the development of the halal business in Indonesia (Abdul Basith, 2019). The growth of halal tourism has the potential to be one of the drivers of economic prosperity. The number of Muslim tourists is expected to reach 230 million by 2026.

The expansion of the tourism industry is projected to improve the welfare of local communities by providing job opportunities. Not only that, tourism development can also help encourage other supporting industries, enabling greater interaction between tourism and other sectors in a region (Adinugraha et al., 2018).

Then halal tourism must cover all fields of industry, including tourist destinations, modes of transportation, hotels and accommodations, restaurants and cafes, and travel service bureaus. The halal ecosystem has the potential to turn halal tourism into sustainable tourism,

meaning that natural resources, business actors, and communities around tourist attractions will benefit from the advancement of halal tourism (Sunarmo, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

The discussion above can be concluded and the bottom line is that the main concept of halal tourism refers to the provision of halal facilities in tourist-friendly places for Muslim tourists or Muslim-friendly tourism, such as accommodation/restaurant facilities or halal cuisine. There are places of worship and other halal tourism facilities. The focus of halal tourism is on services rather than changing attractions or the environment. The increasing number of Muslim tourists requires a number of critical considerations about Islamic teachings that must be followed. For example, the Qibla direction, prayer locations, halal food and drinks, as well as the level of environmental health and food hygiene.

The main convention that must be established in the establishment of halal tourism is that it does not seek to exclude Muslim visitors from general tourist activities or restrict non-Muslim tourists to specific tourist destinations. Halal tourism is increasingly popular to provide convenience for Muslim tourists to worship according to Islamic law. Halal tourism does not lead to Islamization or may be considered a process of Islamization. Because halal tourism is part of a niche market, the most important thing is how to find ways to attract tourists in droves to come.

The development of halal tourism will have a positive impact on the

Indonesian economic sector. If all elements understand the importance of halal tourism, then it is not impossible that the government's desire to implement the concept of halal tourism in Indonesia will not encounter difficulties. Halal tourism will be able to bring in foreign tourists to enjoy Muslim-friendly destinations, besides that it can also increase income for the region or country, thus opening up new job opportunities for the community

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