SURVIVING CONFLICT:  
A CASE STUDY OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN MALUKU

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ABSTRACT

Once was known as the island of spices during the colonialism era, Ambon, the capital of Maluku mostly known as the province of One Thousand Islands. This archipelago gifted with such a beauty only nature can offer. Maluku has been known as one of the best region for marine tourism in Indonesia; beautiful sandy beaches, variety of marine life, plenty of coral reefs and clear blue water. This province has an enormous potential of tourism industry yet to be developed. Being said that, the peacefulness of Maluku is crushed with religious conflict between Christian and Muslim in 2009. Every sector of life was suffering from this tremendous conflict, tourism industry is one among many, due to the unbearable situation. This conceptual research is aimed to find the best way for Maluku to overcome the conflict and also to gain it’s formerly glory of the tourism industry and to develop even more. Data from the tourism office board, books and related articles are used to help writer in making the analysis. As there would be a silver lining in every cloud, what once broken and tear apart with conflict, will find its way up back. Maluku not only will recover the conflict, its tourism industry will rise again as long as the community is willing to maintain the peacefulness of their own.

Keywords: Conflict, Tourism Industry, Maluku

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Tourism industry in Indonesia plays a vital role to its economic performance as well as the source of revenues from foreign travelers. This archipelago country has much to offers; historical heritage, undeniable natural beauty to the richness of cultural diversity. Moreover to say, nature and culture are the main component of Indonesian tourism.

Ambon is the capital Maluku, located in the eastern part of Indonesia. Being known as the province of One Thousand Islands, literally Maluku has thousands of islands. The coral island reefs scattered through the sea, considered as some of the deepest sea, not only in Indonesia but also in the world. Maluku also known as one of the best region for marine tourism in Indonesia; beautiful sandy beaches, variety of marine life, plenty of coral reefs and clear blue water. Maluku has a lot of historical buildings scattered all of the islands. This province has an interesting history related to the colonalization by Portugal and Dutch, and the remains of ancient historical building is still standing to attract tourists. Siwa Lima Museum has Maluku’s best collection of regional and colonial artifacts on display. With the richness of all natural resources, Maluku is highly potential to be the main destination of tourists.
Having said that, the reputation of this region was damaged by religious conflict between Christians and Muslims in January 1999. Many buildings included churches and mosques, along with hundreds of houses, shops, government facilities like banks and schools were burned down due to this conflict. People were forced to flee their homes and take refuge in military headquarters, houses of worship and other facilities.

During the conflict in Maluku, its economic growth faced the downturn. From 1999 to 2000, the GDP of Central Maluku and Southeast Maluku Districts fell by 22 percent and 40 percent (BPS, 2012), an unbelievable bad condition for the region. As the result of this horrible event, citizen of Maluku took decades of efforts to build their hometown from the beginning. But, it was in the past, now Maluku is moving forward and future oriented. Peace has been found and everyone is trying to rebuild their hometown, for all sake.

One prove of this new positive way of thinking, Maluku chose to host an international marine event called "Sail Banda 2010". In this event, hundreds of yachts from around the world setting sail from Darwin, Australia, on July 24, 2010. Sail Banda is expected to open the world community’s eyes not only to the security prevailing in the province but also to its economic and cultural potentials. The conflict did have a terrible impact on the economic, investment, tourism, and infrastructure facilities in the “province of one thousand islands”. But the local government started to rebuild Maluku and make every possible effort to restore the local people’s hospitable and peace loving image. For the Maluku provincial government, Sail Banda will be an event to promote the province’s natural resources, traditional culture and arts, as well as its tourist potentials to both domestic and foreign investors (kompas.com).

From the information provided previously, it is obviously that Maluku has the opportunity to develop its tourism sector to become the next destination, national and international. Unfortunately, the opportunity was obstructed by the damage of the conflict. For the reason, writer is willing to discuss the tourism industry in Maluku, how to survive the conflict.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Nature of Conflict
Cited UPSAM (2009), as what written in Introduction of Conflict Analysis, conflict is known as a natural event and occurred as long as the existence of human being; side by side with human history and continues in every parts of the world. Conflict dates from the beginning of human history and will probably never end (Ho-Won, 2008). Rubbin and Pruitt (1994) define that this concept is found in almost every aspect in the way human interact with others. The most dangerous type of conflict is Civil War, which consists of coercive and violent acts between adversaries (Ho-Won, 2008).

There are different definitions of conflict. It is important to understand that conflict does not happen overnight and it has negative and positive spheres. According to a Resource Pack titled Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding, conflict is an ambiguous concept that takes on different meanings for different groups and different contexts (Africa Peace Forum, 2004).

Conflict could rise between two or more parties who have different interest and are fighting for it, occurred in the same time. These instances consist of a conflict between two or more sides, a situation in which each party aspires to an outcome that the other is apparently unwilling to provide (Rubin & Pruitt, 1994). Another definition of conflict comes from Webster (1983) who indicated that conflict represents a real disagreement between two or more parties: The term conflict originally meant a combat, competition or contest.
According to Rumell (1977), there are three perspectives dominate theories and explanations of conflict. Hereby is the definition of each perspective:

The first perspective is psychological. The explanation for conflict, its source or causes, lies in our nature, psychological processes, or attributes. Thus we create conflict because we are aggressive, frustrated, insecure, altruistic, or selfish; because of our status or poverty; because of our learning, ignorance, or cultural learning; because of our misperception, misunderstanding, or stereotypes; because of ignorance.

The second perspective is sociological. We create conflict because of the social situation, the context within which we find ourselves. Here conflict is understood as an aspect of cooperation and differentiation, as a result of non segmented pressures, overpopulation, or the lack of external threats. It is due to social distance, social class, contact, relative power, or inequality; to inconsistent values or norms.

The third perspective is philosophical: conflict is seen as the incessant and natural clash of opposites, determined and inevitable. The normative implications of conflict can be viewed from this perspective, especially regarding what is individually just.

The other concept about nature of conflict as cited in UPSAM (2009), the first impression of conflict is always negative and people may look at it as a negative phenomenon. However, conflict has different reasons to arise: “Conflict occurs when two or more parties believe that their interests are incompatible, express hostile attitudes or take action that damages other parties' ability to pursue their interests” (Africa Peace Forum, 2004).

Dealing with conflict, there are three possible strategies that can be used by the parties who experienced it (Rubin & Pruitt: 1994):
The first strategy is contending, which means trying to impose one's preferred solution on the other party. The second strategy is yielding, which means lowering one's own aspirations and settling for less than one would have liked. The third strategy is problem-solving, which means pursuing an alternative that satisfies the aspirations of both sides.

There are different theories about the causes of conflict; each theory has goals and suggestions for intervention (Fisher: 2000). The first one is the Community Relation Theory. Based on this theory, conflict occurred caused by mistrust and the reasons behind conflict according to this theory are mistrust and aggression between parties within a community. The second theory is the Principled Negotiation. The reasons behind this type of conflict is the "zero-sum" view between parties. The third one is the Human Needs Theory. Conflict happens because of the lack of achievement of basic human need. Identity Theory is the fourth theory, it happens because of feelings of threatened identity. The fifth theory is Intercultural Miscommunication. It says that conflict occurs due to the incompatibilities between different parties that may resulted from different cultural background. Conflict Transformation Theory is the last one. Reasons for conflict caused by existing problems of inequality and injustice.
Tourism Industry

Several authors’ defined tourism is various aspects. Urry (1990) looked at tourism as a “leisure activity, a distinctive contrast with work”. Urry believed that people chose their destination out of anticipation, especially, through daydreaming and fantasy. Timothy Mitchell defined tourism as “an industry of consumption of experiences”, (2002). The World Tourism Organization (WTO) is the lead agency responsible for the development of standardized tourism definitions. This agency states that tourism is defined by “the set of activities of a person traveling to a place outside his or her usual environment for at least one night, but less than a year, and whose main purpose of travel is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited”.

According to Robertson et al. (2006), “tourism is one of the driving forces of economic development. It could happen in either industrialized, less-developed and also developing countries. Travel and tourism industry has a strong contribution to the growth of economic, creations of jobs, both for skilled and semi-skilled, greater export revenues, foreign investment and economic and social stability”. This industry considered to be one of the world’s largest industry in terms of providing job opportunities. Being a labor intensive industry, travel and tourism provide wide ranges of job opportunities for most job seekers, especially for the untrained and uncertified one. The opportunities help to break the cycle of poverty by helping many labor force that have the difficulty in finding job in the more formal sector. Scope of this industry may vary across wide range of industries.

Tourism is sometimes spoken of in terms of being an industry itself. Tourism however, is not a single industry in the traditional sense. Tourism contains a variety of products and services. From an economic point of view, an industry is described as being a group of firms, selling the same product, in terms of their substitutability stated as the cross-elasticity of demand. By that definition, it is quite clear that the focus of industry includes: individual business grouped together; revenue received by the economic units; and, the production and sale of a common product (in terms of substitutability) (Davidson, 1998).

Tourism does not comprise a single type of business, nor does it lend itself to the grouping together of similar business.

Likerish and Jenkins (1997) in Breno and Bricker (2001), suggest that tourism comprises three kinds of business or trades: (1) the primary trades, which are most commonly associated with tourism (e.g., transport, tour companies, travel agencies, accommodations, catering facilities and attractions); (2) the secondary trades that help support tourism, though are not exclusive to tourism (e.g., retail shopping, banks and insurance, entertainment and leisure activities, personal services); (3) the tertiary trades, which provide the basic infrastructure and support for tourism (e.g., public sector services, food and fuel, manufacturing). The inherent challenges accompanying the variable boundaries of what comprises the tourism industry are further exacerbated when the nature of the tourism ‘product’ is also considered.

DISCUSSION

Tourism in Maluku before conflict

Maluku, as one of the province in eastern part of Indonesia benefit itself, gifted with such a natural resources. Ambon city has vital and strategic position and role as the capital for the Province of Maluku. Considering the importance and geographically strategic position, has points of comparative superiority from the aspects of development, economic growth, availability of human resources and total population than in the Province of Maluku.
In synergy with the growth, the tourism business that include the providence of tourism services such as accommodations (hotels, lodgings), entertainment center, recreation places, restaurants, dinners, supported by the familiarity of the people of Ambon then the tourism business should be well developed. None might predict that the City of Ambon with her famous “Ambon Manise” term would experience humanity tragedy at the year of 1999 through 2002. All aspects of economy, including the tourism sector had fell down. Hotels, lodgings, recreation points, no longer operating, and a larger part of social activities were crippled and the people lived in fear.

Cause of conflict in Maluku

Being born and spend the childhood and teen in Ambon, the writer eager to give his opinion that the conflict in Maluku was caused by the infiltration of extra-destructive power from outside of Maluku. This extra-destructive power have incorporated the elements of political and economic powers, involving the people at the government as well as the civilians, to purposely and systematically turn the city of Maluku into the area of conflict for their own interest.

Still in writer opinion, the local community was intentionally have been used for the benefit and interest of several people, or parties that have their own interest in the area known for its peacefully condition were destructed. Until nowadays, a clear reason behind this horrible conflict yet to be conclusive nor the party that took the responsibility for it come forward.

The effect of conflict

The conflict that have been happening in Maluku up until now have destroyed all aspects of life, on the physical and also psychological level, of the government and society. The conflict have been positioning almost anyone as perpetrators, witness, and also the victims themselves. The conflict have made the City of Ambon and Maluku province in general, degraded in every aspects of qualities and quantities. The material and immaterial loss are incalculable, including the loss of human resources because of the death toll or moving to another place. The conflict is a very traumatic, tragic experience for this generation.

The conflict has been widely spread and happening on a very long time, involving many parties, so it have been very affecting to all aspects of life. During the conflict, the people have suffered crises and loss of clothing, food, shelter, education, health, security. These have happened because the conflict was very violent and have been very destructive to almost all infrastructures and knocking down various public support systems such as transportation, communication, markets, government agencies, and such.

On the economy aspect, the conflict have caused the market to collapse, the transportation systems, the distributions of goods, the exchange of services, the cash flow, and other economics activities. Productive businesses on the middle to bottom level, also the upper level were ruined as well, so the people have lost their source of income. On the social aspect, the people have been experiencing segmented area of neighborhood where people living determine by their religion. This have caused the social relation that had once been a harmonious one in the culture of Maluku to become distantly apart. This segregation is also causing the communication between the people to clog-down and influent. This in effect have also become the cause of prejudice and mistrust among one community to the other, which easily inflammable to gossips. On the politics, this conflict have caused the turning of orientation, composition, and configuration of political sides. The emergence of religion-based political parties have become a popular choice for the public amongst the religion euphoric and fanatic atmosphere.
How tourism business improve social and economic condition

The growth of tourism business is highly determined by various factors such as security and order of the area. The more secure and orderly an area, supported by the structure and infrastructure of tourism such as hotels, restaurants, dinners and tourism events, then the more attracted the tourists to visit and of course this would have a positive impact to the image of the City of Ambon in the eyes of the world.

Hotel industry as one of the indicators to gauge the tourism business, the more number of hotels in one area and the rise of occupancy rates would provide the view that the tourism business is growing. Certainly important, the role of tourism business to the image of Maluku to the world. Because if tourism sector in this city is more promoted and announced to the world, by itself the trust and credibility will come back. So, it is definitely very important. If tourism business in this province is going well, so will the other aspect such as social and economic condition. For example it might decrease the number of unemployment, increase the activity level of the local community, increase the rate of income/earnings of the community and the circle of the money will increase, because the guests and tourists from outside will visit Maluku.

Recovery program for Ambon (Maluku)

Within the promotions activities, the local government should cooperate with tourism services, in this case tours and travels agency to increase the promotions activities; locally, nationally and internationally. This could influence and attract the number of foreign tourists to visit Maluku. Writer should inform that in the year 2012, the City of Ambon itself had been visited by 3 cruise-ships with foreign tourists, Cruise-ship Voyages Discovery from USA, Spirit Adventure from Canada and Amadea from Germany, in total for sure brought thousands of travellers.

Beside that cruise ship visitation, programs that had been done by the people and government of Maluku in the effort to recover the tourism business were the Gathering of Tourism Business such as PHRI, ASITA, GAWISTRI, etc. Other program is by socializing on the importance of keeping the order and security in society as one of preconditions to rebuild Ambon, as the capital of Maluku. The Program of the socialization was called SAPTA PESONA.

In synergy with the recovery of the aspects of life in Maluku, such as economy and social-culture, then the implementation of the 5 programs from the Mayor and Vice Mayor of the year 2011-2016 have stated that the vision of tourism for Ambon was outlined in the RENSTRA of Tourism, Cultural, Youth and Sport Board of the City of Ambon as “AMBON: the CITY of TOURISM 2016”.

To realize that, then things which need more attention are; (1) raising, developing and promoting the objects of tourism from their environmental, cultural, historical and natural beauty aspects as they have been one source of revenues to get from, (2) encouraging the participation of the society in general in planning and implementing the building of tourism and cultural business, and preservation of tourism objects, (3) developing tourism industry as a medium for society empowerment as well as opportunities for businesses and work employment (4) developing tourism objects by providing support structure and infrastructure that provide convenience affect to the tourist.

Effort from government, such as reconciliation, socialization to the people and community. More national or international event that take place in Maluku, so people from outside will feel safe again to visit Maluku and of course, it will get the credibility as a safe place to visited. As Maluku become a house guests of some of national and international
events, that effectively increase the number of tourists to come and visit Maluku. Government and community working together to maintain the stability and peace in Maluku, so the tourists will not afraid about their safety.

**Figure 1**

Tourists Arrival Report in Ambon (Maluku)

Source: Official Tourism Board of Ambon

The fluctuation number of tourists come to Ambon is highly related to the conflict, from the interview with government workers in tourism field, the writer is gathered some information. Before the conflict erupted in 1999, Ambon is quite popular in the eyes of the world, there was a lot of foreign tourists especially from Germany, Dutch, and Australia which is very attracted to Ambon tourism. Unfortunately, because of the conflict, the situation and condition become unpredictable and dangerous not only for the tourists, but also for the local community itself.

In 1999-2000, although there is no official record of it, there are no tourists that intentionally visited Ambon for vacation purpose, the conflict still in a bad condition, but there was some tourists that visited Ambon to do research related to the conflict, and also volunteer from foreign humanity organization. The condition was remain relative the same in 2001-2002. In February 2002, as one of government efforts to end the conflict, there are MALINO II agreement that signed in order to create peacefulness in Ambon and Maluku.

From 2003-2005, shows some growth, because the condition was better, although there still a minor disturbance. But in 2006, the numbers was drastically decreasing for some reason that cannot be explained clearly. The only explanation writer can gave, there are some major issues that have a great impact and threatened the peacefulness in Ambon that create some warnings from another country to visited Ambon at that time.
In 2007, the condition was begin to be able to restrained, so there was a quite significant increasing number. The serious efforts from local and central government, and also from the community itself, making an improvement. And it begin to really shown in 2009-2010, there was a great increasing number as a result from government efforts to create national and international event held in Ambon, such as World Peace Gong Monument that take place in Ambon, and International Marine Event “SAIL BANDA”. These kind of events really help Ambon to repair its Image in the eyes of the world and contributing to attract tourists to visited Ambon, and improve Maluku tourism in general.

CONCLUSION

We could noticed how deep the conflict impacting tourism business in Maluku. Tourism business was considered dead at that time, when conflict in the highest intensity in 1999-2002. When the conflict begin to subsided, the tourism business was also begin to rise again. Despite the negative impact of the conflict, in the recovery efforts from the government and community, the tourism business now on is highly develop.

As a part of tourism business, looking the development of hotel industry in Maluku is much the same. In a recovery stage, the development of hotel industry is highly increasing. Investors are convinced that hotel business in city of Ambon is quite potential. It is proved by a significant increasing number of hotel in Ambon now, the barometer of development in Maluku, including several named star-hotels. The conflict is definately impacting many aspects of life including the condition of his business was critical because of the conflict. But, for now the condition is so much better than before, tourism industry is improved.

Maluku is successful to recover and manage their tourism business after conflict. After very bad experience at the conflict, tourism business in Maluku begin to shows improvement. Although image of Ambon had stained because of the conflict, the capital of Maluku province also got new image as a city that manage to survive and rise again after conflict, as shown in the World Peace Gong. Tourism business in Maluku have a great potential and bright future. In order to fulfilled the goals, community have to be taught how to manage tourism assets, and developing culture in a way to attract, welcoming, and serve the tourists.

REFERENCES


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