

# Moderation of Fatwa: Worship During the Covid 19 Pandemic in Maqasid Shariah Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

Coronavirus disease, also known as Covid-19, is a virus that originates from animals and can spread through humans and cause respiratory infections. The very fast spread of Covid-19 has made the government resolutely minimize its efforts to disperse the crowd so that close contact does not occur which creates a potential for the spread of the Covid-19 virus. That is one of the government's decisions regarding the recommendation to close mosques, so that it is urged for the public to pray at home. The focus of this research is to examine fatwas from the Council of Indonesian Ulama, LBM PWNU and Muhammadiyah regarding worship at home and to examine how the perspective of maqasid shariah during the pandemic so that hifz din and hifz nafs can be implemented properly and correctly without harming the surrounding environment. Because Islam is a religion that is "sholih li kulli zaman wa makan". Before the corona virus pandemic occurred, in carrying out congregational prayer services, Muslims in Indonesia were already accustomed to rectifying, closing the rows and congregating at home. However, with the Covid-19 pandemic in order to keep hifd nafsh healthy and hifdz din as it should be, it is necessary to maintain distance when praying, use masks and worship at home, in order to break the chain of Covid spread. -19. This fatwa indicates that Islamic law is moderate and can adapt to situations and conditions based on the prevailing ijthihad principles, such as worship during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** *moderation of the fatwas of worship, Covid-19 pandemic, maqasid shariah*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

A mosque is a place established for worshipping Allah such as prayer, dzikir, reading the Koran, and other acts of worship [1]. However, due to the coronavirus pandemic, all activities in places of worship cannot be carried out as usual, including mosques [2]. Coronavirus disease or abbreviated as Covid-19 is a virus that originates from animals [3] and can spread through humans [4] and can cause respiratory infections [5].

According to an explanation from the World Health Organization (WHO), the spread of Covid-19 is direct and indirect (through contaminated objects or surfaces), or close contact with infected people through nose and mouth fluids. This includes saliva, respiratory secretions, or droplets that are expelled from the mouth or nose when an infected person is coughing, sneezing, or talking.

People who are in close contact (within less than one meter) with an infected person can catch Covid-19 when droplets of the infection accidentally enter their mouth or nose.

So that when viewed from the way the virus spreads, the government strictly minimizes the dispersal of the crowd so that close contact does not occur which creates a potential for the spread of the Covid-19 virus. That is one of the government's decisions regarding the recommendation to close mosques so that it is urged for the public to pray at home.

In accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 9 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Large-Scale Social Restrictions in the Context of the Acceleration of Handling Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19), namely all houses of worship must be closed to the public [6].

The first case of the Covid-19 virus infection in Indonesia started with a mother and child living in Depok. They were exposed to the Covid-19 virus after close contact with Japanese citizens during a dance held at a club in Jakarta on February 14. The dance event was attended by approximately 50 people from various nationalities. So that from the beginning of the first case, the government had to track down who was at the event.

Until now, positive cases in Indonesia are increasing day by day. There were recorded 225030 positive cases of Covid-19 virus infection in Indonesia. The government also continues to strive to suppress this positive number with various efforts such as social distancing, physical distancing, wearing masks when traveling, washing hands frequently, leaving the house only if you have urgent interests to avoid crowds.

The government in suppressing the positive number of Covid-19 establishes Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) which have been stipulated in the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 21 of 2020 concerning Large-Scale Social Restrictions in the Context of Accelerating Handling of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19).

The criteria for the regions where the PSBB applies are contained in Article 3 of the Republic of Indonesia Government Regulation Number 21 of 2020, namely: a. the number of cases and / or the number of deaths due to disease increases and spreads significantly and rapidly to several regions; and b. there is an epidemiological link with similar incidents in other regions or countries [7].

If the PSBB is determined in a designated area, Article 4 of the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 21 of 2020, at least the restrictions include: a. school and work vacations; b. restrictions on religious activities; and / or; c. restrictions on activities in public places or facilities [7].

DKI Jakarta implemented the PSBB for the first time, namely on April 10, 2020 which continued to be extended until July 2, 2020, which was a transition period to the new normal. However, DKI Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan stated that the decision to re-implement the PSBB was due to three indicators, namely the death rate, the availability of isolation beds, and the special ICU for Covid-19, and the rate of positive cases in DKI Jakarta. The PSBB is divided into three, namely PSBB Volume 1, Transitional PSBB, and PSBB Volume 2.

Among the regulations, one of which is the closure of places of worship. In PSBB Volume one (the first time) all houses of worship in Jakarta had to be closed. This is following the Regulation of the

Minister of Health Article 13 Paragraph 1 letter b, namely the regulation signed by Minister of Health Terawan Agus Putranto on April 3, 2020 which contains restrictions on religious activities. In the PSBB Transition, places of worship are opened with 50% capacity and follow health protocols and in PSBB Volume 2 it is also open with 50% capacity and the difference from the previous stage is that it is only for places of worship in residential areas used by local residents.

## **2. ULAMA'S FATWA REGARDING WORSHIP AT HOME DURING THE PANDEMIC**

### ***2.1. Fatwa of the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) Regarding the Implementation of Worship during the Covid-19 Pandemic***

In the legal provisions in the Fatwa of the Council of Indonesian Ulama No. 14 of 2020 concerning the implementation of Worship in a situation where the Covid-19 outbreak occurs where one of the main objectives of religion is that everyone is obliged to make efforts to maintain health and stay away from anything that can cause exposure to disease. So, people who have been exposed to the Covid-19 virus are required to protect and isolate themselves so as not to transmit it to others. For people who are healthy and are not yet known to be exposed to Covid-19, they must pay attention to several things if there is a condition of uncontrolled Covid-19 spread in a life-threatening area. Muslims are not allowed to carry out Friday prayers and replace them with midday prayers, as well as all activities in other mosques such as the five daily prayers, Eid prayers, Eid al-Fitr, and so on where the potential for crowds should not be held. However, if the conditions for the spread of Covid-19 can be controlled, all activities carried out at the mosque can be carried out as usual [8].

In the explanation of the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, "From the Prophet, he actually said: "If you hear of a plague in an area, then don't enter it. But if there is an epidemic where you are, then don't leave that place. " (Narrated by al-Bukhari). After that, the hadith says, "Rasulullah SAW said: Do not mix (camel) that is sick into (camel) that is healthy .." (HR Muslim). From several hadiths that are in accordance with the fatwa decisions issued by the MUI. So that with this decision, the pandemic of Covid-19 virus infection can be resolved quickly so that activities can be carried out as before.

### ***2.2. LBM PWN***

Bahtsul Masail Institute (LBM) East Java Regional Management of Nahdlatul Ulama (PWN) issued a Covid-19 decision that contained

six points after discussion. *First*, appeal to the public to remain calm and not be too worried about the current situation by being proportional in facing Covid-19 which is in accordance with the principles of Ahlusunah wal Jama'ah. *Second*, LBM PWNU invites to be more optimistic in facing this situation, and with conditions like this, it should be able to get closer to Allah and also be used as a golden opportunity to increase faith and devotion to Allah SWT. *Third*, the LMB encourages the government to make correct decisions and also calls on the public to obey all regulations issued by the government. *Fourth*, discusses the restrictions on prayer and religious activities in mosques. For areas that are considered safe, it is advisable to pray at the mosque, but if it is not safe then it is haram to pray at the mosque. *Fifth*, discussing the handshake. Here LBM still recommends but this does not apply to people who have been exposed to Covid-19. And at the *sixth* point, which is for covering the bodies or *tajhiz* of Covid-19 patients, they must comply with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).

Furthermore, the PBNU issued a Circular (SE) which first stated, "To all Regional Administrators, Branch Managers, Branch Representative MAJilis Administrators, Rating and Rating Administrators, as well as Autonomous Institutions and Bodies under the auspices of the Nahdlatul Ulama and all Nahdlatul Ulama residents and congregations. Islam, in general, should always carry out obligatory worship and improve *amaliyah*, in the form of *taqorrub* to Allah SWT by increasing the practice of the *sunnah*, such as *shodaqoh*, reading the Qur'an, *majahaddah*, praying prayers for the ancestors, as well as various *amaliyah* and other acts of worship, including praying. *tarawih* during the month of Ramadan and Eid prayers during the Covid-19 pandemic at home or according to the protocol for preventing the spread of Covid-29 set by the Central Government and the respective Regional Governments." So from this circular letter, PBNU recommends carrying out *tarawih* prayers and Eid prayers in their respective homes.

### 2.3. Muhammadiyah

Likewise, Muhammadiyah issued an announcement regarding the implementation of Friday prayers and *fardhu* in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. *First*, *Tarawih* prayers are carried out in their homes. *Second*, Ramadan fasting is still practiced except for people who are sick and whose immune conditions have decreased. That person still has to change his fast according to the Shari'a. *Third*, to maintain immunity, Ramadan fasting can be abandoned by health workers on duty. Health workers can change their fast according to the guidelines in Sharia. *Fourth*, Eid al-Fitr prayer is the *sunnah* of *muakadah* and is a very important religious message. However, if at the beginning of Shawwal 1441 H, the spread of Covid-19 has not

brought a decline, Eid prayer and all its sequences do not need to be held. *Fifth*, however, if based on the provisions of the authorities that Covid-19 has subsided and the concentration of many people can be done, Eid al-Fitr prayers and their series can be carried out while still paying attention to the instructions and provisions issued by the authorities regarding this matter. The Eid al-Fitr prayers can be carried out in each house during the Covid-19 emergency.

### 3. APPLICATION OF MAQASID SHARIAH DURING THE PANDEMIC

Era Maqasid al-shari'ah consists of two words, namely *maqasid* and *shari'ah*. The word *maqasid* is a form of *jama'* from *maqad* which means purpose or purpose, while *shari'ah* literally means the path leading to a water source. In terminology, *shari'ah* is the laws of Allah which are intended for humans which contain wisdom and prosperity in life in this world and the hereafter.[9] So, *maqasid shari'ah* are the goals to be achieved from a legal stipulation. Jasser Audah defines *maqasid shariah* as the benefit of law enforcement based on *shari'* explanations or according to *mujtahid* suspicions[10]. Meanwhile, according to Fathi al-Daraini, he said that the laws were not made for the law itself, but were made for another purpose, namely the benefit.[11]

Allah requires that the rules in Islam are not without cause and purpose, precisely with the enactment of this *maqasid shari'ah*, it aims to benefit and avoid the degeneracy that exists in the world and the hereafter. Thus individual rights, as well as community rights on the one hand and the other are guaranteed. This benefit can be realized through the five main elements known as *al-Ushul al-Khamsah*, namely protection of faith, life, intellect, progeny, and property (*hifz ad-din, hifz al-nafs, hifz al-aql, hifz al-nasl and hifz al-mal*)[11]. If this does not materialize, it will cause damage in this world and the hereafter.

The fifth order of *al-Ushul al-khamsah* is *ijtihadi* not *naqli*, meaning that it is compiled based on the understanding of the scholars of the texts taken in the *istiqra'* way. The scholars of *ushul fikih* have never agreed on this fifth order of *al-Ushul al-khamsah*, for example in stringing these five *al-Ushul al-khamsah*, Imam Syathibi sometimes prioritizes *aql* than *nasl*, sometimes *nasl* first then *aql* and sometimes *nasl* then *mal* and lastly *aql*. However, one thing that should be noted is that in any arrangement Imam Syathibi always begins with *al-din* and *al-nafs* first. Meanwhile, according to Imam al-Ghazali the order is: *al-din* (faith), *al-nafs* (life), *al-aql* (intellect), *al-nasl* (progeny), and *al-mal* (property). However, the order put forward by al-Ghazali is the sequence most held by the next *fiqh* and *ushul fiqh* scholars. The difference in the

order above, shows that everything is valid because it is ijtihadi.[12] The translation of al-Ushul al-khamsah is as follows:

### **3.1. Protection of faith (*hifz al-din*)**

*Hifz al-din*, comes from a combination of two Arabic words, namely "*Hifz*" which means to guard, and "*al-Din*" which means Religion. Protection of faith is the first order and must come first. Because, religion is a collection of faith, worship, and muamalah that Allah SWT teaches. to regulate the human relationship with Allah SWT and the relationship between each other. By maintaining religion, it is included in maintaining harmony between fellow nations and countries.

Islam highly upholds the value of the integrity of the Ummah by fostering a high sense of nationalism towards religion and nation, so that matters that can affect the integrity of Islam are very much considered. The relationship between protecting religion and the state is inseparable.

### **3.2. Protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*)**

In Islamic syari'at, it is very important to maintain the right to live and also avoid everything that will harm the soul (life) of humans. the soul in which there is a spirit that is the real control of all the physical and mental movements of humans. This underlies how necessary and important it is to keep the soul healthy, holy, and functional properly.

### **3.3. Protection of intellect (*hifz al-aql*)**

Intellect is a blessing that Allah SWT gives to humans as a differentiator from other creatures of Allah SWT. By maintaining good intellect, which is the center of thinking, then humans can think positively and decide things correctly and carefully. So that there is no harm that will interrupt him or others.

### **3.4. Protection of progeny (*hifz al-nasl*)**

Preservation of progeny in Islam, namely through a legal marriage Because if there is adultery, there is a concern that it will mix up lines and affect the next offspring. Because of good descent, that is, they come from a good family too. Meanwhile, offspring who are not good (damaged) come from families that are not right (adultery).

### **3.5. Protection of property (*hifz al-mal*)**

Property is a human need to continue to run and survive. Safeguarding property, namely by obtaining it in a way that is lawful and correct in accordance with the Islamic law, the Shari'at allows doing muamalah among humans by buying and selling, renting, etc. to regulate how to use assets. To protect it, it is forbidden and punished for

stealing. It is forbidden to cheat and betray. Likewise, others to prevent condemnation and harm to oneself and others.

According to Imam Syatibi there are three levels in realizing and maintaining these five main elements, including: first, *Maqashid al-daruriyat* is the highest level of maqasid shari'ah. This is what determines the benefit of the hereafter. Imam Syatibi grouped these five elements (*al-Ushul al-Khamsah*) into *daruriyyat*. Second, *Maqasid al-hajiyat* or what is called a secondary need is a need to achieve benefit but, if it is not worked on, it will not neglect the totality of the benefit, so it only creates difficulties. Third, *Maqasid al-Tahsiniyat* or tertiary needs are good needs which, if not pursued, will not result in a loss of benefit or experience difficulties.[13]

When the world is being shocked by the existence of non-natural phenomena that have occurred since 2019. Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) or what we better know as the coronavirus, corona, or known as covid-19 is an infectious disease from an invisible virus. Most of those infected with this virus will experience mild to moderate symptoms. As a result of the current pandemic, it has created various polemics that have troubled the public. Both economic, social, political, and religious issues. The polemic regarding the closure of places of worship, for example, has resulted in various pros and cons reactions from among the community. People who are pro think this is an effort to stop the spread of the coronavirus, which is increasing day by day. As for the people who oppose this state that protection of faith or upholding religion (*hifz din*) is more important, rather than protection of life (*hifz nafs*).

What is the right solution in responding to this polemic? So as not to create fear and increase anxiety in the community? For those who feel that their bodies are healthy, both physically and spiritually, are encouraged to keep upholding the pillar of religion, get closer to Allah SWT with sincere worship and surrender to Him. But still have to comply with applicable health protocols. So that *hifz din* and *hifz nafs* can be implemented properly and correctly without harming the surrounding environment.

As for those who are sick, afraid and so on, they also still have to uphold religious orders. By worshiping even at home. While praying that the coronavirus will be immediately lifted by Allah SWT. besides, those who continue to worship at the mosque must also be guarded. Respect for individual decisions must also be exercised. This is a form of social norms in society.

The Council on Indonesian Ulama which is an independent institution that accommodates Islamic scholars and also assists the government in doing

things that concern the benefit of the Islamic ummah, in this case, the MUI issued fatwa Number 31 of 2020 regarding the implementation of Friday Prayers and prayers. Maktubah in the situation of the Covid-19 outbreak. This step is not merely without reason. The coronavirus which is currently spreading to almost all over the world is very dangerous. MUI is taking steps to prevent and break the chain of this coronavirus, by issuing fatwa number 31 of 2020. This can be linked to the principles of fihiyyah, namely; "Harm must be eliminated". [14]

From this rule, it clearly shows that humans must distance and leave themselves from things that endanger themselves and others. Leaving congregational prayers (in the red zone) is an attempt to distance and eliminate harm to others, especially oneself.

"Refusing *mafsadah* precedence over seeking benefit".[14]

This rule shows that laws which in their application create difficulties and difficulties for the mukallaf, then the sharia relieves them so that the mukallaf is able to carry them out without difficulty and adversity.

"What cannot be completely obtained should not be left entirely"[14]

In this rule, if we can't do the practice completely / completely, then it's okay to just do part of it. In accordance with our capabilities, do not leave the whole. For example, when we cannot pray in congregation in the mosque because of the coronavirus pandemic, it does not mean we cannot do it or we leave it, but we can still congregate with family at home.

"Something when it is difficult, becomes loose, and when it is loose, it becomes difficult"[14]

The meaning of this rule is that when a mukallaf is afflicted with difficulties that make it difficult to do something, then he gets breadth and ease. Like the implementation of Friday prayers during the Covid-19 pandemic, due to difficult conditions and it is feared that the spread of the coronavirus will increase, it is permissible or leeway to carry out at home (for those whose places of residence are included in the red zone).

"Something that is allowed because of an emergency according to the measure of the emergency".[14]

That the relief allowed due to an emergency is only limited to eliminating an emergency, cannot be excessive. When referring to this matter, the pros

and cons of society have generated a lot of controversies. No exception for Muslims. The problem of whether or not to congregate in the mosque reaps the pros and cons. It is undeniable that the law of praying is mandatory and the law of praying in congregation is sunnah. Except, the law of Friday prayers for men. Therefore, it would be wiser if we as Muslims prioritize the safety of our souls or lives (*hifz nafs*), rather than having to pray in congregation in mosques.

What we need to know, Islam is never difficult. Islam always provides facilities for issues that contain an emergency element. In the current pandemic situation, congregational prayer services can be held in their respective homes. Because the factors are not possible and this is a reference for not imposing oneself, especially in areas with high positive cases.

When religion has provided solutions and facilities in dealing with a pandemic like this, then the people and the government should work together well. Providing the best solution in stopping the spread of the coronavirus. Awareness and discipline of all parties are also needed. Because adhering to health protocols established by the government is not enough.

#### **4. MODERATION IN THE FATWA OF WORSHIP DURING THE PANDEMIC**

When the Covid-19 outbreak hit, governments in various countries, including Indonesia, rushed to issue regulations that must be obeyed and obeyed by various parties. Among these regulations are the imposition of social restrictions, the closure of educational places, tourism and places of worship which have also been implemented properly [16]. This effort is made for the common good and safety. In addition, health protocols are also strictly implemented to stop the spread of the corona virus [17].

In supporting the government's efforts to stop the spread of the corona virus, the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) issued fatwa number 14 of 2020 concerning the Conduct of Worship in a Situation of the Covid-19 Outbreak[18] and fatwa number 31 of 2020 concerning Organizing Friday Prayers and Congregation to Prevent Transmission of the COVID-19 Outbreak[19]. This is a new phenomenon that occurs in the 4.0 era. The MUI fatwa is supported by fatwas from community organizations in Indonesia such as NU [20] and Muhammadiyah [21].

The moderation of Islamic law is seen in the fatwas of the MUI, NU and Muhammadiyah which explain the law of worship during the pandemic.

Laws can change according to existing situations and conditions [22]. Among the MUI fatwa are for people who are healthy and not yet known to be exposed to Covid-19, but they live in a life-threatening area, so they are not allowed to perform Friday prayers and replace them with midday prayers, as well as all activities in other mosques, such as the five daily prayers, tarawih prayers and Eid prayers. However, if the conditions for the spread of Covid-19 can be controlled, all activities carried out at the mosque can be carried out as usual [18]. This was supported by the NU and Muhammadiyah fatwa which also advocated congregational prayer, tarawih and Eid at home during the pandemic.

Before the corona virus pandemic occurred, in carrying out congregational prayers, Muslims in Indonesia were already accustomed to straightening and tightening the rows. According to the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad saw "Straighten your shaf-shaf, because the straight line is the perfection of prayer in congregation" (Bukhari no. 690, Muslim no. 433). During this time of the pandemic, the MUI fatwa requires keeping a distance in congregational prayer and the fatwa permits prayer wearing masks [23]. It is known, the corona virus can be transmitted quickly through droplets from the nose or mouth through someone's sneeze or cough. Symptoms of Covid-19 are shortness of breath, cough, runny nose, flu and sore throat. In addition, fever above 37 ° is also susceptible to infection. This is why it is important to wear a mask and keep a distance of about one meter from people who are sick or who experience these symptoms [24].

This fatwa indicates the flexibility of Islamic law, that Islam is not rigid and that the law can change according to existing conditions. By enacting this fatwa, it does not contradict the maqashid sharia, that even though there is a change in the law in congregational prayer, it does not abort the obligation to pray itself. Although Friday prayers are not compulsory, a Muslim is obliged to replace them with midday prayers, congregational prayers in mosques are not recommended, but the obligation to pray does not fail even though prayers are performed at home. Eid al-Fitr prayers, which are usually Sunnah performed together in mosques or fields as Islamic symbols, can still be done even at home. This is in accordance with the purpose of protection of faith (*hifz al-din*). Although it cannot be done in a mosque, the activities of carrying out these prayers can be done at home. The reason for changing the law is because so that the body remains healthy and does not contract the Covid virus, is a way to maintain health in accordance with the goal of protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*).

In the Maqasid Shari'ah there are five principles that must be applied by Muslims to realize benefit in the world and the hereafter. The

five principles are: Hifdz al-din (Protection of faith), hifdz nafs (Protection of life), hifdz 'aql (protection of intellect), hifdz mal (protection of property) and hifdz nasab (protection of progeny). These five principles show that linking legal status with the Maqasid Sharia is very important. So that the shari'a do not conflict with the benefit and desire of humans together.

When viewed from the point of view of Maqasid Shari'ah, the fatwa issued by MUI, NU and Muhammadiyah is in accordance with very good considerations. Safeguarding the soul is more important in today's pandemic. Islam is an easy religion. Having religion is easy, you shouldn't make it difficult and hurt yourself, let alone damage and hurt others. Islam is a religion that is flexible and has the character of *shalih li kulli zaman wa makan*. In understanding this, Islam is able to become a teaching that can be relevant at any time and place [25], especially in the current pandemic.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The spread of the Covid-19 virus has made the government firmly minimize the efforts to disperse the crowd so that close contact does not occur which creates the potential for the spread of the Covid-19 virus. That is one of the government's decisions regarding the recommendation to close mosques, so that it is urged for the public to pray at home. The Indonesian Ulema Council, LBM PWNU and Muhammadiyah also issued fatwas calling for worship to be done at home only. On the basis of the Koran and as-Sunnah.

The existence of MUI, NU and Muhammadiyah fatwas regarding worship during the Covid 19 pandemic, indicates the dynamism and moderation in Islamic law. Islamic law can adjust existing conditions and situations so that it is relevant and acceptable wherever and whenever it is.

In the perspective of maqashid sharia, those who feel that their bodies are healthy, both physically and spiritually, are urged to continue to uphold the pillars of religion, get closer to Allah SWT with sincere worship and surrender to Him. But still have to comply with applicable health protocols. So that Hifdz Din and Hifdz Nafs can be implemented properly and correctly without harming the surrounding environment. As for those who are sick, afraid and so on, they also still have to uphold religious orders. By worshiping even at home. While praying that the corona virus will be immediately lifted by Allah SWT. In addition, those who continue to worship at the mosque must also be guarded. Respect for individual decisions must also be exercised. This is a form of social norms in society.

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