

NIAS LOCAL WISDOM: A CRUCIAL ASSET IN PROMOTING NIAS TOURISM (A View Point)

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Abstract— This paper discusses the richness and uniqueness of Nias local wisdoms as well as their challenges, prospects, and their contributions in promoting and developing Nias tourism leading to local people's prosperity. Of course, the roles of Nias local wisdoms as an integral part of Nias culture as a whole would also be discussed especially Nias oral traditions which have attracted students who are pursuing their postgraduate degrees and moreover foreign researchers who regard Nias culture with its rich and unique local wisdoms including its oral traditions which could contribute to Nias tourism promotion and development leading to the improvement of the local people's prosperity as it was said earlier. Local wisdoms that have been existing for centuries, of course, would also contribute to developing character building and defending the civilization and moreover the sovereignty of a Unity in Diversity State. The discussion tries to explore and present further the uniqueness of the Nias local wisdoms from my "Nias Eyes" perspectives and of course, its contributions in developing and promoting the Unity in Diversity State, Indonesia, toward peaceful and harmonious ASEAN Community. The significant roles and functions of local wisdoms are believable could become strong "adhesive elements" in creating and maintaining the eternal unity and peace, harmony, and sovereignty of the Unity in Diversity State, Indonesia, as golden heritages of Nias ancestors to their descendants, today's Nias millennial generation.

Keywords— richness, uniqueness, civilization, sovereignty, explore, unity, diversity, golden generation, prosperity

I. INTRODUCTION

Local wisdom in the broad sense is the special ideas that become the uniqueness, personality, national identity, which is noble and always exist in the life of the nation and culture in general. It has become a hot topic in various scientific forums today, from local, regional, and national even at global level. This is understandable as our societal, national, and state life can now be said to be undergoing an extraordinary test or impact and disturbing the well-knit social cohesion of our society before the reform era. This can be said as a result of the swift current of globalization that swept our country today. Nevertheless, we should also appreciate the positive efforts that have been and will be done by the government, in which case our national leaders and their ranks always strive to stem the strong current of strong negative with the echoing or re-

establishment of local wisdom nationally - which has existed and lived in the lives of hundreds of ethnic groups in this archipelago over the centuries.

Local wisdom in the framework of Unitary State of the Unitary Republic of Indonesia is recognized strong enough and powerful to stem the swift wave of globalization that tends to have a negative impact so that we can stand upright and sturdy as a country and a sovereign nation and dignified in the eyes of the international world. The notions or meanings of local wisdom could be defined here as follows.

II. THE NOTION OR MEANINGS OF LOCAL WISDOM BASED ON SOME RESEARCHERS AND EXPERTS' OPINIONS

Local wisdom according to Echols and Shadily (1992), consists of two words, 'wisdom' and 'local'. Both suggest that 'local' means 'local' while 'wisdom' or 'wisdom' is the same as policy.¹ In general, Sartini (1986) describes local wisdom as 'wisdom, good value, which has been embedded and followed by members of the community.'²

Local wisdom is a view of life and science and various life strategies that manifest the activities undertaken by local communities in responding to various problems in the fulfillment of their needs. In English, it is often conceived as local policy (local wisdom) or local knowledge as well as local 'local genius' intelligence.

Local wisdom is the truth that has become a tradition in a region or region. Local wisdom has a high value of life and worth to continue to be explored, developed, and preserved as antitesa or socio-cultural changes and modernization. Local wisdom is a product of a culturally precarious past that is constantly used as a grip of life, although local value, but the value contained therein is considered very universal. Local wisdom is formed as a cultural superiority of local communities and geographical conditions in a broad sense.

The wisdom of the environment or the local wisdom of society has existed in the life of the community since ancient times ranging from pre-historic times to the present. Environmental wisdom is a positive human behavior in dealing with nature and the surrounding environment that can be sourced from religious values, customs, ancestors or local

culture, built naturally in a community to adapt to the surrounding environment, this behavior develops a culture in an area and will develop from generation to generation. In general, local culture or regional culture is defined as a culture that develops in an area, whose elements are cultural tribes who live in the area. In the implementation of sustainable development by technological advances make people forget the importance of cultural tradition or society in managing the environment, often local culture is considered something that has been left behind in the present century so that development planning does not involve the community.

In anthropology known as 'local genius'. This term, according to Ayatrohaedi (1986), is a term originally introduced by Wales. The anthropologists have discussed comprehensively the meaning of this 'local genius'.³

While Moendardjito (Ayatrohaedi, 1986: 40-41) said that the potential regional cultural element as local genius because it has been tested its ability to survive until now. Its characteristics are; (a) able to survive outside cultures; (b) has the capacity to accommodate elements of external culture; (c) have the ability to integrate elements of external culture into indigenous cultures; (d) has the ability to control; and (e) able to give direction to cultural development.

Gobyah (<http://www.balipos.co.id>), said that local wisdom is the truth that has been a tradition in an area. Local wisdom is a blend of the sacred values of God's words and various values. Local wisdom existed as a cultural superiority of local communities and geographical conditions in a broad sense. Local wisdom is a past cultural product that should be kept steadily used as a grip of life. Although local value, but the value contained therein is considered very universal.⁴

Geriyah (<http://www.balipos.co.id>), says that conceptually, local wisdom and local excellence are human policies that rely on a traditionally institutionalized philosophy of values, ethics, ways and behaviors. Local wisdom is a value that is considered good and right so that it can survive for a long time and even institutional.⁵

Chuaybamrung (2011:40) defines local wisdom as the knowledge of the provincial gained through their experience and initiation as well as those one that has been passed down from generation to generation. During the transition, the knowledge has been adjusted, adapted, changed and developed. Although something might be lost, new knowledge is acquired in accordance with the era. It can also be said that local wisdom is the use of local wisdom or knowledge to develop local community, resulting in the new set of knowledge.⁶

Customs are basically tested naturally and undoubtedly of good value, since they are repetitive and reinforcing social actions.

The success and sustainability of using local wisdom to promote Nias tourism through creative tourism process depends on these factors; having a strong community base, having fertile natural resources, having capable leader who can create faith, having strong cultural base, having participation from local people in the community, having continuous operation and having innovation and creative tourism activities.

Accordingly, Chuaybamrung (2014:32), states that people in the tourism community, entrepreneurs, local administrative organisations and affiliated organisations should be aware of what and how local wisdom is used to promote tourism through creative tourism process.⁷

Another definition of local wisdom (<http://www.pengertianmenurutparaahli.net/pengertian-kearifan-lokal-secara-umum>), is, all kinds of policies which are based on believable goodness values, implemented or applied continuously its realization within a long span of time (inherited downwards) by a group of people within a neighbourhood or certain region which become their settlement.⁸ Those facts could be realized in various forms like; (a) community's mindsets with good characters; (b) deep impression towards own motherland; (c) form of temperament/ the nature of society is mostly in certain areas that will remain attached and brought when mixed with community groups/ different environments; (in) the philosophy of life of certain people who are ingrained and adhered to despite long life abroad; and (e) a great desire to continue to practice adat/ a tradition that has long been followed for generations.

Sibarani (2012) in <http://www.indonesia student.com/pengertian-kearifan-lokal-menurut-para-ahli-contoh-dan-cirinya/>, states that "local wisdom is a form of indigenous knowledge in society derived from the noble value of the culture of the local community to regulate the social order of society."⁹

III. FEATURES OF LOCAL WISDOM

Based on those descriptions or definitions of the local wisdom above, then it could be stated that the local wisdom has some features, that is; (a) local wisdom is a form of civilization heritage which is practised sustainably from one or early generation to another (young generation); (b) local wisdom is believable could direct or manage various interferences from outside; (c) local wisdom is concerning the values and morale of the locals; (d) local wisdom is unwritten, however, it is still regarded as wealthiness from the legal perspectives; and (e) local wisdom is a form of feature which is united to someone based on his/her origin

IV. SCOPE OF LOCAL WISDOM

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V. NIAS LOCAL WISDOMS AS CRUCIAL ASSET FOR TOURISM PROMOTION

From the various explanations of the definition or limitations of local wisdom and scope as well as characteristics above, the writer can present or describe here about various types of local wisdom of Nias ethnic which are still maintained

or preserved since the early ages of Nias ancestors up to today's millennial generation of Nias descendants today, that is:

- 1) Li Niha (Nias Language)
- 2) Tari Nono Niha (Nias Dances), that is Maena Dance (Nias, Gunungsitoli), Tari Baluse (War Dance, Nisel), Faluaya Dance (Nisel or Southern Nias), Sobagoa Dance (Northern Nias), Hiwö (Dragon Dance, Nias, Gunungsitoli), Mogaele Dance (Guest Welcome Dance, Southern Nias), Moyo Dance (Eagle Dance, Nias, Gunungsitoli), Tari Tuwu (Nias, Gunungsitoli), Tari Fanema'ö Tome (Fasömbata), Tari Feta Batu (Nisel), Tari Fame Afo (Nias, Gunungsitoli)
- 3) Sinunö Nono Niha (Nias Folk Songs)
- 4) Budaya Falöwa (Wedding Ceremonies/Rituals), dengan beberapa tahapan secara runtut, yaitu: 1. Famaigi Niha (hunting for fiancée candidate); 2. Fondroi Laeduru Sitobini (Leaving a hidden engagement ring at fiancée candidate's family informally); 3. Fame Laeduru (Leaving a ring formally at fiancée candidate's family); 4. Fanunu Manu Side-Ide ("Grilling a little chicken"); 5. Fanunu Manu Sebua: Fangötö Bongi, Famözi Aramba, Fame'e ba Famotu Ono Nihalö ("Grilling Big Rooster": Determining Wedding's Due Day, Beating Gong, Making the Bridegroom Crying and Giving her Advices); 6. Mamaola ba Nuwu (Requiring Uncle's Approval); 7. Folohe Ono Mbawi Böwö/Folau Bawi (Delivering Dowry Pigs and others); 8. Falöwa (Wedding Day); 9. Fame Gö (Giving "Food" to the bridegroom); 10. Famuli Nucha ("Returning Clothes"); 11. Fanörö ba Dalifusö (Visiting Bridegroom's Father's Relatives).
- 5) Hendri-Hendri (Traditional Nias Poetry)
- 6) Amaedola (Proverbs)
- 7) Owasa (Cultural Party)
- 8) Fangandrö na Bongi ma Fatua Lö Mörö (Family's Prayer/Ritual Before Going to Bed at night)
- 9) Fangandrö Sihulö Wongi (Family's Ritual/Prayer after Getting up in the morning)
- 10) Legendra (Legend)
- 11) Nias Music Instruments, that is: Göndra, Aramba, Faritia, Köroco, Doli-Doli, Lagia, Duri Mbe'we, Gita
- 12) Sinunö Gosali (Hymne/Praise Songs)
- 13) Buku Zinunö (Hymne's Book of Protestant) and Laudate (Hymn's Book of Catholic)
- 14) Molaza (Managing and Cultivating Paddy Field)
- 15) Mohili (Feast/Horticulture)
- 16) Farago, Favoli, Fasile, Fahombo (Nias Sports: Takraw, Volleyball, Silat, Stone Jumping)
- 17) Famemörö Ono Sawuyu (Making a Baby Fall Asleep)
- 18) Famanö-manö (Telling a Story)

- 19) Fadahö-Dahö (Asking a Gambit)
- 20) Manö-Manö (Nias Folklore)
- 21) Mamadou Manu (Rooster's Fighting)
- 22) Fame'e Töi Nono (Giving new born baby's name)
- 23) And many more...

All of those Nias Local Wisdoms above are very potential to attract domestic and various foreign-countries tourists that, of course, could actually contribute or boost local people's earning potentials or income. However, it is not easy for the local people to achieve this if the Local (Regencies/City) Governments do not pay a serious attention to maximize the potentials of all those local wisdoms above.

VI. CHALLENGES OF NIAS LOCAL WISDOMS

After conducting informal observations on the existence of Nias local wisdoms, for two years between 2010 and 2011, during my short assignment as a Head of Tourism, Culture, Youth, and Sports Service for the City Government of Gunungsitoli, in Nias Islands, I could then say that the real challenges in maximizing the benefits or contributions of Nias local wisdoms for the benefits of the local people, in Nias Islands these days, are as follows; (a) lack of local infrastructure facilities that support local wisdoms' development; (b) lack of national or foreign investors who invest for tourism development; (c) lack of knowledge about local wisdom and its benefits economically; (d) lack of attention and budget allocated for maintaining/preserving and promoting local wisdoms; (e) lack of political will in supporting the existence and sustainability of local wisdoms financially; and (f) lack of local high calibre tourism human resources and stakeholders who really devote or dedicate their times or else even 'merger' themselves in fast-tracking and maximizing the potential of those local wisdoms for the sake of the local people's prosperity.

VII. SOLUTIONS FOR MAXIMIZING THE POTENTIAL OF NIAS LOCAL WISDOM FOR LOCAL PEOPLE'S PROSPERITY

In order to maximize the potential of Nias local wisdoms for local people's prosperity, some solutions could be offered to make them could really beneficial or could bring prosperity to the local people are by responding positively and seriously those six weaknesses above, they are by; (a) fast-tracking the construction of local infrastructure facilities that support local wisdoms' development; (b) approaching and inviting national or foreign investors to invest in tourism development; (c) educating and enriching knowledge of local people about how crucial the local wisdom and its benefits economically; (d) paying a serious attention and allocating adequate budget for maintaining/preserving and promoting local wisdoms through tourism sector; (e) enhancing political will of the local government in supporting the existence and sustainability of local wisdoms financially; and (f) creating local high calibre tourism human resources and stakeholders who really devote or dedicate their ideas and times or else even 'merger' or diffuse themselves in fast-tracking and maximizing the potential of

those local wisdoms for the sake of the local people's prosperity.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Local wisdom can be summed up as the personality, cultural identity of the community like values, norms, ethics, beliefs, customs and special rules that have seen its ability to survive continuously. Local wisdom is principally good and is a cultural advantage of the local community and is related to the widespread geographical conditions. Due to the nature of such local wisdom, it will reflect the cultural condition of the Unity in Diversity Archipelago. If those Nias local wisdoms above could be fully maximized, I strongly believe that those rich local wisdoms of Nias could bring prosperity to Nias people in the Islands of Nias at least like "the Second Bali in the Western Part of Indonesia". Nias has got the potential to be the main tourist destination or at least to be "Next Bali of Indonesia". Nevertheless, the roles and involvement of local, provincial, and national governments should be strongly encouraged if Nias is expected to be The Second Bali of Indonesia in the future.

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