

Development of Religious Tourism Papan Tinggi Cemetery in Barus, Tapanuli Tengah District

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the extent of the development of religious tourism at the Papan Tinggi Cemetery in Barus, Central Tapanuli, North Sumatra, as well as the role of the local government and the factors that contribute to the weaknesses and shortcomings of the development of religious tourism at the Papan Tinggi Cemetery in Barus, Central Tapanuli. The research approach used is qualitative research, which is characterized by naturalistic inquiry with data collection techniques in the form of triangulation, namely a combination of observation, interviews, and documentation, aimed at understanding meaning, uniqueness, and discovering hypotheses in a holistic manner. The research findings indicate that the lack of, or very minimal, government involvement in the development of the religious tourism site of Papan Tinggi Cemetery in Barus City, Tapanuli Tengah Regency, has resulted in very slow progress in its development. The religious tourism at Papan Tinggi has not shown significant changes from year to year, leading to a decrease in its appeal to visitors. Additionally, the available facilities are below average, making visitors feel uncomfortable during their religious visits. However, there are supporting factors for development, such as the Papan Tinggi Cemetery, which already has more accessible transportation and very good road conditions, with asphalt roads and two access routes leading to the cemetery area. Meanwhile, the inhibiting factors for development at the Papan Tinggi Cemetery include the lack of budget funding for development from the government, as well as human resources that sometimes have a poor correlation and inadequate skills in religious tourism development.

Keywords: Development, Religious Tourism, Papan Tinggi Cemetery

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Introduction

The development of religious tourism needs to be carried out by creating a concept that aligns with what is desired in achieving certain goals and objectives, both in social, cultural, and environmental aspects, especially in the economic and cultural fields that have existed since ancestral times and have been passed down through generations in the local community. Several points that need to be considered in the development of religious tourism are: 1) Religious tourism is a tourism activity conducted to places that hold special significance for religious followers, 2) Religious tourism is usually related to places of worship, such as mosques, graves, and temples, 3) Religious tourism can also be associated with history, myths, legends, and the uniqueness of architectural buildings, 4) Religious tourism can be a new way to develop tourism in Indonesia that upholds Islamic values, 5) Religious tourism can serve as a means to convey Islamic teachings, draw lessons, and remember the Oneness of God, 6) Religious tourism can be a means to open hearts and foster awareness that life in this world is not eternal.

What makes a place considered a religious tourism site includes several factors, among them: having historical significance and possessing myths and legends. From the explanation

outlined above, we can conclude that religious tourism is an activity that involves visiting places that hold special significance for certain religious communities. Religious tourism can be related to history, figures, and places of worship.

According to Maryani and Naingolan (2019), tourism development is the enhancement of components related to tourism, with the aim of increasing the number of visitors, extending their length of stay, encouraging them to spend more money, ensuring optimal tourist satisfaction, and maintaining the integrity of the destination's environment. In the development of tourism, there must be local government intervention so that religious tourism can be beneficial, especially for the local community, which will ultimately become a source of livelihood for them. However, on the other hand, we see that the development of religious tourism is very limited for the local community due to several factors, one of which is their skills in organizing, utilizing, and managing religious tourism effectively. Additionally, the capital they possess is also very limited, as is the promotion to outside regions and even to foreign countries, so that people from outside the area and abroad can become aware of and interested in visiting these tourist destinations.

Tapanuli Tengah Regency (Tapteng) is located on the west coast of North Sumatra Province. (Sumut). The majority of the population consists of the Batak Toba and Mandailing tribes. However, the community residing in Tapteng is diverse, including tribes such as Batak, Mandailing, Minangkabau, Nias, Javanese, Minahasa, Bugis, and Sundanese. There are even descendants from Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Tapteng is one of the tourist destination areas in North Sumatra Province. The region nicknamed "The Land of a Million Charms" holds extraordinary natural beauty potential. Among them are religious tourism, nature tourism, mountains, beaches, and the sea. Tapteng Regency has 178 villages spread across 29 sub-districts. Among the many districts, there is one particularly interesting district, namely Barus, located on the west coast of Sumatra Island. The capital of this sub-district is the Padang Masiang village. Barus, as the center of civilization in the 1st to 17th centuries AD, is also referred to by another name, Fansur. Barus was once the largest port city that ever existed in the Archipelago, long before the emergence of Malacca and Samudera Pasai in Aceh. Barus established itself as a renowned producer of camphor, which led to the city being named Barus.

Barus is one of the sub-districts in Tapteng that encompasses 20 villages, among which there is one village that holds a million historical relics, namely Penanggalah village. In this village, there is the Papan Tinggi Tomb that is always visited by visitors. Makan Papan Tinggi is

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an ancient Islamic cemetery complex located on a hill, specifically in the village of Pananggahan, Barus Utara District, Tapanuli Tengah Regency, North Sumatra Province. The tombs located in the Papan Tinggi Cemetery consist of 5 graves, one of which is approximately 7 meters long, with the height of its gravestone being around 1.5 meters. Meanwhile, the other 4 graves are adjacent to the main tomb, each measuring about 1.5 meters in length, and their gravestones are made of stone erected without any markings at all.

The local community often refers to it as the High Board Tomb of Barus, while another name in Indonesian is simply the High Board Tomb. To reach the cemetery area, we have to walk about 100 meters from the main road to the foot of the hill. Once we arrive at the foot of the hill, we need to climb the stairs to get to the top. There are hundreds of steps to go through to reach the summit, with at least around 710 steps. A hill located to the east of the road between Barus and Manduamas. However, until now, in the surrounding area and community of Makam Papan Tinggi, there has been no more specific development compared to the past or like other regions that have developed tourist attractions, both from the handicrafts of the local community and residents living around the tomb, as well as the development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and accommodations that could serve as a source of income for the local community from visitors coming from outside the area, such as Red Door and other lodgings. This is what makes it the main issue for the author to raise this research. All of this has not been realized due to the lack of knowledge and capital possessed by the local community in the Makam Papan Tinggi area, which has hindered the rapid development of religious tourism at Makam Papan Tinggi.

Literature Review

According to Maryani and Nainggolan (2019), the development of tourism is the enhancement of components related to tourism, with the aim of increasing the number of visitors, extending their length of stay, encouraging them to spend more money, ensuring optimal tourist satisfaction, and maintaining the integrity of the destination's environment. According to Wulansari (2022), tourism is an activity carried out by an individual or a group that involves moving from one place to another repeatedly for a temporary period with the aim of enjoying the beauty of nature rather than seeking a livelihood. Tourism is a travel activity that involves various facilities and services provided by the community, entrepreneurs, the government, and local authorities. (UU Nomor.10 Tahun 2009). Tourism can also be defined as a series of tourism activities undertaken by individuals, groups, or families to a place for a short period of time and for the purpose of enjoyment. The development of tourism, which is the main driver of the tourism sector, requires collaboration from all stakeholders, including the community and the government, as well as direct cooperation from businesses and the private sector. In accordance with its duties and authority, the government acts as a facilitator that has its role and function in the creation and determination of all policies related to tourism development. (Kurniawan dan Sakinah, 2021). Religious tourism can be defined as a travel destination related to history, figures, and places of worship. This tour has many benefits for mental health and spirituality someone. Starting from enhancing faith, increasing religious knowledge, to broadening cultural and historical insights of a place. Religious tourism, according to Suryono (2004), is defined as activities that involve visiting places that hold special significance, typically including locations such as mosques, graves, and temples.

Research Methodology

This study is a type of research using a qualitative approach. According to Sugiyono (2022:9- 10), qualitative research methods are naturalistic studies that utilize data collection

techniques such as triangulation, which combines observation, interviews, and documentation, aimed at understanding meaning, uniqueness, and discovering hypotheses in depth. According to Moleong (2000), qualitative research is research that seeks to understand the phenomena experienced by subjects through descriptions in written and linguistic forms, particularly in natural settings, and using various scientific methods.

Result

The development of religious tourism in Papan Tinggi, Barus, Tapanuli Tengah is very minimal compared to religious tourism in other areas due to a lack of attention from the local government and the limited skills and capabilities of the local community to implement changes that would serve as benchmarks for the economic development of the local population, which partly becomes a significant and promising source of income for the community.

The potential attractions of religious tourism at Makan Papan Tinggi in Barus City, Tapanuli Tengah Regency, can be grouped into three aspects: Something to See, something to Do, and Something to Buy.

- 1. Something to See:** The attractions that can be seen (tangible) are the main draws here. This is because the religious tourism site of Makan Papan Tinggi in Barus, Tapanuli Tengah Regency, is physical in nature and can be observed by visiting tourists. The cemetery complex in Papan Tinggi is the burial site of the first Islamic figures who came to the coastal area of Barus to spread Islam, who were companions of the Prophet Muhammad.
- 2. Something to Do (Something That Can Be Done)** A tourist attraction must provide facilities or amenities for visitors to engage in various activities, thereby extending the duration of their stay. (Length of Stay). One of the ways the management of the Papan Tinggi Cemetery operates is by utilizing the beach adjacent to the Malacca Strait, which looks very beautiful and possesses a captivating beauty not found in other areas. Like surfing and also getting more comfortable and safe accommodation,
- 3. Something to Buy (Something That Can Be Bought)** Something that can be purchased by visitors is the natural produce from the area, which includes fish and local agricultural products. However, visitors cannot fully experience the local offerings as they should, because there is a lack of creativity from the local community that could still be developed further.

In the Development of the High Board Cemetery in Tapanuli Tengah Regency, Barus District, it is as follows:

1. Attraction (Tourist Attraction)

Tourist attractions are a fundamental part of tourism development that will influence tourists' decisions to visit a particular site. In Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism, it is stated that tourist attractions are anything that possesses uniqueness, beauty, and value in the form of diverse natural wealth, culture, and human-made products that become the target of tourist visits. The High Dining Tourist Attraction in Barus City, Central Tapanuli Regency has a uniqueness with an elevation of 700 meters. Although the new stairs leading to the site are quite small, with good intentions and sincerity, visitors can safely reach their destination as expected. The religious tourist site of the Papan Tinggi cemetery is crowded with visitors during holidays, Islamic holy months, and national holidays. To enhance the appeal for visitors to this tourist attraction, the management and the Culture and Tourism Office of Central Tapanuli Regency are collaborating with the community to improve the market for visitors, whether it be food markets or handicrafts that can serve as souvenirs and shopping options for those who come here. Additionally, there are adequate accommodations that meet the desired capacity of visitors, along with many beautiful spots for photography as documentation for those who visit,

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showcasing the natural beauty and historical buildings, as well as the charming neighborhoods.

The reason visitors come to the Papan Tinggi Tomb is not solely for religious tourism; there are also activities beyond religious purposes, such as visitors coming to enjoy the market and play at the beach or the open sea, which is beautifully set against the Indian Ocean and remains pristine, unpolluted by air pollution or litter. The natural beauty of the sea encourages visitors to stay longer.

In this study, the Papan Tinggi Tomb is not the primary destination for visitors coming to Central Tapanuli Regency or the city of Barus. However, visitors are more interested in the height of the dining area and the length of the tomb of the friend of Rausl, which cannot be found or is not the same as the usual Islamic graves. To reach that tomb, one must go through or climb approximately 700 steps, and according to the locals, it cannot be guaranteed how many steps we will actually take to reach that tomb. Additionally, the beauty of the city of Barus can be seen from the height once we arrive at the tomb.

2. Facilities (Amenities)

People travel to a place for various reasons, one of which is the availability of more complete facilities at their destination. The availability of supporting facilities influences the growth of the number of tourists in the Makan Papan Tinggi area in Tapanuli Tengah Regency. According to Yoeti (2003:56) in Pertiwi (2008), the definition of tourist facilities is all the amenities that serve to meet the needs of tourists who are temporarily staying in the tourist destination they are visiting, where they can relax, enjoy, and participate in the activities available in that tourist area. The facilities provided at the Papam Tinggi cemetery tourist site include a prayer room, public restrooms, and shopping areas. All of these facilities are aimed at meeting the needs of visitors during their visit to the Papan Tinggi cemetery in Tapanuli Tengah Regency. However, the facilities are still not sufficient as expected by visitors from outside the city. With the addition of accommodations, visitors will be encouraged to stay longer in the area, and also enjoy the local specialties such as grilled fish, which is freshly caught by local fishermen and usually not available to visitors in their own regions. Additionally, the facilities for places of worship, such as mosques, serve as places for them to carry out their religious practices.

It is hoped that there will be local government intervention in managing the high board cemetery area as a religious tourism spot, as well as the surrounding area that can be enjoyed by tourists as an alternative entertainment for them, even for families and children. Currently, there are recreational places for children to play in the sea, such as boats and swings that can be rented, although the development is very minimal. However, if it is further developed, it could be much more beneficial. The management needs to strive for the improvement of the available facilities and to leverage cooperation with other parties so that the existing facilities can be of better quality, thus providing satisfaction and comfort for the visitors.

3. Accessibility

Accessibility is a way to provide public transportation facilities for tourists that affects costs, time, distance, and comfort while traveling. Accessibility refers to the availability of means that allow visitors to easily reach a tourist destination; in this case, the availability of transportation to the tourist destination and the accessibility of the distance to the tourist destination are important factors (Soekadijo, 2003). The tourist site of the high tomb of Ppana in Barus City already has good access with adequate road conditions. Based on its condition, it

aligns with Soekadijo's theory (2003), as the availability of roads has facilitated and supported the flow of visitors and vehicles, with the roads being paved. In addition, the High Board Cemetery is located on the outskirts of Central Tapanuli, specifically in the city of Barus. It faces directly towards the open sea to the west, aligned with the qibla. The High Board Cemetery is also close to other tourist attractions, such as the cemetery known as Mahligai, where the burial ground is the resting place of several Islamic scholars, including the graves of Sheikh Rukunuddin, Sheikh Ushuluddin, Sheikh Zaina Abidin, Ilyas, and Sheikh Imama Kotib.

Supporting and Hindering Factors in Development

The supporting and hindering factors faced in the implementation of the development of the religious tourism site of Papan Tinggi Cemetery are as follows:

1. The supporting factor for development is that the Papan Tinggi Cemetery tourist site already has easily accessible transportation, which is very good, and the roads are paved with two access routes leading to the Papan Tinggi Cemetery area.
2. The hindering factors for development at Papan Tinggi Cemetery include the lack of budget funding for development from the government and the insufficient skills of human resources in both the development of facilities and infrastructure as well as external promotion.

Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion of the research on the design of tourism destination development strategies using qualitative descriptive methods at the Papan Tinggi Cemetery in Tapanuli Tengah Regency, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The development of the religious tourism site at Papan Tinggi Cemetery in Tapanuli Tengah Regency indicates that the management has not fully undertaken improvements and enhancements. However, there is currently no planning for the development of tourism in the area of the Papan Tinggi grave site.
2. In the development of Religious Tourism at the Papan Tinggi Cemetery in Tapanuli Tengah, there are several supporting and inhibiting factors, as follows:
 - a. The supporting factors for development include the Papan Tinggi Cemetery, which is already widely known by the community, the role of the government, the ease of coordination among related parties, and the adequate facilities and infrastructure for visitors.
 - b. The inhibiting factors for the development of Religious Tourism at the Papan Tinggi Cemetery include the lack of budget funding for development from the government, as well as human resources that sometimes have a weak correlation with the surrounding community of the Papan Tinggi Cemetery and inadequate skills among human resources in the development of this religious tourism.

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