

# Making Poverty a Tourist Attraction

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YOGYAKARTA- In the new era of tourism today, poverty can actually be made a tourist attraction. Similarly, when optimizing tourism destination that actually has the basic potential, such as horror or 'gray' historical events, such as Lady Diana crash site, Lawang Sewu in Semarang or Lubang Buaya in Jakarta. This was stated by researcher from Center for Tourism Studies, Drs. Hendrie Adji Kusworo, M.Sc., in a seminar *New Era of Tourism: Synergy between Education, Research and Action* in the Center's office, Friday (29/7). "This is how we can place and maximize poverty as a tourist attraction. This is a reality in world's society today, including Indonesia," Adji said.

He added that by developing and optimizing poverty and its attributes, Indonesia could become a particular attraction for foreign tourists. Adji said the potential opportunity for the development of poverty into a tourist attraction is not only in South Africa, Brazil or India, but also Indonesia. "Indonesia has many, in Jakarta or Yogyakarta, for example. Just look at the area of Code River with sundries of the people's life that can be made a tourism object. Well, people would earn additional income that way," he added.

To be able to attract tourists to visit attractions based on poverty, more intensive networking between government and tourism actors is needed. The more important is how to raise motivation of these tourists to visit. "The profile of the objects needs to be made up to the facilities that can be used as attractions, such as shopping sites, etc.," he said.

Meanwhile in their writing, a lecturer of S2/S3 program of Tourism Studies of UGM Graduate School, Prof. Dr. Janianton Damanik, M.Sc., and a lecturer of Udayana University Bali, Nyoman Sukma Arindra, M.Sc., raised the issue of threat of pseudo-eco-tourism development in Bali. According to both experts, the trend of pseudo-eco-tourism in Bali has some serious implications on several aspects of society and natural environment of Bali. "The implications could be tracked in three dimensions: socio-culture, physical environment, and policy," Nyoman said.



Nyoman added that the implications of the development of pseudo-eco-tourism in Bali on tourism as a whole have created contentious issue at the policy level, and practically in the field. Pseudo-eco-tourism products have 'obscured' the basic creed of cultural tourism that is adhered to by the tourism in Bali since the 1970s. Some pseudo-ecotourism products in Bali have systematically marginalized the existence of the typical endemic potential wealth of local biological resources. In addition, the emergence of pseudo-eco-tourism products has added social-cultural issues at the grassroots level in Bali.

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