

Conference

Thai Foreign Policy in the Form of Public Diplomacy Associated With the Halal Industry

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Abstract. This study aimed to examine the halal industry in relation to Thai public diplomacy. The Thai Government aims to build an image as a country that is friendly to Muslim tourists. This study applied the concept of halal and public diplomacy in understanding Thailand's economic development policies, especially in the manufacturing and tourism sectors. Qualitative research methods were used and data were collected through interviews and a literature review. The findings indicated that through the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Government is focused on developing the halal industry, including in relation to tourism. The objective of these services is to provide comfort and MICE facilities for Muslim tourists. The government established the Halal Industry Center on the southern border of Pattani province. A halal certification system was also developed in Thailand in collaboration with Chulalongkorn University. The Thai Agricultural Halal Standard (TAS 8400-2007) is the legal umbrella for implementing halal certification, which refers to the international halal standard - Codex. Thailand's halal food market is growing 20% every year, making it the sixth-ranked country for halal food exports. China, the 57 OIC member countries, the United States, India and Russia are Thailand's main markets. To promote Thailand's halal tourism and industry, the government collaborates with ASEAN and Middle East countries and regularly participates in organizing exhibitions and international business forums. The Thai Government's efforts have had a positive impact on the national income and have contributed to a yearly increase of 10% in the number of Muslim tourists.

Keywords: halal industry, halal tourism, Muslim, public diplomacy, Thailand

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1. Introduction

The halal industry is an important sector in the world and continues to increase from year to year, the halal industry has many sectors in it that continue to grow. one of which is the halal tourism industry if there is rapid growth. From data submitted through the Global Muslom Travel Index, in 2019, which explains that there are 140 million Muslim tourists with a market value of more than USD 40 billion, with a projection in 2026 of reaching 230 million Muslim tourists with a predicted market capital of USD 300 billion and the projection in online transactions reached USD 180 Billion (1). This shows the growth of Muslim tourists and provides an opportunity for the halal industry to grow faster and

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bigger. The most visited countries are Turkey, followed by the United Arab Emirates, and Russia and France, and at the last level is Malaysia, with the highest spending on travel, namely Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar and Indonesia (2).

This is very interesting when you see a country with a minority Muslim population, but visited by Muslim tourists, this really shows that the halal industry can be developed in any country that wants to develop it. In Southeast Asia itself, Thailand is a country that is a Muslim minority but friendly to Muslim tourists, from the existing data, Thailand is in the top 10 halal tourism industry that is frequently visited, and the second position after Singapore with the convenience of Muslim tourists (2) (1).

There are many things that have been done to research about the halal industry in Thailand such as halal certification for industry in Thailand and it has a fairly rapid development, such as food used with halal services and exports to Muslim countries (3) This also occurs in the halal tourism sector in Thailand, which can provide comfort for halal tourism in Thailand in several tourism objects, and create various awareness of halal tourism such as in the Andaman Bay, Chiang Mai, as well as halal hotels for tourists (4)

Based on this, this paper will discuss the existing efforts in Thailand to manage the Halal industry in the form of halal products and also tourism with instruments in supporting the hospitality of Muslim tourism in Thailand.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Halal Industry

The Global Muslim Travel Index and the Global Islamic Economy Report state the notion of halal tourism/Islamic tourism/Muslim friendly tourism means an activity carried out by Muslim tourists in accordance with Islamic law (1) (2). Halal tourism from the OKI standard contains at least the following elements: halal hotels, halal transportation in this context flights, halal food, halal finance, and halal travel packages (5) While the Global Muslim Travel Index is a requirement for halal tourists. must have conditions where a Muslim is good access, a supportive environment, qualified communication, and friendly service for Muslim tourists (1).

So halal tourism is an effort to provide comfort to tourism that has Islamic nuances and apply Islamic law so that Muslim tourists are easy and comfortable when carrying out tourist activities, for example halal food is available, hotels and tourist attractions are friendly for Muslim tourists. In order to build the industry, so that it can become part

of the Islamic economic industry globally because it is experiencing a positive trend (6). In addition, halal is not only a rule that exists in Islam, but to become an industry in various aspects of human life ranging from food, beverages, which have now developed for clothing, cosmetics, real estate, restaurants, hotels, Islamic banking (7). This halal product has good quality with strict control and inspection (CNN International, 2017). The halal industry has an important role as an effort to improve the economy (Fathoni, 2020). So the concept of halal is not only a rule in Islam, but can also be a lifestyle that provides benefits for the global Islamic economy.

2.2. Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy is a way for states or non-state actors to share news and influence the public of other countries to promote their image, or national interests. In practice, public diplomacy is carried out not only by the leader of the country, but the people can also be directly involved. The government can use various media such as culture, film, television, music, radio, teaching, language learning, and others (8). The achievements of public diplomacy are summarized according to several experts, including: 1) creating interactions using other countries using a way of knowing each other which is a necessity between countries, cultures, and their people, 2) communicating the country's views, putting a real understanding of a country that has been perceived so far. wrong, 3) coordinate and establish cooperation between the government and the people (9). 4) so that foreign publics can know more about a particular country, 5) increase foreign public appreciation, 6) create close interactions between countries, and in the end 6) can influence foreign public attitudes/conduct (9). Thus, public diplomacy is carried out to complement traditional diplomatic activities (Susetyo, 2008).

In the context of this research, Thailand has carried out public diplomacy using the instruments of the halal industry to present itself as a country that is friendly to Muslim tourists by providing international standard facilities and services. Public diplomacy to promote the country uses the image built on this Thailand through the halal industry as an effort to achieve its national interest which is to attract Muslim tourists to visit Thailand and as a key player in the halal industry even though the country is generally dominated by non-Muslims. This follows what Japan & South Korea did, where the image of being a Muslim-friendly country has an impact on economic and political profits (10) Indonesia has also made halal tourism an instrument of public diplomacy to compete with other countries (Fithriana, 2019) one of them development of halal tourism in West Nusa Tenggara which aims to increase the regional economy (11).

3. Methods

This study uses a qualitative research method whose unit of analysis is the Thai government with the object of research being Thailand's policy in promoting itself as a country that is friendly to Muslim tourists as an effort of public diplomacy. The data collection technique used primary sources derived from the results of interviews with the research body on halal in Thailand (The Halal Science Center Chulalongkorn University) and Assoc expert staff. Prof. Dr. Pakorn Priyakorn from the Halal Standard Institute of Thailand. Secondary sources are obtained from literature studies that examine literature from scientific journals, books, reports, related news articles, and trusted online media publications to support this research topic. Stages of analysis techniques in this study through data collection, data presentation, to drawing conclusions.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Halal Tourism Development as A Response To Increasing Muslim Tourists

These millennial Muslims are the primary drivers of the growth of halal tourism because they have their own way of traveling when compared to older Muslim tourists, for example seeking coverage and providing learning experiences through direct social media which makes the rapid spread of coverage on tourist sites to attract tourists, in addition to income. also higher, & Health is better (12). There are 3 characteristics and needs of millennial Muslims, namely: 1) accessibility, for example, always connected to the internet to provide the latest photos and status on social media; 2) affordable, flexible transportation & cheap accommodation for backpackers; 3) Authentic, always looking for new & unique destinations or destinations, and flexible travel schedules. (Supaijo & Fermansyah, 2019:46). This is what makes halal tourism grow rapidly.

The research institute describes the projected growth in the number of adherents of the Muslim faith in Thailand from 2010 to 2050. Basically, there are still 3 faiths dominated by Thailand, namely Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. The population of Thailand was 69,120,000 people in 2010. The majority of the people who embraced Buddhism were 93.2% or the equivalent of 64,420,000 people. Muslims are a minority belief as much as 5.5% or equivalent to using 3,770,000 people & below one % others are Christians, Hindus, Jews & others (13). Muslims are projected to continue to experience growth in Thailand. This is in line with the number of Muslim tourist arrivals reaching 3.6 million per year (14). Responding to this fact, the Tourism and

Sports Ministry of Thailand launched a project for the development of halal tourism and services aimed at enhancing the potential of the halal tourism market in Thailand.

The Ministry of Tourism & Sports is affiliated with Chulalongkorn University to carry out halal tourism development projects, including in-depth research on the characteristics of demand for Muslim tourists & their conduits in order to design tourism products & services to match the needs of Muslim tourists & meet halal criteria (15). The Tourism Authority of Thailand created the implementation of The Muslim-friendly destination in Arabic and Indonesian versions that make it easier for Muslim tourists to find halal restaurants, mosques, and various other halal facilities and services (14).

In addition, the Thai government established a Halal Industry Center on the southern border of Pattani province. Thailand's halal culinary market is growing 20% annually, making it the sixth country to become a halal culinary exporting country. Of the 30,000 factories in Thailand, 8,000 of them are halal culinary factories. There are 1,800 factories that are entitled to use halal label accreditation, not only culinary, tourism, hotel businesses, and health services also receive halal professional allowances (16). With the support of government policies, cooperation with universities, and the development of the Thai halal product industry, Thailand has great potential to compete with other countries in the halal tourism sector.

4.2. Halal Certification and its Impact on Thai Industry

Awareness of the importance of halal professional allowances found its momentum in 1949 when Thai entrepreneurs failed to export poultry to Middle Eastern countries. Rejection of Thai poultry products in the Middle East market due to inappropriate animal mutilation using Islamic principles. Based on this experience, Thai entrepreneurs created halal professional allowances as a standard for Thai export commodities to form the religion of Muslim consumers who are relatively large in number in the world (17)

Halal certification in Thailand continues to be developed to meet the needs of Muslims. The development according to the halal professional allowance in Thailand goes through four stages; first in 1949 halal products & services were only based on opinions according to Islamic scientists or clergy without any halal certificates; In the second term from 1949 to 1997, the development of the halal industry was carried out to meet the needs of Muslims in Thailand which finally in 1971 the Thailand Islamic Center Committee introduced halal culinary standardization for the first time (18). The third stage, from 1997 to 2016 the Codex-Based Thailand's Standard Institute professional allowance forum was formed. In 2002 the Thailand Islamic Center Committee succeeded in

convincing the Thai government to create a halal center in Southern Thailand. The government supported funding to create a halal HACCP system in 2003 by involving the Halal Science Center at Chulalongkorn University which has a specific laboratory for researching halal food. In 2009 the quality of halal standardization was improved in Thailand.

The fourth stage, since 2017 halal products and services are relatively promising options. Product marketing has included logos and promotion features digitally, connected using online media, cloud, & e-commerce (18). The authority in Thailand that has the authority to place halal professional allowances, namely the Halal Affairs Committee in the Center Islamic Committee of Thailand under Sheikhu-Islam, then transferred to the Islamic Committees and Management of Halal Affairs of CICOT (the Central Islamic Council of Thailand) from Islamic Organization Administration Act BE 2540 affiliates use the Halal Science Center, Chulalongkorn University to study product feasibility before receiving the halal label (Interview using Halal Science Center Staff, 17 September 2019).

In 2007 a government regulation was made regarding halal standardization in Thailand, the Ministry of Agriculture, namely the Thai Agricultural Halal Standard, TAS 8400-2007 which is the first umbrella rule for the implementation of the halal professional allowance (Interview using Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pakorn Priyakorn according to the Halal Standard Institute of Thailand, 17 September 2019) this standard applies to Halal Food which includes requirements for preparation, processing, packaging, storage, presentation & distribution, food safety, marking and labeling label (19). Thailand exported halal culinary products in 2001, to 57 Muslim countries using a value of USD 347 million. Its value is getting higher and higher in 2014, reaching USD 6.1 billion. Currently, there are more than 3,500 factories that have applied for a halal logo according to the Central Islamic Council of Thailand & Provincial Islamic Council, and more than 100,000 products have received the halal professional allowance (17). In 2018 Thailand exported USD 5.799 million of halal culinary, USD 102 million of halal clothing, & USD 434 million according to halal cosmetics. As for the halal products exported, namely rice, sugar, canned and processed marine culinary, and cassava are the main products. Thailand also exports halal cuisine to non-Muslim countries such as frozen, dried, fresh and processed chicken (20). In addition, Thailand also exports halal cuisine such as corn, tapioca flour, sugar, crackers, chicken, fish, shrimp, canned tuna, vegetable juices, fruits, processed fruit products, & spices (15). There are approximately 5,000 companies involved in the Thai halal industry, forming over 150,000 halal products and services (Salaam Gateway, 2019b).

4.3. Thailand Halal Tourism Management

In addition to the emphasis on developing the halal culinary industry, Thailand also puts peace for Muslim tourists. Based on the ranking of (1) regarding the 2019 Global Muslim Travel Index, Thailand is in 2nd place using a score of 57 after Singapore. Received a score of 65 being the most friendly non-OIC member country to Muslim tourists on service quality, environment, communication and access to tourist destinations (21). Thailand managed to bring in Muslim tourists in 2018 as many as 3.6 million people who traveled (Republika.co.id, 2019) One of the tourist destinations visited by Muslim tourists is the Ton Son Mosque which is located near Wat Arun.

This mosque was built in 1688, when King Narai was in power. In addition, the Platinum Fashion Mall shopping area, The Market Bangkok, Asiatique, Terminal 21, are also tourist destinations that attract many Muslim visitors. There are lots of halal cuisines in the place, especially at night there are tents selling in front of the property, as a special attraction for tourists to experience street food. To make it easier for Muslim tourists to carry out tourist activities, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) created an application called Thailand's Muslim-Friendly Destination that makes it easier for tourists to find places to eat, mosques and various services and facilities for Muslim tourists. This application has a warning when praying, using a choice of English, Thai, Indonesian, & Arabic (22).

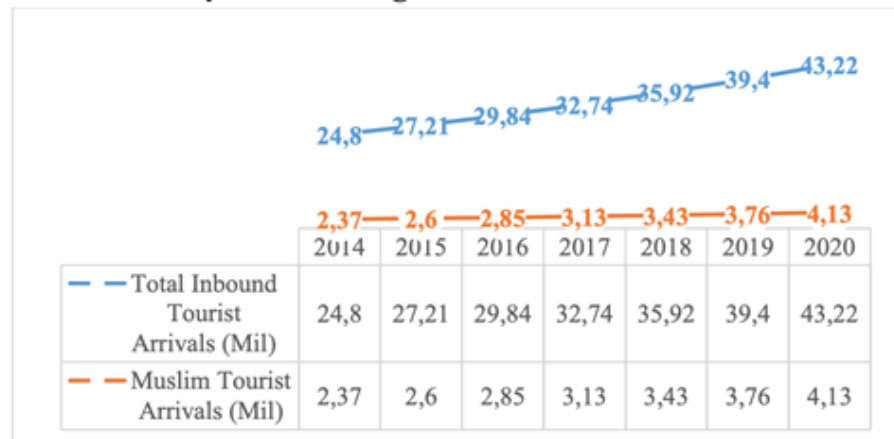
Thailand has several Muslim-friendly beach resorts, such as Six Senses Resorts, Banyan Tree Resorts, Ao Nang Princeville Resort, Ao Nang Orchid, & Diamond Cave Resort and Spa. Thailand also has multiple Halal spas that are gender-segregated, using separate rooms for men and women. This spa place offers separate rooms for men and women, using masseurs who are also provided separately. They use organic products (23). Guaranteeing security, in this case, Muslim tourists who carry out tourist activities are guaranteed things that are not against religion. For health, because it is aware of the large number of tourists from the Middle East, Bangkok Hospital provides specific services in Arabic, provides staff who understand Arabic, and provides places of worship. In addition to hospitals, Thailand also implements Muslim tourist-friendly airports, such as prayer rooms & halal restaurants at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport, Phuket International Airport, Chiang Mai International Airport, and others (23). Important places such as hospitals and airports should indeed be equipped with facilities and services that are friendly to Muslim tourists, because the need for worship is expected when transiting or waiting for patients.

4.4. Thai Halal Industry Diplomacy

From November 30 to December 3 2017, the Thailand Halal Assembly was held at the Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Center (BITEC) of The Central Islamic Council of Thailand, The Halal Standard Institute of Thailand, & The Halal Science Center Chulalongkorn University. This event succeeded in presenting 250 international and local products using the halal professional allowance. There are also seminars on halal, halal standard conventions discussing halal collateral organizing bodies, and training workshops for Thai companies related to halal professional allowances (24). In 2018 a program was organized from 14 to 16 December 2018 by the same agency, using government support. The plan is for exhibitions, seminars, and workshops related to the development of the halal industry. This event was attended by various Muslim countries such as Indonesia, Oman, Malaysia, Qatar, Brunei, and the UAE, and other countries that are visa-free to Thailand. Noted, airlines; for example, Emirates, Oman Air, Etihad, & Qatar Airways have nearly 20 flights a day to Bangkok according to their respective hubs in the Gulf countries, in this activity.

With 380 booths & 40,000 attendees, both domestic and international (24). In order to provide an interesting experience & introduce that Thailand is friendly to Muslim tourists, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) held a Muslim-friendly Destination Mega FAM (familiarization) by inviting approximately 100 travel agents & media by Islamic countries to Thailand Travel Mart 2015. parties participate in specialized institutions, travel trade rendezvous sessions, product presentations, & travel to places of interest for Islamic visitors. In January 2016, the Tourism Authority of Thailand's Dubai Office hosted famtrip accommodations for 30 travel agents & social media influencers according to Tehran (COMCEC, 2016).

Based on graph 1, the government considers the projected Muslim tourist arrivals which have grown since 2015 to reach 2.6 million people. It is expected that this number will increase by 4.1 million arrivals in 2020. The arrival of Muslim tourists to Thailand is expected to increase every year. The number of tourists visiting Thailand in 2014 was 24.8 million people, of which two.37 people were Muslim tourists. In 2020, 43.22 million tourists are required to visit Thailand, using a target of 4.13 million Muslim tourists. Based on a total of 38.2 million tourists in 2018 who visited Thailand, approximately 3.6-three.7 million people were Muslim tourists. The Thai government considers donations as much as 10% of the total international arrivals who are Muslim tourists. Thus, the government through the Tourism and Sports Ministry of Thailand is relatively focused on sharing projects in the halal industry including tourism (21).



Thailand expects a significant increase in Muslim visitors based on Indonesia and Malaysia through the ASEAN Integrated Community, therefore the Thai government is working with the Thai-Muslim community and the tourism industry to ensure its readiness to use both the facilities and social, cultural and religious services that the polytheists want. Muslim visitors. Attracting more Muslim tourists, is also in line with using government policies to promote the production and export of halal culinary. In other terms, Thailand sees tourism as a solution to enhance the economy (3).. Therefore, the halal industry can be used as an instrument of Thai public diplomacy to attract Muslim tourists.

5. Conclusion

The development of the halal industry in Thailand looks relatively good, the value of exports continues to grow and the arrival of Muslim tourists is increasing, even though the population is generally dominated by non-Muslims. This indicates that the diplomacy that Thailand has built to Muslim countries has shown positive results, making Thailand a Muslim-friendly country. The management of the halal industry in Thailand is relatively good because all forums have a crucial role and are directly involved. Both government and non-government forums, such as the Halal Science Center of Chulalongkorn University, are places for testing culinary products through laboratory tests. In addition, there is the Halal Standard Institute of Thailand as a center for standardizing halal products & services. The existence of the Central Islamic Council of Thailand is a forum that places professional allowances as well as a halal label. Meanwhile, the government issued a regulation that became the basis for the regulation of the implementation of the Thai Agricultural Halal Standard halal professional allowance, TAS 8400-2007. Thailand's halal tourism diplomacy also shows good output using international activities

both at home and abroad. Provide opportunities for promotion and form a picture of being a Muslim Friendly Tourism country. 2nd position after Singapore in the ranking of being a Muslim-friendly country, as one of the indicators. In addition to the high number of Muslim tourists arriving, Thailand prioritizes serenity and good facilities for Muslim tourists by using halal hotels, places of worship, activities that make it easier for Muslim tourists to find halal places to eat, reminders when praying, to attractive Muslim-friendly places. . Thailand's halal industry diplomacy sees 2 crucial aspects.

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