



## INDONESIA AND SAUDI ARABIA PARTNERSHIP DURING REGIONAL PRESSURE ON HAJJ MANAGEMENT

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### Abstract

This paper discusses the relationship between Indonesia and Saudi Arabia in managing the pilgrimage. Hajj is a sector that makes a significant contribution to the economy of Saudi Arabia. However, the increasing number of pilgrims every year makes managing the pilgrimage more difficult and makes Saudi Arabia face regional pressure in the form of internationalizing the management of the pilgrimage. During regional pressure, Saudi Arabia is trying to diversify its economy through Saudi Vision 2030 which contains plans to improve the governance of the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages. Indonesia, one of the countries that cares about pilgrims, is often faced with facts related to the inefficient management and services of Hajj. Through the concept of national interest, this research shows that the internationalization pressure of hajj has become a stimulus for Saudi Arabia in improving the management of its hajj in line with its 2030 vision which also focuses on hajj issues. The collaboration of these two factors has made Indonesia, a close partner of Saudi Arabia in hajj activities, will have a positive effect in the form of increased aspects of service and mobility that will make it easier for Indonesian pilgrims to perform the pilgrimage.

**Keywords:** Hajj Management, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, National Interest, Saudi Vision 2030

### Abstrak

*Tulisan ini membahas hubungan Indonesia dan Arab Saudi dalam pengelolaan ibadah haji. Haji merupakan sektor yang memberikan kontribusi signifikan bagi perekonomian Arab Saudi. Namun, meningkatnya jemaah haji setiap tahunnya membuat pengurusan haji semakin sulit serta membuat Arab Saudi menghadapi tekanan regional berupa internasionalisasi pengelolaan haji. Di tengah tekanan regional, Arab Saudi berupaya mendiversifikasi ekonominya melalui Saudi Vision 2030 yang berisi rencana perbaikan tata kelola ibadah haji dan umrah. Indonesia, salah satu negara yang peduli terhadap jemaah haji seringkali dihadapkan pada fakta terkait pengelolaan dan pelayanan haji yang tidak efisien. Melalui konsep kepentingan nasional, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tekanan internasionalisasi haji menjadi stimulus Arab Saudi dalam membenahi pengelolaan hajinya selaras dengan visi 2030-nya yang juga berfokus pada persoalan haji. Kolaborasi dua faktor tersebut membuat Indonesia, mitra erat Arab Saudi dalam aktivitas haji akan mendapatkan efek positif berupa peningkatan aspek pelayanan dan mobilitas yang memudahkan jemaah Indonesia dalam menunaikan ibadah haji.*

**Kata kunci:** Manajemen Haji, Arab Saudi, Indonesia, Kepentingan Nasional, Visi Saudi 2030

### Background

Saudi Arabia is a country that has been awarded a strategic position as home to two important cities of the Muslim faith throughout the world, namely the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque. As the center of Islamic

worship in the Middle East region, every year Saudi Arabia receives around 2.5 million Muslim residents from 106 countries congregating in the city of Mecca for five days to perform the pilgrimage activities. The pilgrimage has been the



second major contributor to Saudi Arabia's income and economic growth for decades. Saudi Arabia's annual pilgrimage income reaches 12 billion US dollars. The magnitude of the Hajj pilgrimage's contribution to Saudi Arabia's economy is due to the high level of visits from Muslim residents from all over the world.

Nevertheless, the pilgrimage that accommodates the mobility of Muslims from various countries has made Saudi Arabia face the problem of effective governance in organizing the pilgrimage. Fahham<sup>1</sup> in his article entitled "Hajj: Problems and Its Solutions" states that there are various problems in the governance of the Saudi Arabian pilgrimage, namely the technical aspects related to the registration of prospective pilgrims and capacity (quotas). The most crucial aspect in the implementation of the pilgrimage, namely services consisting of aspects of health, transportation, accommodation, and food services, are the main problems that make the implementation of the pilgrimage ineffective and even take decades of queues.

This problem regarding the governance of the pilgrimage eventually gave rise to regional pressure to make the pilgrimage a form of cooperation or referred to as the internationalization of the pilgrimage. The internationalization of Hajj policy is an idea that arose as a result of echoes of an idea related to the management and system of the pilgrimage, which was ineffective and primarily politicized by Saudi Arabia. The idea of internationalizing hajj policies aims to make the pilgrimages an activity under the auspices of a joint organization or institution.

Bianchi<sup>2</sup> in his article entitled "Reimagining the Hajj" states that the idea of internationalization is a response that arises as a result of service problems that occur in the management of the Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi

Arabia, which results in high death rates of pilgrims from various countries when carrying out religious activities. Pilgrimage is also related to political stability within the government of Saudi Arabia. Contradictions of opinions and arguments between scholars and policymakers, as well as disagreements with interested institutions (stakeholders), are serious problems for Saudi Arabia which then affect the image of the country's pilgrimage management.

The idea of internationalization intersects with the concept of national sovereignty. Saudi Arabia certainly rejects the idea of collective governance of the pilgrimage on the pretext that the idea of internationalization of the Hajj policy is part of the propaganda that can harm Saudi Arabia's domestic political stability. Furthermore, this idea is alluded by the term "political suicide".

During regional pressure regarding the collective governance of the pilgrimage, Saudi Arabia is trying to diversify its economy by launching the Saudi Vision 2030. In this Saudi Vision 2030, one focus is on improving the quality and capacity of organizing the pilgrimage as stated in the vision "Strengthen Islamic Value and National Identity" (SIVNI).

The agenda for the internationalization of the Hajj policy has elicited responses from various parties, one of which is Indonesia. Indonesia has been a close partner of Saudi Arabia since colonial times, the closeness of Indonesia and Saudi Arabia has made the two countries have firm relations and cooperation agreements, one of which is in the pilgrimage sector.

Subandi and Machmudi<sup>3</sup> in their study entitled "The Role of the Governments of Indonesia and Saudi Arabia in Organizing the Hajj Pilgrimage 2015-2021" explained that since the colonial era when the Netherlands colonized Indonesia, the relationship between Indonesia and Saudi Arabia has been ideological through the implementation Hajj cooperation, as time went on until the independence and reform era, the closeness between Indonesia and Saudi Arabia

<sup>1</sup> Achmad Muchaddam Fahham and others, 'Achmad Muchaddam Fahham Penyelenggaraan Ibadah Haji: Masalah dan Penanganannya Haji: Problems And Its Solutions', *Kajian*, 20.3 (2015), 201-218.

<sup>2</sup> Robert R. Bianchi, 'Reimagining the Hajj', *Social Sciences*, 6.2 (2017) <<https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci6020036>>.

<sup>3</sup> Subandi and Machmudi.



deepened and even penetrated the strategic realm through various agreements and cooperation such as countering terrorism, cooperation in protecting human resources, to education, trade, and maritime cooperation.

According to Subandi and Machmudi, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia have a good relationship in cooperation in the organization and implementation of the pilgrimage. However, in practice, the organization and implementation of the pilgrimage between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia still faces several problems related to public services, accessibility, and mobility. This problem indicates that it is necessary to revitalize the governance and implementation system of the pilgrimage to Indonesia.

Facts related to regional pressure regarding the internationalization of Hajj and the Saudi Vision 2030 are potential momentum and opportunities for Indonesia as a country that has ideological and strategic ties. In the context of fulfilling the rights of citizens (Indonesia is obliged to fulfill the right of Muslims to perform the pilgrimage), Saudi Arabia is a crucial factor in achieving Indonesia's national interest.

The concept of national interest is a relevant theory to analyze this phenomenon. According to Hans J. Morgenthau, national interest is a concept that explains the capacity and capability of a country in maintaining its existence and fulfilling its needs in various aspects such as physical aspects, namely territory, political identities such as ideology, regime or government stability, and cultural identity, namely history, ethnicity, norms, and customs. In line with the previous explanation, this research will answer related to the question "Why is the internationalization of hajj and plans for economic diversification through the Saudi Vision 2030 become a potential opportunity to revitalize the governance and system for organizing the Indonesian pilgrimage?"

This study uses the explanatory research method as an analytical instrument to understand the relationship between the variables presented by the author in the past. The explanatory method is a research method that is used to explain the

relationship between two variables in a phenomenon. The use of explanatory method is also used to test the hypotheses that have been established at the beginning of the study.

The hypothesis of this article stated that the internationalization of the pilgrimage and Saudi Arabia's economic diversification plan are two factors that form opportunities for Indonesia in improving the quality of governance and the system of implementing the pilgrimage which is experiencing problems of effectiveness and efficiency. When referring to the basis of research that examine hypotheses, two variables carry the research process, namely the independent and dependent variables. Independent variables are variables that affect or cause changes in another variable. The dependent variable is a variable that is affected by the behavior or actions of the independent variables.

Based on a series of previous paragraph, it is determined that the independent variable in this study is Saudi Arabia, which receives regional pressure and its efforts in economic diversification through Saudi Vision 2030. On the other side, the dependent variable is Indonesia, which receives the impact of conditions and behavior from Saudi Arabia as explained previously.

### **Strengthen Islamic Values and National Identity (SIVNI) in Saudi Vision 2030 and Vocal Points for Saudi Arabia**

With the number of annual visits reaching more than 2,5 million people in carrying out the pilgrimage, economic observers say that organizing the pilgrimage is one of the crucial sectors that contributes to the economy and creates jobs for the people of Saudi Arabia.<sup>4</sup>

Since 2016 coinciding with the momentum of the presence of Saudi Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia has sought to break away from dependence on oil by turning to potential non-oil and gas economic factors. Under Mohammad bin Salman's leadership, Saudi Arabia has been trying to transform its economic sector by organizing Hajj

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<sup>4</sup> Idris.



and Umrah as the primary source of income to replace petroleum. In Vision 2030, Mohammad bin Salman sets out plans to increase the number of visits by pilgrims to as many as 30 million people each year with an economic income of more than 13 billion US dollars by 2030.<sup>5</sup>

In the Saudi Vision 2030 initiated by the Government of Saudi Arabia, there are three main pillars serve as a reference for achieving the long-term goal of Saudi Arabia's economic diversification and reconstruction: a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation. The fact that Saudi Arabia faces problems related to the emergence of various issues in the organization and implementation of the pilgrimage, as well as the idea of internationalizing the Hajj policy, is something that the Government of Saudi Arabia should anticipate and face. Saudi Arabia actually manifests this idea in its sub-vision entitled "Strengthen Islamic Values and National Identity" (SIVNI).

Strengthening Islamic Values and National Identity (SIVNI) is a specific focus initiated by Saudi Arabia through one of the pillars in the Saudi Vision 2030, namely, a vibrant society. In SIVNI, Saudi Arabia aims to improve the quality of services in Hajj and Umrah activities for Muslim immigrants from various parts of the world. Saudi Arabia implemented this goal through a program entitled "*Doyof Al Rahmān*" which contains three main focuses, namely facilitating hosting more Umrah visitors and providing more accessible way to the Holy Mosques, improving the quality of services provided to Hajj and Umrah Visitors and enriching the spiritual and cultural experience of Hajj and Umrah visitors.<sup>6</sup>

In its development, one of the three focuses has been successfully carried out by Saudi Arabia since the momentum of the launch of the Saudi

Vision 2030 idea in 2016 by Prince Mohammad Bin Salman. This successful moment can be seen in the launch of Saudi Arabia's new infrastructure facility, namely the Haramain Speed Train, which connects Jeddah Airport and the cities of Makkah and Medina.<sup>7</sup>

Fact that Hajj is one of the sectors that support the Saudi Arabian economy, in addition to oil commodities, would be assumed that the implementation of SIVNI is one of the factors that can bring Saudi Arabia to achieve success in its long-term plans for economic diversification.

As a country of Muslims' center of civilizations and religious activities worldwide, Saudi Arabia government has been trying to show its privilege for political gain, instead of having strong bargaining power. The presence of initiatives regarding the internationalization of Hajj policies from various modern Muslim scholars is concrete evidence of arguments regarding the image and position of Saudi Arabia, which is considered prone to politicizing the pilgrimage.

### **Problems of Governance and System for the Implementation of the Hajj Pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia**

The pilgrimage sector plays a significant role in Saudi Arabia's economic growth. The magnitude of the pilgrimage sector for Saudi Arabia is accompanied by the fact that many foreign tourists visit to carry out the pilgrimage, which does not fail to present perceptions and views regarding governance and management owned by Saudi Arabia. For decades, the management of the implementation of the pilgrimage by Saudi Arabia has not been good because Saudi Arabia has some technical problems, such as the availability of infrastructure and service standards for pilgrims from all over the world.<sup>8</sup>

In terms of service, Saudi Arabia faces crucial problems related to waiting lists and limited capacity. This problem then makes pilgrims wait

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<sup>5</sup> Sean McLoughlin, 'Hajj: How a New Saudi-Run Travel Agency Failed Western "Guests of God"', 2022 <<https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/hajj-saudi-arabia-new-online-portal-fails-western-pilgrims>> [accessed 24 October 2023].

<sup>6</sup> Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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<sup>7</sup> Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

<sup>8</sup> Bianchi.

about tens years waiting time.<sup>9</sup> Besides, Saudi Arabia is also faced with problems in the health sector, such as diseases that attack tourists when performing the pilgrimage.<sup>10</sup>

Meanwhile, reported by The Conversation, the implementation of the pilgrimage which the world's Muslims carry out with full management and control under Saudi Arabia is also allegedly prone to being used as a political tool for the Government of Saudi Arabia to achieve its economic goals. Problems related to politization of control and can be seen through the actions of Saudi Arabia, which increased VAT (Value Added Tax) for pilgrims from previously only 5% to 15%. The increase in VAT is alleged raised the price of goods in Saudi Arabia. It would make difficult for the pilgrims to carry out their religious activities and visits, both in meeting their food and drink needs and fulfilling their worship needs and equipment.<sup>11</sup>

The complexity of the problems in organizing the pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia led member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) assume the chaos of the domestic affairs and governance system of Saudi Arabia. This assumption was followed up by an idea or initiative to internationalize the Hajj policy.<sup>12</sup> Hajj internationalization is intended to create an institution that can regulate the implementation of the pilgrimage together without

the full monopoly of the Government of Saudi Arabia. Apart from that, the idea of internationalizing the Hajj is also aimed at creating a fair and transparent system and governance for the implementation of the Hajj to make it easier for Muslims around the world.<sup>13</sup>

However, this will undoubtedly be rejected by the Government of Saudi Arabia because it affects the country's income and economic growth. This condition is in line with Amiri, Samsu and Fereidouni's statement in their academic works entitled "The Hajj and Iran's Foreign Policy towards Saudi Arabia". According to them, Saudi Arabia is reluctant to accept the idea of establishing an international regime that regulates the organization of the pilgrimage.<sup>14</sup> Besides, Saudi Arabia will actually reject this because it is related to a violation of Saudi Arabia's national sovereignty.<sup>15</sup>

The internationalization of hajj policy, which Saudi Arabia rejected, will allegedly shake Saudi Arabia's domestic stability in the midst of its economic reconstruction efforts. While the presence of various pressures from the external environment, such as competition for regional domination with Iran and competition from Turkey.<sup>16</sup> Saudi Arabia has to take a rational stance oriented towards its sovereignty and national interests. This context leads us to the view that Saudi Arabia certainly has to think about an optional step by taking advantage of its relations with other countries, which may more or less reduce pessimistic and skeptical views regarding the politicization of the hajj, which is detrimental to pilgrims from various countries.

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<sup>9</sup> Muchlisa Choiriah, 'Ini Sebab Berangkat Haji Harus Antre Bertahun-Tahun', 2016 <<https://www.merdeka.com/peristiwa/ini-sebab-berangkat-haji-harus-antre-bertahun-tahun.html>> [accessed 24 October 2022].

<sup>10</sup> Mae R. Aldossari, Abdullah Aljoudi, and David Celentano, 'Health Issues in the Hajj Pilgrimage: A Literature Review', *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal* (World Health Organization, 2019), 744–53 <<https://doi.org/10.26719/2019.25.10.744>>.

<sup>11</sup> Setyo Hari Priyono, 'Didominasi Arab Saudi, Indonesia Perlu Usulkan Pembentukan Lembaga Internasional Agar Penyelenggaraan Haji Adil Dan Menguntungkan Umat', 2022 <<https://theconversation.com/didominasi-arab-saudi-indonesia-perlu-usulkan-pembentukan-lembaga-internasional-agar-penyelenggaraan-haji-adil-dan-menguntungkan-umat-181334>> [accessed 25 October 2023].

<sup>12</sup> Kayaoglu.

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<sup>13</sup> Kayaoglu.

<sup>14</sup> Reza Ekhtiari Amiri, Ku Hasnita Binti Ku Samsu, and Hassan Gholipour Fereidouni, 'The Hajj and Iran's Foreign Policy towards Saudi Arabia', *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 46.6 (2011), 678–90 <<https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909611417546>>.

<sup>15</sup> Ani Nursalikhah, 'Ulama Indonesia Tolak Internasionalisasi Haji', 2018 <<https://ihram.co.id/berita/p5q06m366/ulama-indonesia-tolak-internasionalisasi-haji>> [accessed 21 October 2023].

<sup>16</sup> Gian Angga Fauzi, 'Keterlibatan Indonesia dalam Pra Mediasi Arab Saudi dan Iran Tahun 2016', *Ilmu Hukum Internasional*, 5.4 (2017), 1195–1210.



## Track Record of Cooperation and Problems in the Implementation of the Hajj Pilgrimage Between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia

As two countries with the largest Muslim population compared to people of other religions, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia maintain good relations with various agreements and cooperation that benefit both parties.<sup>17</sup> Indications of this mutualism can be seen by the establishment of collaboration between the two countries in various sectors, such as economic cooperation in the form of export-import of textile, machinery, and aluminum commodities.<sup>18</sup>

Then, cooperation between the two countries is in the security field, especially in combating terrorism crimes.<sup>19</sup> Cooperation in the field of employment is through optimizing the legal aspects of Tenaga Kerja Indonesia, (TKI, Indonesian Migrant Workers) in Saudi Arabia.<sup>20</sup> As well as various other collaborations that benefit Saudi Arabia and Indonesia, such as in the fields of health, food, investment, communication, information, and transportation.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, the cooperative relationship between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia is not only focused on a series of these sectors but also in a religious context, namely cooperation in the organization and implementation of the pilgrimage. Hajj is one of the most important sectors in the partnership between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. This collaboration is based on the positive benefits obtained by each country. On the one hand, Saudi Arabia receives economic benefits as well as carrying out its obligations as a home for the two most important sites for Muslims around

the world. On the other hand, Indonesia also benefits from opening access for Indonesian citizens to fulfill their spiritual needs and obligations (Muslims). As a country in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia has supported Indonesia in its struggle for independence. This cooperation builds relations between the two governments (Government to Government) and between the two citizens (people to people) from Saudi Arabia and Indonesia<sup>22</sup>.

After Indonesia's independence, the pilgrimage affairs collaboration between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia was accompanied by various dynamics, such as increasing and decreasing the quota for performing the pilgrimage for Indonesian pilgrims. Initially, Indonesia received a large portion for sending pilgrims, namely around 211 thousand people. However, in 2013, the Government of Saudi Arabia reduced Indonesia's quota by 20% for sending its pilgrims. However, not long after, the allocation of pilgrims for Indonesia returned to its original portion. This condition then reflects that the two countries have good relations resulting positive manifestations.<sup>23</sup>

Based on data from Indonesia Business Post in 2017, the arrival of pilgrims from Indonesia who performed the pilgrimage significantly contributed to Saudi Arabia's economic income of more than 900 million U.S dollars<sup>24</sup> With this fact, Indonesia is currently the country that sends the most pilgrims among countries that have Muslims around the world.

Nevertheless, cooperation in organizing the Hajj pilgrimage between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia does not mean it will run smoothly without obstacles and challenges. The cooperation relationship between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia has been and is still accompanied by various problems, namely problems with the registration mechanism and waiting list for hajj pilgrims. Registration and waiting lists are the main problems faced by Saudi Arabia and Indonesia in organizing the pilgrimage. This problem occurred

<sup>17</sup> Subandi and Machmudi.

<sup>18</sup> Fauzi.

<sup>19</sup> Mustofa, CLXXV.

<sup>20</sup> Yeni Nur Arifin and others, 'Upaya Peningkatan Perlindungan Hukum Melalui Mandatory Consular Notification terhadap Tenaga Kerja Indonesia di Arab Saudi', *Journal Komunikasi Yustisia Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha Program Studi Ilmu Hukum*, 2022, v.

<sup>21</sup> Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia, 'Daftar Persetujuan Kerja Sama Bilateral RI-Arab Saudi', 2018

<[https://kemlu.go.id/riyadh/id/pages/daftar\\_persetujuan\\_kerja\\_sama\\_bilateral\\_ri-arab\\_saudi/648/information-sheet](https://kemlu.go.id/riyadh/id/pages/daftar_persetujuan_kerja_sama_bilateral_ri-arab_saudi/648/information-sheet)> [accessed 24 October 2022].

<sup>22</sup> Subandi and Machmudi.

<sup>23</sup> Subandi and Machmudi.

<sup>24</sup> Indonesia Business Post.



because the mechanism applied is first come first served, which means whoever registers quickly, will also be served quickly. Furthermore, the pilgrimage registration is also open every day throughout the year.<sup>25</sup>

In 2015, the first come, first served mechanism and the non-stop opening of registration for the pilgrimage resulted in a long waiting list for pilgrims from Indonesia so that the waiting time for performing the pilgrimage was around 15 years for regular types of pilgrimage and special pilgrimages, around five years.<sup>26</sup> With a Muslim population that reaches more than 80% of the total population with various beliefs,<sup>27</sup> Indonesia is a country in the Southeast Asia region with the second most extended waiting list, namely 41 years.<sup>28</sup> Until 2022, according to data from the Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah (PHU) for residents or prospective Indonesian pilgrims, the waiting list and estimated time for carrying out the pilgrimage have reached tens of years, even in some provinces showing up to 90 years.<sup>29</sup>

Besides that, Indonesian pilgrims are also required to pay *dam nusuk*, which is an obligation to buy a goat for sacrifice or pay around 300 to 500 riyals (Saudi Arabia's currency). *Dam nusuk* is obligatory for pilgrims who perform Hajj in a *tamattu'* manner or the implementation of the Hajj but is accompanied by a pilgrimage due to the arrival of the pilgrims to Saudi Arabia before the day of the pilgrimage arrives.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Fahham and others.

<sup>26</sup> Fahham and others.

<sup>27</sup> Viva Budy Kusnandar, 'Persentase Pemeluk Agama/Kepercayaan di Indonesia (Juni 2021)', 2021 <<https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2021/09/30/sebanyak-8688-penduduk-indonesia-beragama-islam>> [accessed 26 October 2023].

<sup>28</sup> Nurmayanti, 'Simak Perbandingan Antrean Haji Negara-Negara di ASEAN', 2019 <<https://www.liputan6.com/islami/read/4048441/simak-perbandingan-antrean-haji-negara-negara-di-asean>> [accessed 23 October 2023].

<sup>29</sup> A. Fida, 'Daftar Tunggu Haji Bisa 90 Tahun Lebih, Ini Penjelasan Kemenag', 2022 <<https://hidayatullah.com/berita/info-haji-umrah/2022/06/16/231765/daftar-tunggu-haji-bisa-90-tahun-lebih-ini-penjelasan-kemenag.html>> [accessed 25 October 2023].

<sup>30</sup> Fahham and others.

While there are problems in the technical aspect, the implementation of the pilgrimage is also not free from problems in service aspects such as health standards and catering services (food) during the pilgrimage activities. The problem that is often faced when organizing and carrying out the pilgrimage between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia is the lack of quality health checks and the capacity of qualified health standards for pilgrims from Indonesia, so it is common to find pilgrims who have poor health conditions but still carry out the pilgrimage. This problem might be a threat to pilgrims health.<sup>31</sup>

In the aspect of catering services (food), problems were also found related to the long timeframe for sending food to Indonesian pilgrims. Then there were indications of not being conducive in the form of long queues when picking up food rations for each Indonesian pilgrim and even food cases pilgrims who are not fit to eat because they are stale and immature are a problem faced by Saudi Arabia and Indonesia in the implementation and implementation of the pilgrimage.<sup>32</sup>

Furthermore, problems in the service aspect also occur regarding the availability of transportation and the quality of accommodation in supporting the activities of the hajj pilgrims. Pilgrims from Indonesia are often face problems related to the Lack of land transportation. Lack of transportation commonly occurred in providing buses to support pilgrims' mobility to the Grand Mosque. Some other problems are Saudi Arabia's limited workforce in serving the bustling number of pilgrims from Indonesia; miscommunication often occurs between the accommodation (accommodation); and ground transportation agents, which causes a clash in the delivery schedule for Indonesian pilgrims and other countries.

The fact that there are still many problems in various aspects of the pilgrimage cycle can be a

<sup>31</sup> Tim Pengawas DPR RI, *Executive Summary Laporan Tim Pengawas DPR RI Pada Penyelenggaraan Ibadah Haji Indonesia Tahun 2014* (Jakarta, 2014).

<sup>32</sup> Fahham and others.

turning point and preference for the Government of Saudi Arabia in executing one of its sub-visions, namely "Strengthen Islamic Values and National Identity" (SIVNI). The problems in organizing and carrying out the pilgrimage from Indonesian pilgrims can be a starting point for Hajj diplomacy between Saudi Arabia and Indonesia on various occasions and subsequent cooperation agreements.

### Implementation of SIVNI Saudi Vision 2030 Through Saudi Arabia's Hajj Diplomacy with Indonesia

On various occasions, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia have carried out various collaborations and agreements that benefit both parties. Over the decades, many agreements and cooperation have been established in various sectors. To date, as many as 49 active collaborations and agreements have been held by the Government of Saudi Arabia and Indonesia.<sup>33</sup>

In this context, Indonesia, as a state actor, strives for its national interests, which are interpreted by exploiting the momentum and position of Saudi Arabia as a strategic partner amid international demands and ambitious economic plans. About Saudi Arabia's long-term economic objectives contained in the Saudi Vision 2030, there is a sub-vision entitled "Strengthen Islamic Values and National Identity" (SIVNI), which is Saudi Arabia's plan to improve the quality of service and the visiting experience of Muslims in the context of carrying out the pilgrimage and umrah.

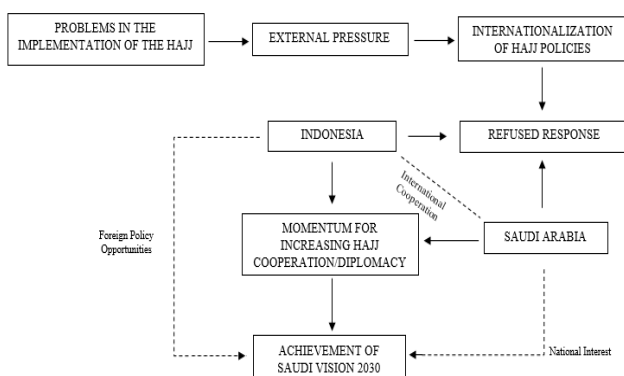


Chart 1. SIVNI Pre-Implementation Phenomenon Flow

<sup>33</sup> Kementerian Luar Negeri Republik Indonesia.

The sub-vision initiated by Saudi Arabia has three main focuses: The first, facilitating hosting more Umrah visitors and providing easier access to the Holy Mosques. Second, improving the quality of services provided to Hajj and Umrah Visitors, Third, enriching the spiritual and cultural experience of Hajj and Umrah visitors.<sup>34</sup> In the first focus, Saudi Arabia plans to facilitate more Muslim visitors to get easy accessibility to the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque (Holy Mosques). Second, Saudi Arabia is trying to improve the quality of service for Muslim visitors who wish to perform the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages. These two focuses bring Saudi Arabia to achieve the big goal contained in the third focus, namely enriching the spiritual and cultural experience in organizing and carrying out the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages for Muslim visitors worldwide.

However, as previously explained, the organization and implementation of the pilgrimage for pilgrims from Indonesia are still faced with several problems in various aspects. This condition indicates that Saudi Arabia needs to revitalize the governance and system of the pilgrimage, especially in Indonesia.

Referring to research conducted by Fahham (2015), there are some causes of problems found in the implementation and implementation of the pilgrimage, which can be the target of SIVNI implementation. First, the registration mechanism uses a first-come, first-served system and an unlimited registration period. Some problems emerge related to full capacity (quota) and waiting lists, which create long queues that take up to decades for Indonesian people.

The second problem in organizing the pilgrimage that is relevant to SIVNI is the problem in terms of the availability of transportation and the feasibility of accommodation in the process of carrying out the pilgrimage by Indonesian pilgrims. In terms of transportation, the problems that are often encountered are limited transportation and those

<sup>34</sup> Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



responsible for supporting the mobility of pilgrims to the Grand Mosque or other places of pilgrimage rituals. On the other hand, the accommodation facilities occupied by Indonesian pilgrims often experience problems related to inadequacy, such as worn-out beds, lifts, and elevators. Besides, small rooms with exceeding capacity also become a problem for Indonesian pilgrims.

Furthermore, the third issue that can become the basis for implementing Saudi Arabia's SIVNI in cooperation with Indonesia is the health standards or screening for Indonesian pilgrims and food services. Often pilgrims who have illnesses or are not in good health are not screened and pass the pilgrimage and the presence of various potential diseases such as acute respiratory infections. Then in food services, pilgrims are often faced with the problem of delays in food delivery, long lines that are not conducive to taking food, and several issues with the taste and suitability of food. Pilgrims often get improper food such as undercooked or expired.

Another problem that can be the target of SIVNI implementation is the effectiveness and efficiency of guidance for pilgrims in carrying out rituals. Pilgrims who perform the pilgrimage are usually faced with the problem of lack of insight and knowledge to carry out the rituals of the pilgrimage, this condition lead pilgrims to fines (*dam isa'ah*) which is a regulation of the pilgrimage established by Saudi Arabia based on Islamic law. Although hajj guidance has been carried out by the Government of Indonesia and other authorized institutions, this problem has not been completely resolved.

Based on these problems, the three aspects of SIVNI can be a reference for Saudi Arabia to carry out cooperation relations through diplomacy with Indonesia regarding hajj affairs. This argument can be seen in the construction chart below.

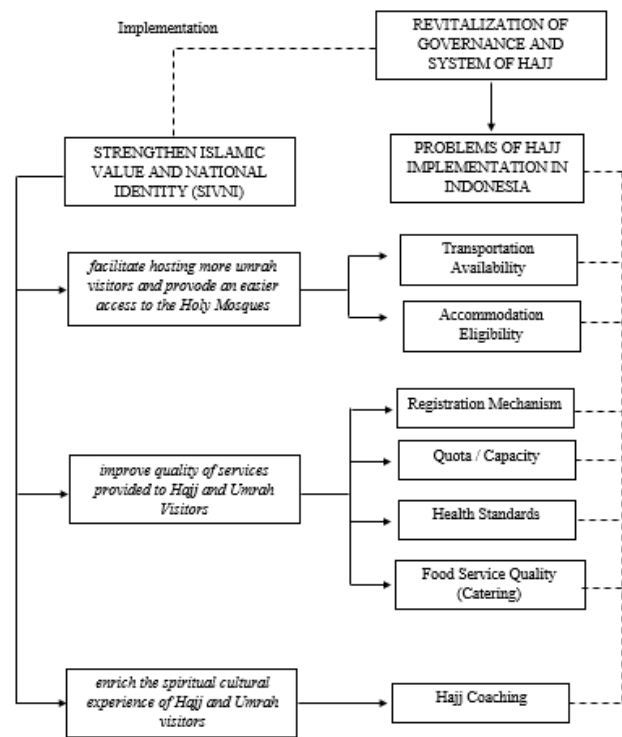


Chart 2. SIVNI Implementation Phenomenon Flow

The first focus contained in SIVNI namely umrah visitors hosting facilitation and providing easier access to the Holy Mosques This focus is related to problems in the service aspect in terms of transportation availability and accommodation feasibility, which are the main problems of pilgrims from Indonesia.

Then, the second focus of SIVNI namely, improving the quality of services provided to Hajj and Umrah Visitors related to problems in technical aspects such as registration mechanisms, capacity (quota), and waiting lists as well as problems in other service aspects in the form of health standards and food service (catering). The third focus is enriching the spiritual and cultural experience of Hajj and Umrah visitors. This focus is related to other crucial problems Indonesian pilgrims face, namely the ineffectiveness and inefficiency of Hajj training (hajj rituals).

**Conclusion**

Regional pressure regarding the internationalization of Hajj for Saudi Arabia during its efforts to diversify its economy affected Indonesia's pilgrimage circumstances as one of the countries that contributes the highest number



of pilgrims. Indonesia can potentially receive a positive impact due to the synergy of the SIVNI plan and Saudi Arabia's efforts to ward off regional anxiety. Indonesia, as a country contributing the highest Muslim congregation in Southeast Asia, which is experiencing problems with the management of services, transportation, accommodation, and food services can solve these problems. Indonesia's momentum to strengthen relations with Saudi Arabia amid the crisis that hit the country that elects two holy sites for Muslims will determine whether Indonesia will progressively fulfill its national interests or instead be trapped in the political vortex of the Middle East filled with intrigue and conflict complexity.

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