

MENOLAK WABAH

(Suara-Suara Dari Manuskrip, Relief,
Khazanah Rempah Dan Ritual Nusantara)

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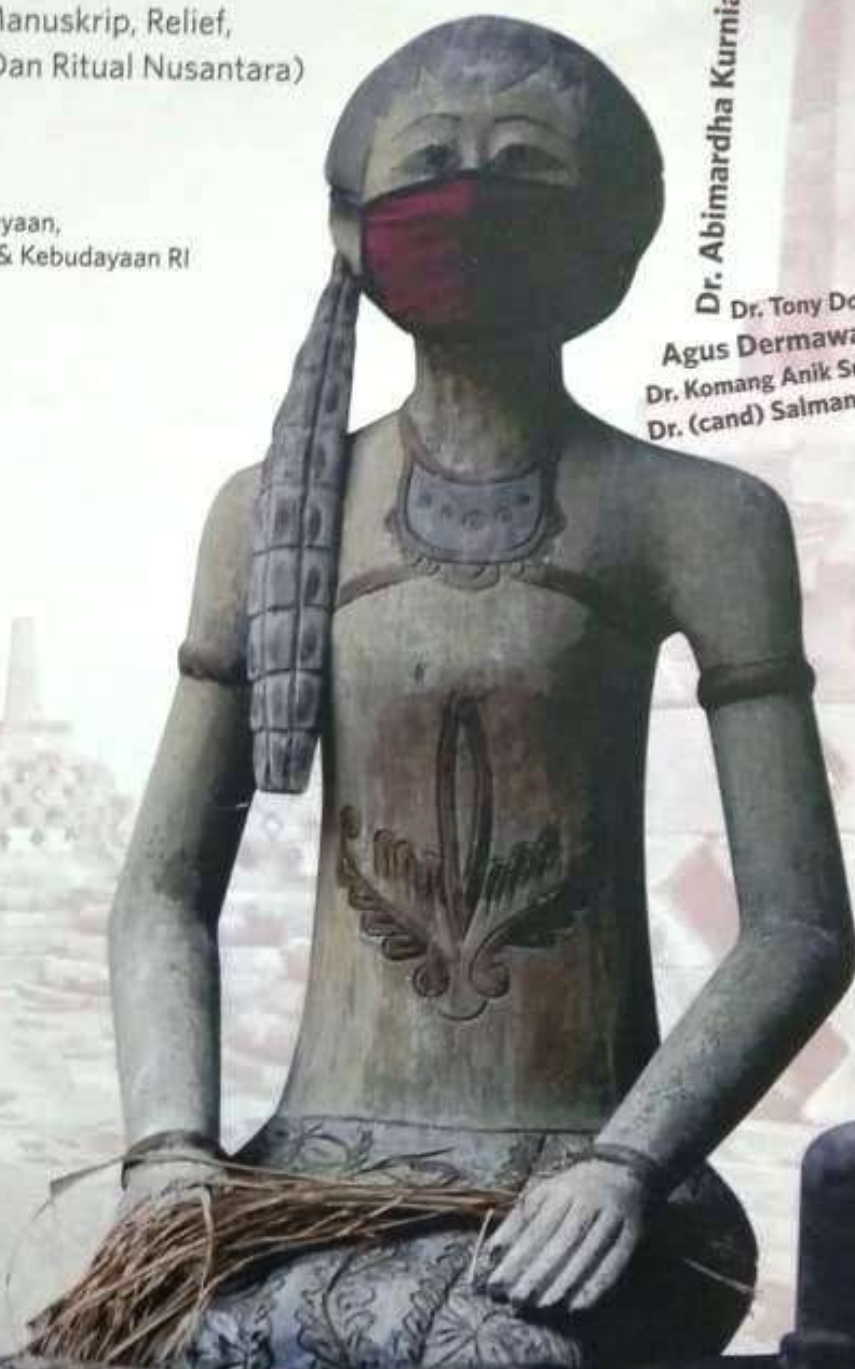
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PANDEMIC DISASTER HISTORY IN ACEH (1800-2020)

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Abstract

Today the world has been hit by an extraordinary pandemic outbreak. The disease is very dangerous because it attacks the world community very quickly, so that it can cause the effects of death. The origin of the disease emerged in 2019 from Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, which is referred to as the Corona virus. As a result of the spread that spreads so fast. Thus, outbreaks of the disease have also been transmitted to various countries in the world, causing many deaths, including in Asia, Australia, Europe and America. Now the virus is a very frightening specter for all inhabitants on earth. This study examines the traces of the Pandemic disaster in Aceh from 1800 to 2020. The purpose of this study is to obtain an overview and explain critically the history of the Pandemic in Aceh, with research locations in Aceh Besar, Banda Aceh and West Aceh. The instruments used in this reaserch are observation, in depth-interview, and documentation. The results of the study shows that Acehnese people regard the event as a historical repetition, as happened since ancient times. In the history the Aceh people are often plagued by disasters that come to change. In the last two centuries (1800-2020) there have been recorded four types of disease outbreaks that cause impacts in the form of fatalities, including infectious disease outbreaks, from bacterial Influenza outbreaks, Vibrio Cholera, Vibrio El-Tor, Smallpox to Corona (Covid-19), thus requiring many parties to take steps to deal quickly in preventing the outbreak of the virus or the deadly pandemic so that it does not spread widely.

Keywords: Traces, Disasters, Pandemic, and Aceh

Introduction

Currently, the world has been being struck by a massive pandemic outbreak. The disease is severely deadly because it rapidly infects people all around the world, hence it causes inevitable deaths. The diseases or viruses was firstly discovered in 2019 in Wuhan, province of Hubei, China and later was popularly known as corona virus. The impact of its infection was extremely rapid. Consequently, the outbreak now has been transmitted across countries in the world which later causes countless deaths, including in Asia, Australia, Europe and America. Now, the virus becomes the frightening specter for all people on earth. The term 'Corona' is derived from the latin means "crown". It was named Corona Virus because every part of its body has protruding nails, look like a crown. In scientific terminology, such protrudes like nails are called 'protein spike'. This protein functions as the receptor stucked in the host. Since it became a trending pandemic since late December 2019, World Health Organization (WHO) named this by Covid-19 (*Coronavirus Disease that was Discovered in 2019*). It was also mentioned that this virus owned 88% genetic similarity to Corona Virus of bats, hence bats were accused to be the cause of this Covid-19.¹

Medical practitioners revealed that the virus came from wild animals and the infections occurred due to unhigine consumptions behaviour from the omnivores, devoured anything to hinder the hunger without thinking twice about the implication that might happen² Before this outbreak happened, the world had also been shocked by many cases that were included as the Global Pandemic, namely *Avian Influenza* (H5N1) and *Swine Influenza* (H1N1) that spread during 2009, and the the most severe Influenza Pandemic recorded in the history was in Spain (1981), which caused 50 million deaths all over the world. Similar to the case of Corona, there is a

¹ See Zainal Arifin, *Ekonomi Corona*, Opini in <https://thetapak Tuanpost.com/kategori/opini/ekonomi-corona/> accessed on April 6th, 2020.

² See Iping Rahmat Saputra, "Corona, Merana dan Durjana", Opini in official website atjehdaily.id on the page <https://www.atjehdaily.id/2020/04/05/corona-merana-dan-durjana/> accessed on 6th April 2020.1

phase where great countries also are exposed by the Covid-19 like South Korea, Iran, Italy and USA with total 301,147 cases per April 4th, 2020, followed by Spain in the second place, and Italy in the third.³

Not only that, some countries with high transmission, they took the *lockdown* policy to anticipate the spread of the virus for not being broader and resulted to many fatalities.⁴ This pandemic is not something new. Even since long time ago, the society in Aceh also experienced many outbreak or diseases in the history from 1800-2020. This outbreak appeared repeatedly many times with different models and different cases as well. Based on the various literature, the information told that many people in Aceh died at that time due to many forms of pandemic. Through this study, the author would elaborate the history in details about the outbreak that once happened in Aceh and the overcoming steps that are believed to be effective in preventing the spread of the virus or the deadly pandemic.

Research Method

This study used qualitative approach in form of written words or oral from observed people and attitude, purposively to study the issues and to obtain deeper meaning about the history of Pandemic in the Acehnese society from 1800-2020. This study used the ethnography method done in Aceh Besar, Banda Aceh and Aceh Barat. The data instruments that were used namely observation, in-depth interview and documentation. The data collected could be analysed through data reduction, data display and draw the conclusion.

³ See Musrafiyan, "Covid-19: Problem, Reaksi, dan Solusi", Opini in official website advokasirakyat.id on the page <https://advokasirakyat.id/2020/04/05/covid-19-problem-reaksi-dan-solusi/> accessed on 6th April 2020.

⁴ See Serambinews.com entitled "Virus dan Obat Penangkalnya dalam Perspektif Masyarakat Aceh", at <https://aceh.tribunnews.com/2020/03/23/virus-dan-obat-penangkalnya-dalam-perspektif-masyarakat-aceh> accessed on April 6th, 2020.

Result and Discussion

1. The History of Pandemic Disaster in Aceh, (1800-2020)

In the context of pandemic in Aceh, the beginning transmitted any kind of viruses or outbreak occurred since 1800s, in which back to that time, Aceh was colonialized by the Dutch East Indies. Under the context of that colonialization, based on historical records, there was first outbreak or pandemic that was known as the bacteria of *Vibrio Cholera*. According to Farid Wajdi (2020) that outbreak firstly occurred in Batavia, Jakarta and then the cholera outbreak began to infect the Dutch troops. The cholera disease was firstly known in 1821. This disease which attacked the colon was signed by the symptom of vomits and the great feeling of defecating. People who suffered from cholera could die in few hours if there was no a serious treatment.⁵ The were countless died people and some of the dead bodies could not be buried. Those dead bodies were put close to highways with their coffin.⁶

From Batavia, cholera even was transmitted to the end of northern Sumatera, that was Aceh, as revealed by Anthony Reid in *Asal Mula Konflik Aceh*, cholera was still spread amongst Dutch troops and transmitted to the people of Aceh.⁷ The Dutch had attacked Aceh on November 6th, 1873. In the water sector in Aceh, all Dutch armies raised the yellow flag indicating that their armoured ships was attacked by the contagious disease at that time. General Van Swieten sent the first wire from Penang to Jakarta to inform

⁵ *Sejarah Pemberantasan Penyakit di Indonesia* published by Departemen Kesehatan

⁶ Wiwin Juwita Ramelan, dkk, "Penyakit Menular di Batavia", research report of Universitas Indonesia

⁷ Anthony Reid, *Asal Mula Konflik Aceh: Dari Perebutan Pantai Timur Sumatera Hingga Akhir Kerajaan Aceh Abad Ke-19*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2005, p. 52.

⁸ Mohammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad Jilid II*, Medan: Harian Waspada, 2007.

that 77 ship crews were infected by *Vibrio Cholera*. Even there was information stating that the one infected by cholera was buried in the coast of Aceh to spread that disease there.⁹ Consequently, the cholera outbreak also attacked the Palace of Aceh that caused Sultan Aceh, Sultan Mahmud Syah died on January 28th, 1874 due to *Vibrio Cholera*. In the historical record also stated that at least over 150 people in Aceh died each day due to cholera, and each day there was over 150 dead bodies buried in the palace yard.¹⁰ However, in 1911, the vaccine for cholera was introduced in the society, but the cholera outbreak could not really be overcome completely. Although the vaccine had been produced, until 1920 was still spread every year.¹¹

Then, in the next decades, there was still in the condition to be colonized by the Dutch East Indies. There was a new outbreak popularly known as "*Pandemic Influenza*" or "*Spanish Flu*". That outbreak occurred in 1918 and became the most malignant disease in the history of human kind, because it killed millions of people. It was estimated that between 20 to 40 million people died due to that deadly disease.¹² The *Influenza Pandemic* attacked and killed people who were in the productive age, between 20 to 40 years old, even though children and old people were sometimes impacted by this disease.¹³ After the "*Pandemic Influenza*" or "*Spanish Flu*", in the next decades, there was another pandemic attacking Indonesia with the new version. This pandemic was known as *Vibrio El-Tor*. This outbreak happened around 1930s, and was also considered as the global pandemic at that time. As a result, people of Indonesia felt the trauma toward this pandemic. There were countless casualties caused

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Interview with Farid Wajdi Ibrahim (Plt. Ketua Majelis Adat Aceh)

¹¹ Interview with Misri A. Muchsin (Profesor of History at UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh)

¹² Priyanto Wibowo, dkk, *Yang Terlupakan: Sejarah Pandemi Influenza 1918 di Hindia Belanda*, Depok: Kerjasama antara Departemen Sejarah Fakultas Ilmu Pengetahuan Budaya Universitas Indonesia, dengan Unicef Indonesia, dan Komnas FBPI, 2009, p. cover.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 47.

by this pandemic. Especially in 1930s and 1960s, the name of *Vibrio El Tor* become the most feared by people in South Sulawesi, Semarang and Jakarta, because this disease was contagious. Similar to Aceh, the cause of this pandemic in term of its transmission was similar to cholera. Even, some people argued that this pandemic was a relative from the bacteria that caused the cholera.¹⁴ As mentioned by Abd. Razak (2020) that the pandemic or outbreak happened in the year of 1930s had caused many deaths. Almost all village (*gampong*) in Aceh was infected by this pandemic, hence it made people of Aceh must bear with two miseries. *First*: the suffering against colonialization; and *second*: the suffering due to the outbreak of *Vibrio Cholera* and *Vibrio El-Tor*.¹⁵

Moreover, Abd. Razak (2020) said that there were some *gampong* in Aceh became empty and even there were no more inhabitants lived there. This was caused by the deaths in one day starting from 5 people and even more. *Gampong Rabeu*, and *Lubok Gapuy* in Aceh Besar became one of sample cases from many *gampong* in Aceh which its villagers were all dead and disappeared during the spread of that deadly pandemic. Even in that dead phenomenon, there was no one wanted to do the *Fardhu Kifayah* for the death Islamic presecution toward the dead body (*mayit*) that died due to the outbreak of *Vibrio Cholera* and *Vibrio El-Tor*.¹⁶

After many kinds of pandemic or outbreak disappeared after the vaccine was found. After decades of Indonesia Independence, there was another pandemic which struck the world, including Indonesia. That new disease was known as virus of "*Variola Mayor*" and "*Variola Minor*". This virus was infected since 1980s. In Aceh, this virus once was spread broadly and even in the early 1980s, many children and even adults got "smallpox" on their bodies caused by the infection of

¹⁴ See Hendaru Tri Hanggoro, *Melawan Wabah El-Tor*, dalam *Masa Lampau Selalu Aktual*, Opini at official website <https://historia.id/sains/articles/melawan-wabah-el-tor-DnoY4> accessed on 6th April 2020.

¹⁵ Interview with Abd. Razak (Dayah Head) di Aceh Besar in July 2020.

¹⁶ Interview with Abd. Razak (Dayah Head) di Aceh Besar in July 2020.

these two viruses. According to Ruqaiyah (2020), it was estimated that many people in Aceh at that time died due to this virus and some imperfectly survived. It resulted to the blindness and deafness and it left many scars and marks on their skin. Many children died due to this virus.¹⁷ During that year, WHO had announced war against this virus globally. However, until today it could not be convinced about the spread of this virus. But, in one historical note said that this disease was found long time ago, especially during the civilization of ancient Egypt, and some scientists assumed that the virus was coming from the 3rd century before the Egypt civilization. Later, in the eighteenth century, that virus was also occurred in Europe.¹⁸

Next, in the twentieth century, there was the next pandemic of *Avian Influenza*. This happened in March 2003, and was estimated this virus came from bird and it infected the population of birds and finally infected humans. After this influenza, there was *Swine Influenza* happened in March 2009 caused by the virus type A with subtype H1N1. During the pandemic of A-H1N1/2009, Indonesia had been one of countries that built the *National Indonesia Pandemic Preparedness and Reponse Plan*, so Indonesia could anticipate the possibility of pandemic, especially for Swine Influenza, A-H1N1/2009.¹⁹

In 2019, there was a new type of virus coming from Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. The disease was popularly called as Corona virus, in which this virus had 88% genetic similarity to the Corona Virus of bats. This disease became one of viral outbreaks in the later December 2019, so it had infected many people from other countries. Therefore, WHO released a new name for this outbreak with Covid-19 (*Coronavirus Disease that was Discovered in 2019*).²⁰

¹⁷ Interview with Ruqaiyah (Retired teacher at Meulaboh-Aceh Barat) who was born in 1953.

¹⁸ See "Sebelum Virus korona Wabah Pandemi Mematikan Pernah Melanda Dunia" in www.kumparan.com accessed on August 7th, 2020.

¹⁹ Priyanto Wibowo, *Loc.Cit*, pp. 1-3.

²⁰ Rahmad Syah Putra, Saifan Irwan, dkk, *Suara Mereka di Saat Pandemi*,

The spread of this outbreak was very fast, so it was spread for sure. Last data showed that beside China, some countries and other continents were also infected by this virus, and more than 200 countries in the world had reported the cases of this corona virus.²¹

In Aceh, the main indication of the corona spreading was caused by the direct contact with the infected people through the visit and travel to the infected areas. This was evident by one male patient that was firstly declared positive in Aceh that experienced a travel history to the infected area/province by Covid-19, that was Surabaya and Bogor. The 56-year-old patient, based on the last result of diagnosis, suffered infected lung, so finally he died at Zainal Abidin General Hospital (RSUDZA), Banda Aceh, on Monday, 23rd March 2020.²²

Post discovery of that case, the government of Aceh immediately conducted a meeting discussing the further prevention. By conducting the meeting with FORKOPIMDA (*Forum Koordinasi Pimpinan Daerah*) to establish the anticipating action coordinated in Aceh. The meeting also involved *Kodam Iskandar Muda* and *Polda Aceh*, *PT Angkasa Pura*, *Sultan Iskandar Muda Airport*, *Head of Harbour*, *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (DPRA)*, *High Court*, *Kepala Kanwil Beacukai Aceh (Aceh Customs)*, *BPOM*, *Kejaksaan Tinggi*, *Bank of Indonesia* and several *Kepala Satuan Kerja Perangkat Aceh (SKPA)*. Nova Iriansyah as the *Task Executor* of Aceh Governor, issued a letter announcing to instruct people to do the prevention of spread of Corona Virus through clean healthy life habits, and also to increase the level of worship toward Allah SWT, and "People of Aceh were instructed to keep their *wudhu*, continuous *dzikir* and *ibadah* from all disease,

Banda Aceh: Bandar Publishing, 2020, p. 13.

²¹ See *Penyebab Asal Mula dan Pencegahan Virus korona* pada halaman website berita online news.detik.com <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4956764/penyebab-asal-mula-dan-pencegahan-virus-corona-di-indonesia> accessed on April 7th, 2020.

²² See "Aceh Laporkan Kasus Pertama Positif Corona Covid-19" pada website resmi tirto.id pada halaman <https://tirto.id/aceh-laporkan-kasus-pertama-positif-corona-covid-19-eHMK> accessed on April 7th, 2020.

including Corona."²³

The government of Aceh also dismissed and banned temporarily the activity of learning at schools, *dayah* and universities including to prepare the mass graveyard for the victims of Corona or Covid-19 located in Aceh Besar. The preparation for the mass cemetery was done based on the instructed letter of *Permohonan Direktur Rumah Sakit Umum Daerah* (RSUD) dr. Zainoel Abidin on 27th March 2020. The proposal of land for mass graveyard was done for the positive-Covid-19 corpses or patient under surveillance (PDP) at General Hospital of dr. Zainoel Abidin²⁴, in which the steps were taken by the government of Aceh to face the worst scenario whenever the medical assistance could not save the lives of corona patients. Certainly, such thing made something convenient for whole people in Aceh. However, Acehnese society should have been aware toward the risk of corona virus. In line with the government of Aceh, the *Majelis Permusyawaratan Ulama Aceh* (MPU) Aceh as the highest *fatwa* institution for religious affair, also issued its *Tausiyah, Nomor 4 Tahun 2009* about the Worship Implementation and Other Social Activities in Emergency Situation. This was proved that the infectious disease had been spread broadly in the middle of society, so it then required a serious action.

Related to that, the Aceh history expert, Nurdin AR (2020) argued that Covid-19 as one of historical repetitions toward the outbreak phenomena. Although through the different pandemic, it had the same history with the greatest phenomenon happened few decades ago which caused massive casualties, hence it demanded many parties to do a responsive preventing actions in preventing the infection of virus or deadly pandemic to be widely spread.²⁵ Therefore, Acehnese

²³ See Surat Edaran Gubernur Aceh on March 12rd, 2020 about "Cegah Virus korona Melalui Ibadah, Perilaku Hidup Bersih dan Sehat.

²⁴ See Surat Permohonan Direktur RSUD dr. Zainoel Abidin, Perihal "Permohonan Lahan Tanah Kuburan yang ditujukan Kepada Gubernur Aceh", on 27th March 2020/02 Sya'ban 1441 H.

²⁵ Interview with Nurdin AR (a retired Museum head of Aceh Museum and lecturer of Adab dan Humaniora Faculty of Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry

people since long time ago had selected two main tools in preventing this pandemic. *First: Religious Approach*, which was through forms of prayers that were said as one virtue to repeal the bad luck. *Second: traditional approach*, in form of herbal receipt taken from various trees grown on earth. The traditional approach was not just a simply way, but it had been tested million of years. This must be supported and proven by many references in forms of knowledge in medical sector obtained from previous Acehnese ancestors from the theory of disease, theory of medicine and even its medical treatments.

2. Religious Approach

For people of Aceh, the corona outbreak was considered as one test or warning from Allah SWT to his creatures to be more pious and keep remembering Allah. Therefore, many people of Aceh held many rituals to prevent the outbreak, like the recitation of *Qunut Nazilah* in five-time prayer as a form of bad luck refusion. In Aceh Besar, the researcher visited some gampong, namely: *Gampong Meunasah Papeun*, *Gampong Tungkop* and *Gampong Siem*. Similar to Aceh Besar, Banda Aceh like *Gampong Lamdingin*, *Gampong Lamgugop* and *Gampong Ateuk Pahlawan*. The villagers there did the ritual by walking around the village handing a torch after *Isya* prayer while saying the prayers. It was also similarly found in Nagan Raya district, dozens of villagers of *Gampong Kuta Padang*, *Suka Makmue* sub-district,²⁶ did the prayer by walking around the village. This kind of action was meant to repeal the bad luck including to prevent the pandemic of Covid-19. The prayers while walking around the village was done after *Isya* prayer at *Masjid Istiqamah*, local village. The people did the walking around village by reciting the *zikir Ya Latif* and other form of prayers led by a *Teungku* of local village, followed by all people there. The purpose was to repeal the bad luck and to be away from all the dangers.

Then, it also happened in Aceh Barat in several villages, namely:

Banda Aceh) in March 2020.

²⁶ Result of Field Notes at Nagan Raya district, on March 22rd, 2020

Gampong Pante Mutia, Gampong Ie Itam Woyla, Gampong Suak Ribee, Gampong Suak Raya, Gampong Meunasah Buloh Kaway XVI, Gampong Pasi Jambu, and Gampong Alue Lhok. They also did the same tradition by walking around the village while saying the *zikir Ya Latif* and the prayer of *tulak bala* to prevent the spread of outbreak. Mustafa (2020) mentioned that the tradition had been long implemented by people of Aceh, especially when Aceh at that time was struck by the pandemic called as *Ta'eun Ijak Brok*. The villages of Aceh at that time also applied this kind of tradition by reciting the *Isim Ya Latif* in preventing the spread of the disease.²⁷ Moreover, Habli (2020) also added that the recitation of *Ya Latif* was one of the *Nazam* for people of Aceh, famously known as "*Jalateh*." The *zikir Ya Latif* was taken from the 29th of *Asma'ul Husna*. Through this *Al-Latif*, Allah would keep away from all the dangers by saying the *Isim ya Latif*, could make ourselves to be close to Allah SWT, the creator of disease and the creator of universe, named As-Syaafi (The Healer). This had also the correlation with the argument from Az-Zajjaj, the Arabic language expert in the *tafsir Asma'ul Husna*, defining Al-Latif could be ment by "reaching the goals through hidden and unexpected ways."²⁸

In the sub-district of Woyla, Aceh Barat, this tradition was usually held in month of *Safar*. Since based on the people's understanding that in the tradition and experience, many bad luck and outbreak happened in *Safar*. The outbreak of *ta'eun* (*tha'un*) which attacked the livestock, especially chickens, usually happened in *Safar*. So, the ritual of *meujalateh* (reciting the *Nazam Isim Ya Latif*) became the routine during *Safar*. Even, it was told by one customary leader there that long time ago, before the conflict between GAM-RI, the ritual of *meujalateh* was done in the evening and using special accessories like bamboo stick. That stick was filled by pebbles to produce the sound and completed by *bulee jok* (the fiber of sugar palm tree) at

²⁷ Interview with Mustafa (a villager of Ie Itam, Kecamatan Woyla, Aceh Barat) on July 7th, 2020

²⁸ Interview with M. Habli (a villager of Pasi Aceh, Aceh Barat) on July 7th, 2020.

the head of the stick. The sound produced by shaking the pebbles inside the bamboo, and the shaken *bulee jok* at the edge of stick, was ment to scare the devils/outbreak.²⁹ *Meujalateh* (the recitation of *Isim Ya Latief*) last for 15 days from *Rabu Abeh* in *Safar*. At the end of ritual, all the sticks were tied and turned into a raft, and it was released to the river, and followed by the *kenduri Rabu Abeh*.³⁰ Moreover, the origin of *Nazam Isim Ya Latif*, based on the researcher's note, mentioned that *Isim Ya Latief* was carried by the *mursyid* or *khalifah* of *Naqsybandiyah* from Abuya Muda Wali Al-Khalidi and was systematically arranged by *Alm. Abuya Jamaluddin Waly*. This *Nazam* was similar to the arrangement from Al-Habib Abu Bakar Al-Adniy bin Al-Masyhur. The intro was started by the first verse:

يا لطيفا لم يزل الطف بنا فيما نزل إنك

لطيف لم تزل الطف بنا والمسلمين

"O! the Most Gentle, please be gentle upon us all for all of Your provision, because truly, You are the most Gentle forever. Please be gentle upon us all and people of Moslem."

It could be meant generally that through the *tawashul* of *zikir* of *Asma'ul Husna* the 29th, Al-Latif, Alla will keep us away from all dangers and by reciting the *Isim Ya Latif* could make us to be closer to Alla SWT, the God, the creator of any disease and the creator of universe, named *Asy-Syaafi* (The Healer). This also had the correlation with the argument from Az-Zajjaj, the Arabic language expert in the *tafsir Asma'ul Husna*, defining Al-Latif could be ment by "reaching the goals through hidden and unexpected ways".

Meanwhile, Istiqamatunnisa (2020) stated the tradition as one of the heritages from the previous Acehnese ancestor, through its basic implementation taken from several references from books (*kitab*) of

²⁹ Interview with Syahidin Jabat (a head of MAA of Woyla District) on July 8th, 2020

³⁰ Interview with Syahidin Jabat (a head of MAA of Woyla District) on July 8th, 2020

ulama in Aceh, in form of prayers to wipe the outbreak away or *ta'eun* appearing in the middle of society. Hence, it was reasonable if the people of Aceh until today often held the ritual of *tulak bala*, not just walking around the village. However, also by reciting the *zikir* and prayers at *meunasah-meunasah* or at the gate of the village (*babah ret*), and those rituals was done seriously through religious steps.³¹ The tradition and prayers were also found in several old manuscripts like in the manuscript of *Mujarabah* collection at Aceh Museum which discussed about the prayers of *tolak bala* of this *ta'eun* pandemic, which sounded as follow: "Bismillah... Bismillahi sya'nil 'adhiimil burhaanusy syaddis sulthaani kullu yaumin huwa di sya'nin maasya Allahu, kaana wamaa lam ya'lam yaa sya'lam yaqul laa haula walaa quwwata illah billah. Allahumma inni a'uzubika minath tha'uni waththa'uuni wamautil fuhyiati min humumil wabaai wamin juhdil balaai wasuil qadhaai wadarkisy syiqaai wasyamatatil a'daai yaa zaljalaali walikraam, which means: In the name of Allah, the most gracious, most merciful. In the name of Allah who is great/powerful, strong evidence has been obtained by the Sultan, that every day He feels/sees evidence of the greatness of Allah, that He (the sultan) and anyone who does not know, why not (*yaa sya'lam*) just say it. there is no power and strength except Allah the Almighty/powerful/possessing power. O Allah, keep me away from *tha'un* disease and *tha'un*-like plague and death because of the plague and fear/panic because of the plague, and keep me away from the difficulties of the plague, and the difficulties of affairs/due to disease, misery and screams that occur, O The Most Owner of glory and the Most Owner of Honor.³²

According to Istiqamatunnisa (2020) in that script, it was mentioned only the prayers in short, but from the prayers, we could see that *ulama* had conducted this book to be applied in order to keep us away from the outbreak that was dangerously infectious and

³¹ Interview with Istiqamatunnisa (Researcher of ancient archives & and lecturer of Adab and Humanity of Islam Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry) on August 20th, 2020.

³² See Kucik Lam Ujoeng Muhammad Hasan, *Naskah Mujarabah*, Banda Aceh: Museum Aceh, tt, p. 23.

deadly, as well as the Corona virus that is currently attacking the world.³³ So, it was reasonable, during the viral of this corona virus, the verse of compliment and the prayers has returned one more time, and many of them were done by people of Aceh as the manifestation of *Tolak Bala* and asking Allah SWT to keep away from this pandemic. Certainly, this ritual was also one of the heritages as done by previous people of Aceh. This was because Aceh was closely related to the Religion and the Traditon and Custom, really believed to the rituals could overcome every dangers and the *ta'eun* pandemic coming into the society. The prayers and *syair* were read by melodious voice led by one *teungku* or *Teungku Imam Gampong*, then it was replied or followed by all the followers togetherly by men, old and young. This was also once stated by (C. Snock.1997:38) the verses and prayers that were read many times at *meunasah-meunasah* in every village for seven days, then in the last night, it was recited while walking around together at the gate of the village, after finishing the *bang* or *adzab*, to do the *Isya* prayer together.³⁴ The ritual was done because the people of Aceh believed that evey outbreak could be wiped away and return to Allah SWT.

3. Traditional Approach

In Aceh, the outbreak was known as *Ta'eun*. At that time, the *Ta'eun* was coming from Arabic word, *Tha'um*. This type of disease was not just one type, but there were fews of it, one of them: *ta'eun* as the outbreak

³³ Interview with Istiqamatunnisa on Agust 20th, 2020; see also Istiqamatunnisa, *Doa dan Syair Tulak Bala Ta'eun Berdasarkan Naskah Aceh*, in www.atjehwatch.com accessed on August 31st, 2020.

³⁴ See Snouck Hurgronje, *The Acehness: Introduction. Distribution of the People, Forms of Government and Administration of Justice. Achehnese Calendars, Festivals and Seasons. Agriculture, Navigation and Fishery. Laws Relating to Land and Water. Domestic Life and Law*. New York: E. J. Brill, 1906. See also Snouck Hurgronje, *Aceh di Mata Kolonialis*, Jakarta: Yayasan Soko Guru, 1985; See also Snouck Hurgronje, *Aceh: Rakyat dan Adat Istiadatnya*, Jakarta: INIS Indonesian-Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies-, 1996; See also Snouck Hurgronje, *Orang Aceh: Budaya, Masyarakat, dan Politik Kolonial*, Yogyakarta: Mata Bangsa & Ircisod, 2019; and see also, Snouck Hurgronje, *Orang Aceh Ilmu Pengetahuan Sastra Permainan dan Agama*, Yogyakarta: Mata Bangsa & Ircisod, 2019.

that could be contagious to all people. Based on previous experience, there were things that needed to do by people to preserve their immune of bodies from all the diseases, namely: *First*, keep being healthy by cleaning the yards from as well as possible, this was exactly happened back there, when people of Aceh burned all the dirty objects and sterilized the environment of their houses during the *Ta'eun* pandemic. *Secondly*: drinking herbal drinking like: sugar cane water mixed with turmeric powder, honey and eating betel and other special bitter leaves, and fresh fruits and vegetables. *Thirdly*: the behaviour which encourages people to do the activities directly under the sunlight, for the purpose to kill the bad bacteria and to keep the immunity. Another usual habit done by the people while working lightly to get more sweat. Some alternative ways should be continuously maintained and applied in order to be away from the disease.

Such tradition was also mentioned by the Dutch Antropolog, Christian Snouck Hurgronje (1857-1936) who once lived in Aceh and did some researches about religious procedures to the medication and kind of medicine used by Acehnese people in healing various illness. All of them were written in some books, one of them was noted in the book entitled "The Achenese" published in two volumes in Leiden (1906). Then that book was republished in Indonesian version by Yayasan Soko Guru Jakarta (1985) entitled '*Aceh di Mata Kolonial*' Volume 1 and Volume II. In that book, Snouck Hurgronje (1985:52) wrote that there were four kinds of medicine used by Acehnese people to heal the *ta'eun*. *First*, the *ta'eun* could be healed by drinking the extract of sugar cane mixed with turmeric powder. *Second*, the sufferers who were infected could be treated by water of rice mixed with gambier. *Third*, the extract of smashed betel nut could be effective to heal the *ta'eun* infected patient; and *fourth*, the water from guava that was firstly baked and then to be drunk. All those four heals were the traditional ingredient that were used by Acehnese traditional people to heal the *ta'eun*. These ingerdients were considered to be effective to heal the pandemic for the infected patients.³⁵

³⁵ Zahrul Fadli Johan, "Virus dan Obat Penangkalnya dalam Perspektif

Conclusion

In the historical context of outbreak in Aceh, the first spread of virus or pandemic happened back in 1880s. Based on the historical notes that Aceh had experienced many pandemics that caused the countless deaths, namely: 1) *Vibrio Cholera*, *Influenza Pandemic* or *Spanish Flu*, *Vibrio El-Tor*, the smallpox caused by *Variola Mayor* and *Variola Minor*, the *Avian Influenza* to *Coronavirus Disease* that was discovered in 2019 (Covid-19). It then forced people in Aceh to take the preventions rapidly. Long period ago, the people of Aceh had implemented two main ways in overcoming the pandemic. *First*: religious approach, which was through various forms of prayers said as one virtue to repeal the bad luck. *Second*: traditional approach, in form of herbal ingredients taken from various tress grown on earth, namely sugar cane mixed with turmeric powder, honey, eating betel, special bitter leaves and also fresh fruits and vegetables.

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