

# 東北紀行

## Tohoku Travelogue

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### 『東北紀行』創刊のご挨拶

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東日本大震災から4年2ヵ月がたち、新しい東北の姿が現れつつあります。復興のために、学会東北会員の観光研究と発信の重要性は高まっています。周知の通り、今年度、東北会員の組織として従来の懇談会を改組した東北支部が設立されました。私は支部長として会員の研究発表機会の確保に努めるつもりです。今般創刊した東北支部 Newsletter 『東北紀行』は、東北の旅・観光、復興関連情報、支部活動等をお伝えします。皆様のご高覧とご助言をお願いいたします。本号は去る3月の支部発足総会でのインドネシア・アチェ文化観光庁マーケティング局長（津波博物館前館長）ラマダニ氏講演の要約を掲載します。アチェは津波被災地として東北が学ぶべき先例です。ご参考となれば幸いです。

### POSITIVE LONG TERM IMPACTS OF ACEH'S PAST DISASTER IN CREATING POTENTIAL TOURISM DESTINATION: Another Approach towards Future Community's Disaster Resilience\*



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Wars and other catastrophic events have created negative impacts to human lives. They can heavily destroy all aspects of human lives in terms

of economy, socio-culture, politics and environment built over generations. The First and Second World Wars and other catastrophic natural disasters are such horrific examples that have become unforgettable frightening nightmares within our human life. The events had created not only the deepest misery, loss, trauma and devastation for those living within the periods, but also their family members were torn apart during the tragedy.

On the other hand, from a tourism perspective as one of world's rapid growing industries, such remains of bygone wars or other catastrophic events will also result in positive long term impacts on future people's lives. Maintaining and promoting post-war or disaster heritage sites, for examples, have become a new significant niche market for a tourist destination, not only to create job opportunities for the locals, to remind succeeding generations of the worse impacts of the tragedy, but more importantly to enhance people's awareness on disaster risk reduction towards future disaster risks.

The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami disaster (also known as the Aceh Tsunami) with massive devastation and loss, for another example, has created not only a deep internal trauma for the people of Aceh (Aceh is one of Indonesia's 34 provinces located in the north-western-most part of Indonesia), but also Tsunami remains. The remains, which if carefully managed will be Aceh's future important Tsunami heritage, not only as scientific and educational purposes, but also new unique tourism destinations, such as *the stranded ship, the boat atop the house, Tsunami mass graveyards, stranded mosque dome, Tsunami heritage trails, Baiturrahman Grand Mosque, Baiturrahim Mosque, survivors with their Tsunami stories and Aceh Tsunami Museum.*

As the Tsunami remains are considered unique, specific and rarely found in other places, Aceh with its past large scale disaster event, which is incorporated with other Aceh's natural beauty and its vibrant sense of cultural heritage has been designated as a unique Tsunami-based tourism destination in the north-western-most part of Indonesia. In addition, a newer term "memory tourism" or "Aceh Memory Tourism" as part of "Dark Tourism" is also used and applied in order to more softly and emotionally describe many of the past difficult situations.

Nevertheless, promoting Aceh as a potential Tsunami tourism destination or memory tourism destination post the human tragedy is not without any challenges. As it was massively catastrophic, the reconstruction efforts were prioritized in providing humanitarian aids, rebuilding the shattered economy and creating a politically stable environment (*before the Tsunami event, Aceh experienced a long serious armed political conflict between the Free Aceh Movement and the Government of Indonesia. The tragedy finally paved a way to end the conflict between the parties that had*

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taken a long period and a greater number of casualties since 1976).

As the Acehese people seriously experienced grievous feelings, such as *hopelessness, missing, pressure, fear, anger, sadness, pain and guilt*, in aftermath of the disaster, it was impossible to pay attention on tourism issues or promote Aceh as a disaster-based tourism destination. In other words, it may take some time to plan and arrange those catastrophic sites as tourism attraction due to a disaster image, emotion and psychology of people to the past catastrophic events occurred.

Many pros and cons arose when the concept of Tsunami tourism was publicly introduced. Many criticized that the disaster-based tourism as an exploitation of human misery and a practice that demeans and humiliates local residents, especially the survivors. Meanwhile, others also argued that such tourism to devastated areas can offer a boost to the local livelihood and raise awareness of the incident.

In short, after years of rehabilitation and reconstruction work, today the people of Aceh have managed to overcome the catastrophe and continue with building their cities and life. They also welcome positively that Aceh is designated a potential Tsunami-based tourism destination by the local government in the efforts to create job opportunities for the locals, to remind succeeding generations of the worse impacts of the tragedy and to enhance people's awareness on disaster risk reduction towards future disaster risks.

It should be noted that promoting Aceh as a memory tourism destination does not merely mean to commercialize or exploit the sufferings and the pains of the Acehese for business purposes only. Otherwise, apart from the livelihood improvement in a longer term, it will be another effective media aimed at showing the global tourists on the strength, resilience and patience of the Acehese during the past hardship and conveying a tribute for the outpouring of generosity and sympathy of the global community and promoting a global sense of social togetherness. It is also an effective media for sharing live stories or lessons learnt of past disaster experiences on how to explore ways of coping with disasters and rebuilding stricken communities by showing residents what happens in the past and the needs to get to high ground for self-mitigation.

To date, the memory tourism has been as a new niche market for a tourist destination and generated significant income for the tourism players in Aceh, where surprisingly many of whom are the past Tsunami

survivors in order to improve their livelihood post the disaster. The tourism business run by them varies from travel agents, cafe and restaurant managers, accommodation managers, tourist resort managers, tourist guides, tour operators to event organizers.

The Aceh Tsunami Museum as an important iconic Tsunami or memory tourism and other Tsunami-related sites has so far turned into popular tourist attractions among visitors. These sites are mostly preferred as weekend recreation spots, where powerful memories of past Indian Ocean Tsunami disaster still endure. Amazingly, a growing numbers of domestic and international tourists are coming to see and enjoy these sites while studying about the Tsunami and Tsunami destruction in Aceh.

The number of tourists' visit (domestic and international tourists) to Aceh in 2014 was 1.428.262 tourists consisting of 1.377.541 domestic tourists and 50.72 international tourists. This number increased to 27% compared to the number of tourists' visit in 2013. The number of tourists' visit (domestic and international tourists) to Aceh in 2013 was 1.118.178 tourists consisting of 1.075.626 domestic tourists and 42.552 international tourists. However, this new kind of tourism has economically generated a significant income and open up employment opportunity for the locals.

To sum up, the disaster eventually proved to be a "*blessing in disguise*", which transformed the tragedy into an opportunity for the Acehese to leading a better life in peace like promoting Tsunami or memory tourism. Through this type of tourism, it will be a media to create job opportunities for the locals, to remind succeeding generations of the worse impacts of the tragedy and to enhance people's awareness on disaster risk reduction. Additionally, as Japan also experienced similar devastating earthquake and Tsunami that struck off the north-eastern part of Japan on March 11, 2011, it also resulted in not only a massive loss and devastation, but also Tsunami remains, such as the story of Hamayuri ship that was carried by the Tsunami and perched on the top of a small Japanese inn in Otsuchicho. As a result, a joint research and cooperation in close partnership with Japan Institute of Tourism Research (JITR) is needed in order to further examine the issues of positive long term impacts in creating potential tourism destination and what actually motivates individuals to visit sites of dark tourism in the aftermath of the disaster for economic and socio-cultural benefits of both countries, Japan and Indonesia's Aceh.