

# Mosque and Civilization

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### Mosque and Civilization: Setting Islamic Center of Nusa Tenggara Barat as Center of Civilization

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#### Abstract

This article aims to describe the meaning, current state, challenges, and projection of the Islamic center of West Nusa Tenggara Province of Indonesia as the center of civilization. The scope of the study is all fields of civilization ranging from spiritual, education, social services, economic to public policies domain. This scope is referring to what Prophet Mubammad peace be upon him did with an-Nabawi grand mosque in al-Madinah al-Munawwarah as the center of the first generation of Muslims's life starting from private to public life. The method used in this research is qualitative research with a phenomenological approach as a paradigm. As a conclusion, it could be said that this Islamic center has been completing landscape of Lombok Island as an island of thousand mosques, proving compatibility of Islam with modernity, promising the wider and more important roles of the center to recall Islamic civilization as the machine of Muslims movement at all aspects of life and contribute to building a better world for all human beings all over the world.

#### Kata Kunci :

Masjid,  
Islamic Center,  
Peradaban Islam,

#### Abstrak

Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan makna, situasi terkini, tantangan dan proyeksi Islamic Center Nusa Tenggara Barat sebagai pusat peradaban. Ruang lingkupnya adalah dimensi peradaban mulai dari wilayah spiritual, pendidikan, layanan sosial, pembangunan ekonomi sampai dengan kebijakan publik. Hal ini mengacu kepada apa yang dilakukan oleh Nabi Muhammad SAW dengan menjadikan Masjid Nabawi di Madinah sebagai pusat kehidupan generasi pertama umat Islam mulai dari urusan pribadi sampai dengan urusan publik. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologi sebagai paradigma. Kesimpulannya, Islamic Center Nusa Tenggara Barat telah melengkapi panorama Pulau Lombok sebagai pulau seribu masjid, membuktikan kesesuaian Islam dengan modernitas, menjanjikan peran yang lebih luas untuk mengembalikan peradaban Islam sebagai penggerak kehidupan umat Islam dalam segala aspek kehidupan dan berkontribusi positif dalam membangun kehidupan yang lebih baik bagi umat manusia di seluruh dunia.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the long history of Islamic civilization, the mosque has been playing an important role as the center of the Muslim movement in all fields of life. Soon after living in *al-Madinah al-Munawwarah*, the first thing done by Prophet Muhammad PBUH was building a mosque (Al-Buthi 1990). Prophet built foundations of new Muslim society namely mosque, brotherhood among Muslims, and Madinah charter as constitution referred by Medina's citizens that consist of Muslims, Jews, and Christians (Al-Buthi 1990). From that time, the mosque has been the heart of Muslim society. In the mosque, they perform worships, share knowledge, seek justice in fair judiciary processes, release warriors

to the battleground, make policies due to common interests, and preserve strong integration of Islamic *umma* (Bin Duhaisy 2003).

Islamic center of West Nusa Tenggara Province of Indonesia is an iconic mosque located at Mataram, the capital city of the province and surrounded by some buildings for education, Islamic studies, tourism, offices, hall, and park purposes (Britannica 2016). Total land space used for all is 74.749 meter square with 36.538 meter square for the mosque with a capacity for 150.000 prayers and 99 meter high of the minaret (Times Indonesia 2019).

Launched at September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 (Antara 2016), the mosque that named *Hub al-Watān* has played important roles in representing Islam as a marker of the identity of *Sasak* people (indigenous habitant of Lombok Island) either in religious or social-cultural life. In the first place, the mosque has been completing the landscape of Lombok as an island of 1000 mosques, hundreds of Islamic boarding schools, and 93 % of the Muslim population (Rondonuwu 2015). *Hub al-Watān* Mosque also begins to play a broader role than just a place to perform *ṣalat*. In the same year, the mosque hosted 26<sup>th</sup> national reciting Qur'an competition (MTQ, *Musābaqah Tilawatil Qur'an*) (Detiknews 2016), serial of Ramadan festival at the following years, some exhibitions, international conferences, and daily Islamic lecturing delivered by prominent intellectuals of the province as a routine program.

This broader role corresponds to some promising achievements of NTB especially Lombok at the national and global levels. On October 20<sup>th</sup> 2011, President of Indonesia officially opened Lombok International Airport (LIA) triggering the fast-growing of supporting infrastructure and manufacture like roads, hotels, flights, tourism. In 2015, Lombok has been awarded as world's best halal tourism destination and world best halal honeymoon destination (The Jakarta Post 2015). Mandalika regent of Central Lombok is now becoming a special economic regent, an exotic and world level tourism spot that also will be the host of MotoGP in 2021 (The Jakarta Post 2019).

West Nusa Tenggara government is now starting to talk about the Islamic Center as a civilization center. Under *NTB Gemilang* (enlightened West Nusa Tenggara) vision, the government has decided six missions in five years (2018-2023) of its term. One of them is *NTB aman dan berkah* (secure and blessed West Nusa Tenggara), and one of the programs to get this mission done is to make Islamic center as the center of civilization (Dinas Komunikasi, Informatika, dan Statistik NTB 2019). This is the direct context of this research. It will be very interesting and important at the same time to make an outlook to that bright vision and those enlightened missions, to give an appropriate reference of public policies based on academic point of views, and to present a sort of future horizon of this idea from the perspective of civilizational studies.

A new phenomenon, the Islamic center of NTB quickly attracts university students, researchers, and academicians' attentions to do some researches due to the presence of it and its roles to Muslim society in West Nusa Tenggara. Among those researches, Mustain (2018), for example, studied the Islamic center of NTB's role to reconstruct Islamic identity in Lombok especially in Mataram where most Hindus of the island life and preserve the heritage of Karangasem Kingdom that ruled Lombok from 1670 to 1820 M. According to Mustain, the government of West Nusa Tenggara Province under TGB. Dr. M. Zainul Majdi has a dominant but hegemonic role in making the Islamic center of NTB as a prestigious icon of the Islamic identity of Lombok society and aggregating supports from them along the process of building such Islamic center with very luxurious mosque named Hubbul Wathan (Mustain 2018).

Najamudin (Najamudin 2018) studied conflict that arose as the consequence of Islamic center of NTB building between new management and *jama'ab tablig* who use old

Great Mosque of At-Taqwa Mataram as their center of activities in one side and the family who apostate the land of an old mosque who worried about the legal state of the land in another side. Najamudin concluded that the key point of the solution is good communication between the parties engaged in the conflict to solve the problems related to the conflict. Meanwhile, Fazira Ulfa (Ulfa 2018) focused on the role of a creative team of Islamic Centre NTB in flourishing its economic and public aspects. Ulfa concluded that this creative team has been contributing positively to publishing the Islamic center of NTB through online and social media, servicing public teaching held in the Islamic center of NTB, and helping the management of the Islamic center of NTB to increase income from halal tourism activities.

Based on these researches, the novelty of this research laid on its scope and perspective. This research will cover all dimension of the Islamic center of NTB because the perspective that used in this research is civilization perspective as there is no meaning of it without covering all dimensions of life. At this point, the questions of this research are; 1) what does it mean to have an Islamic center as a civilization center?; 2) what are the challenges to get it done; and 3) what is the projection of it in the future? All of these questions will be the research questions of this article.

As the theoretical framework of these questions, this research primarily refers to a book written by Husain Mu'nis (1981) entitled *al-Masjid* that reviewed almost all references written either in Arabic or English, arranged original concept of a mosque in Islamic civilization and recommended work plan to reactivate great historical roles of a mosque in Muslim societies. Mu'nis (1981) encourages Muslim society to build the grand mosque at the center of every region of the Islamic world as the head of mosques in surrounding areas with iconic architecture to show the beauty of Islam and its architectural tradition.

This work also refers to Ismail Raji al-Faruqi (1997) to find out the importance of a mosque in Islamic civilization. He noted that Islamic civilization consists of three-level: spirit, body, and performance. Mosque, in this context, is lain the second and third levels but it can't be separated from the spirit. At this point, this article refers to Ibn Asyur (1992) as noted that the spirit of Islamic civilization is sacred (*iman or taubid*) motivation not profane (economic, social, or sexual) one. This thought is in line with Ibnu Khaldun's (Ibn Khaldun 2004) theory due to the main factor of the decline of Islamic civilization namely changing motivation from the first to the second.

This research, therefore, aims to understand the meaning of setting the Islamic center of NTB as the center of civilization, find out its current state and challenges faced, and draw the possible projection in the future. To get these aims obtained, the researcher worked in a qualitative kind of research using the phenomenological approach as a paradigm (Moleong 2013). There are two considerations to choose this paradigm: firstly, as Sasaknese and toward the Islamic center of NTB, the researcher shares the same pride with other Sasak Muslim people in the intersubjectivity scheme required in the phenomenological approach (Putra 2012). Secondly, the researcher is directly engaging with other colleagues as a preacher in the Islamic center of NTB. Furthermore, the researcher is also being part of Sasak people as the Islamic center of NTB perceived as a contemporary icon of Muslim-Sasak identity. As noted by Hassan Hanafi (2012), the most appropriate method to make research on a certain society's identity is the phenomenological method.

Collecting data, therefore, is done through observation of the processes and current state of the Islamic center of NTB as the researcher is one of the preachers engage in some Islamic preaching held in the Islamic center of NTB. Documentation using internet-library sources through collecting news, articles, and opinions about the Islamic



center of NTB. An unstructured in-depth phenomenological interview through focus group discussion (Groenewald 2004) entitled making Islamic center of NTB as the center of civilization held by Suara NTB newspaper on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019, as researcher engaged as one of the speaker in the focus group discussion (suaraNTB.com 2019b). Collected data has been analyzed using the theoretical framework presented before in this article. It is hoped that this research will be the contribution for the government and related stakeholders to construct a sort of “blueprint” that the Islamic center of NTB lacks until the present time in developing it as the center of civilization (suaraNTB.com 2019a).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Locating the Islamic Center in Religious and Socio-Cultural Context of West Nusa Tenggara

The idea of building an Islamic center in the capital city of West Nusa Tenggara backs to more than 20 years ago (Mustain 2018). It is just a matter of time to make it real regarding the big concern of *Sasak* people in building symbols of religion. Back to 2008, John Klock (2008) noted that only in 78 years (1930-2008), the number of mosques expanded from 177 to 2522, the number of hajj from 426 to 2070, and population from 700 thousand to 2.9 million. Hidjaz (2018) noted around 9000 mosques exist in 518 villages across Lombok. The mosque is the center of space orientation among *Sasak* villagers. They call it *inen paèr* (center of domicile).

Not only as of the center of spatial orientation, but *Sasak* people also put mosques in their religious, social and cultural life as a main public sphere where they perform religious rituals, deliver basic education of Islamic teachings, engage social solidarity, and make important decisions due to their common interests (Hikmah 2010). *Sasak* people therefore always build mosques better than houses they live in. Mosque has to be the most magnificent building in the area of domicile. The more economic capacity accomplished by a certain community the more magnificent and luxurious mosque established. *Sasak* society had been waiting with no patient when the government of West Nusa Tenggara planned to build a landmark mosque of the province named Islamic center. The idea has been surpassing a long time from the period of previous governors of West Nusa Tenggara, Warsito (1988-1998), Harun ar-Rasyid (1998-2003), Lalu Serenata (2003-2008) until it comes true when the administration was under Governor TGB. Dr. M. Zainul Majdi (2008-2018). It was like dreams come true when Zainul Majdi as governor executed the idea to have a great Islamic Center in the capital city of NTB. The deep idea was laid on the hearts and minds of Muslim-Sasak as the majority of NTB people but the execution was waiting for a powerful and brilliant decision of governor as Zainul Majdi had done (Republika Online 2018; Kompasiana.com 2010).

This last name was like a center of gravity during 10 years of his administration. He represented three entities at the same time: Islam, *Sasak*, and Indonesia. Everything seems easy to him. He has authority to speak on behalf of Muslims regarding on his excellence in Islamic knowledge as scholar graduated from doctor program of the *al-Azhar* University of Egypt; strong legitimacy among *Sasak* people regarding on his legacy from Mualana Syekh Zainuddin Abdul Majid, founder of *Nabqatul Watân*, one of the biggest Islam organization in Lombok; and the power of making public policies as the elected governor of West Nusa Tenggara. The expectation of society especially *Sasak* people then met authoritative, legitimate, and powerful leadership. As a consequence, the policies made by the government are fully supported by the grass-root.

All extraordinary achievements of West Nusa Tenggara are not excluded from this circle. Lombok was like experiencing a quantum jumping of civilization since Majdi

posted as Governor of NTB. In 2008, Majdi decided to start continuing an iced plan to build an Islamic center in the capital city of NTB, launched a program named the land of 1 million cattle in Lombok and Sumbawa, set Dompu and Bima regencies as a national and international producer of corps, continued developing Lombok International Airport, proposed Kuta-Mandalika of Central Lombok as Indonesia's special economic zone, marketed Lombok as a global halal tourism destination; and boosted Lombok as host of national and international meetings like conferences, seminars, festivals.

Majdi's approach to all of his movements was the civilization approach. He wanted to show that Islam is compatible with democracy, modernity, and universal inventions in the field of science and technology. The basic intention in building the Islamic center of West Nusa Tenggara was to provide a civilization center based on the mosque as the center of movements of Muslims either in spiritual and religious senses of social, economic, cultural, and political ones. After launched officially in 2016, the Islamic Centre of NTB hosted an international conference on moderate Islam twice in October 2017 and June 2018. During fasting month of Ramadhan 1438 and 1439 H, Islamic Centre of NTB became the main stage of what so-called *PKR (Pesona Khazanah Ramadhan)*, all in one commemoration of Ramadan month by inviting imams from some middle-east countries, book exhibition, seminars, workshops, public Islam preaching by the prominent-popular speaker of the country, and so on.

In the religious and social life of Nusa Tenggara Barat society, especially Lombok people, the presence of the Islamic Centre of NTB has been putting them on the new milestone of civilization. Majdi's great effort to build an Islamic center led them to enter the field of civilization from its main gate. Lombok is now famous as a premier destination of halal tourism in Indonesia including the Islamic center as a recommended place to visit. Lombok international airport is now providing direct international flights including from and to Jeddah KSA facilitating the big enthusiasm of Lombok Muslims to perform *hajj* and *umrah*. Mataram, as the capital city of West Nusa Tenggara, programmed as MICE (meeting, incentive, convention, and exhibition) city. Briefly, it could be said that the Islamic center is a very strategic starting point for West Nusa Tenggara society to play a more important role in the civilization field whether at the national or international level.

### **Locating the Islamic Center in the History of Islamic Civilization: From *Imārat Al-Masjid* to *Imārat Al-'Arḍ***

In the whole history of Islamic civilization, the mosque was like the heart of the whole body of the Islamic community. Diachronically, the word "mosque" in English came from *mosquée* in France, *moscheta* in Italian, *mezquita* in Spanish, and *masjid* in Arabic. All of these words had been used in the Aramaic language since the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. to identify every place used to perform worship (nationalkuwait.com 2007). At this point, *masjid* in the Islamic perspective differs from the others as it is the soul and religious, political, and social center of Islamic communities. Husain Mu'nis (Mu'nis 1981) said that no existence of Islamic communities without *masjid*. This is the basic intention of the idea to build an Islamic center at the capital city of West Nusa Tenggara Province; to build the biggest mosque that will be the mother of thousands of mosques in Lombok just like what the Prophet Muhammad PBUH did in Medina.

*Masjid* then transformed from the meaning as just the place to perform *shalāt* to the center of civilization, as the center of all Muslim movements in life. This is the true meaning of *al-masjid al-jāmi'* in Islam (Mu'nis 1981). The prophet Muhammad PBUH said in one of his hadith that all surface of the earth has been made *masjid* for him. It means that the believers who provide prosperity for the mosques (At-Taubah 9: 18) are truly people

who provide prosperity for the earth (Hud 11: 61). It is no doubt that great conquest and Islamic sciences codification made in Islamic history were started from mosques; the starting point to spread peace, justice, and prosperity all over the world. Muslim mosques have been connecting a wide range of Islamic world in one direction to *al-Masjid al-Haram* (al-Baqarah 2: 144) with *iman*, amenity, brotherhood, knowledge exchange, and basic need services just like silk road of ancient China in an old global trading context. Mosques of Muslims then preserve civilizational networks between Islamic worlds in a very special way; a network that connected by *iman* as a basic platform to fulfill the mission as *khilafat Allah fi al-ard*.

That was so-called *al-wāzī' ad-dīni* (religious motivation) by Ibn Asyur (Ibn Asyur 1992) as the spirit of Islamic civilization. He noted that the crossroad of Islamic civilization laid on its spirit. When the spirit was pure faith to get Allah's *riḍa* and ultimate obedience to all teachings of His religion, Islamic civilization grew up very fast covering all directions of the world. On the contrary, when the spirit changed to the profane-material ones (*al-wāzī' ad-dunyawi*), it declined to the lowest level of achievement. This theory refers to the sharp-deep analysis of Ibnu Khaldun (2004) as put politics, development, industry, and science affairs in Islamic states follow religious affairs. The main basis of religion is *iman* or personal belief that becomes the basis of all of those things. He said that transformation from *Khilafah* to the kingdom was not the cause but symptom of transformation from religious intention to power one and replacement of religious fanaticism to the state one.

When the Islamic civilization was in its golden age, *al-masjid al-jāmi'* was the spotlight of enlightening achievements in all dimensions of civilization including education, Islamic studies, social solidarity, economic network, political decision making, international correspondences, arm forces inspections and so on. In the decline period of Islamic civilization, however, these mosques remain the only place where *tauhid* preserved, worships performed, Islamic knowledge taught, judiciary processes held, and Islamic brotherhood guarded. The colonials might break Muslims but not Islam. The mosques had been standing as the address of Islam. They are houses of Allah on earth. They are the guardians of the Islamic world. Husain Mu'nis said that Mongolian forces who stroke the Islamic world from the east and crushed everything in their road of war to the Islamic world finally gave up in front of Islam that conquered their hearts. They worshiped Allah in the mosques they ruined before, brought the glory of Islam, and developed civilization on behalf of it (Mu'nis 1981).

Al-Faruqi (1997) stated that the essence of Islamic civilization is Islam; the essence of Islam is *tauhid*, and one of the main foundations to apply Islam in life is *masjid*. The real owner of the *masjid* is Allah. Every single Muslim has the same right to get in every *masjid* at every place on the surface of the earth and get benefits from all services provided. The golden triangle of the main values of Islam that consist of *tauhid*, *tazkiyah*, and *'umrān* is truly found in the mosque (Malkawi 2013). *Tauhid* is the essence of *imān*. *Tazkiyah* is the implementation of *imān* in improving the internal side of a human being. *'Umran* is the manifestation of *imān* in making prosperity to all human beings in their real life. This is the true mission of the mosque from the perspective of Islam. Having an Islamic center whose mosque as the main building, therefore, means improving all aspects of human being's life from the very private side to the most public one.

In a very unique way, Jusuf Kalla, head of DMI (*Dewan Masjid Indonesia*, Indonesia mosque council) and the former vice president of Indonesia said that it is only God who knows the real number of mosques in Indonesia. The figure rapidly grows up to one million mosques across the country (Republika Online 2019a). Kalla (2017), therefore, stated that Indonesia has the biggest number of mosques in the world. Gazalba (1994)



highlighted that the kings of kingdoms in archipelago far before Indonesia's independence paid serious attention in building a mosque to aggregate social, economic, and political legitimacy from the people. The problem is not in the number of mosques rather than the civilizational roles its take. This is what so called by Gazalba (1989) as mosque crisis when it is no longer functioned as a mosque in the era of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Indonesian scholars, therefore, focus on how to reactivate the other roles of the mosque than just the place to perform pure worship (*ibadah mahdhab*) such as the center of economic empowerment (Cholil 2016), anchor of social cohesion (Musahadi 2018), basic of Islamic education and media literacy (Rahmawati et al. 2018).

### **An Outlook on IC NTB: Current State and Its Challenges**

It has been four years since *Hub al-Watān* mosque of Islamic Centre of NTB firstly launched on September 12<sup>st</sup> 2016. The mosque since then has been drawing a new panorama of religious life in Mataram, the capital city of West Nusa Tenggara. Selected *imāms* (Mustain 2018) of 5 times praying have been filling the sky of Lombok with their nice voices of reciting al-Qur'an especially in the month of Ramadan. The creative team of Islamic Centre of NTB management also broadcasts every public lecture of Islamic teachings from prominent Islamic scholars of NTB every day in the early morning after praying *subuh*, the afternoon after praying *maghrib* or Friday sermon in live streaming via *youtube* channel or public official radio of Mataram. Islamic Centre of NTB also gathers a crowd of people at every public preaching delivered by popular Muslim preachers of Indonesia like Abdullah Gymnastiar, Yusuf Mansur, Bahtiar Nasir, Adi Hidayat, Das'ad Latif, and others (Mustain 2018).

It can be said that the Islamic Centre of NTB always attracts people's attention to visit either to pray, listen to public lectures, attend the special event or just take a look at the beautiful and glorious building of *Hub al-Watān* Mosque and its minaret. It is commonly known that the Islamic Centre of NTB has been an object of halal tourism in one package with other halal tourism objects of Lombok Island. Monthly, thousands of visitors come to see the mosque either domestic or international travelers, mostly from Malaysia (Tempo Magazine). In the Ramadan month of 2018, it was recorded that the figure was 27.000 visitors in just one month (Antara 2018). To boost the figure, the Islamic Centre of NTB management under the supervision of the tourism office of West Nusa Tenggara government frequently organizes special events like PKR (*Pesona Khazanah Ramadan*), Islamic book fair, competitions, seminars, etc. as mentioned before (Republika Online 2019b).

From the very beginning, the West Nusa Tenggara government has been playing a key role in planning, budgeting, implementing, and managing all things related to the Islamic Centre of NTB existence. During 2009-2013, the government had been allocating up to 600 billion rupiahs to build the Islamic Centre of NTB, 70 % of it allocated to build the mosque (Mustain 2018). The non-governmental budget was collected from monthly salary cut from civil state workers in NTB that counted more than 3,5 billion rupiahs and 32,8 billion rupiahs from CSR of Newmont Nusa Tenggara Corporation to build 99 meters high of mosque minaret (Mustain 2018). This non-governmental contribution is a small amount compared to the total spending of the Islamic Centre of NTB building budget. It means that the establishment of the Islamic Centre of NTB much depends on the arrangement of the government. As a consequence, the Islamic Centre of NTB is legally treated as an asset of West Nusa Tenggara province.

Management of Islamic Centre of NTB, therefore, is under what so-called BPKAD (*Badan Pengelola Keuangan dan Aset Daerah*), a government office that manages



monetary affairs and assets of West Nusa Tenggara province. This management technically focuses on exploring an economic side of Islamic Centre of NTB by collecting retribution from visitors or users of sites set for business purposes like a hall for conferences or wedding party; outdoor area for exhibitions; and highest stair of the minaret at 99 meters high to see the wonderful view of Mataram city from above. The total contribution of the Islamic Centre of NTB to the budget of the government is to target approximately 2 billion rupiahs per year (Mustain 2018). On the other side, in 2017, Governor of NTB issued a letter of the decision due to management of *Hub al-Watān* mosque that functioned to manage all programs of the mosque. The persons who engaged in the management are not far from their position in the government as governor (head of the consultative board), secretary of government (head of the organizational board), and other persons with near tied to the government (Ulfa 2018).

This is the real challenge of the Islamic Centre of NTB. It is totally under the control of the government, the public contribution is too poor. At the same time, the budget capacity of the government to flourish the civilizational roles of the Islamic Centre of NTB is very limited. Current managerial state and budget allocation of the Islamic Centre of NTB, therefore, are not matching intending to make it the center of civilization. At the official document about 2020 work plan of NTB government issued at June 28, 2019, there is no special highlight on Islamic Centre of NTB except explicit narration that making Islamic Centre of NTB as the center of civilization is among programs derivate from the 6<sup>th</sup> mission of NTB government in 2019-2023 namely NTB *Adil dan Berkah*, justice and blessed NTB (Dinas Komunikasi, Informatika, dan Statistik NTB 2019). Sulaiman Jamsuri, recent head of management, said that the Islamic Centre of NTB needs an appropriate platform of management including budget management, to cover all of its various agendas that are inappropriate to be just under a small branch of the big machine of government bureaucracy (suaraNTB.com 2019b). He, furthermore, said that in the future, the Islamic Centre of NTB has to be a self-sufficient body moving from government control to Islamic community support. This is a pre-condition to make the Islamic Centre of NTB a center of civilization.

The glory of the Islamic Centre of NTB, at the current situation, is referring to the architecture and building *Hub al-Watān* mosque, not to the role it plays. The great idea to have a civilization center in NTB is like an unaccomplished mission at the fact that all planned infrastructure like education, business, and offices center that support the idea is not installed yet. As a consequence, a great idea is implemented within ordinary daily activities. It was imagined that Islamic Centre of NTB will be center of Islamic sciences transfer to create great Islamic scholars of NTB as what Islamic centers or *al-masjid al-jami'* had been done in the great history of Islam but the reality is merely public Islamic preaching with the emphasis to the general interest of Islamic society expressed in basic teachings of Islam. In addition, the social and economic role of the Islamic Centre remains far from the idea to be an empowerment tool of the social and economic life of Muslim society in NTB. In 2013, the previous Governor of NTB, TGB. Zainul Majdi signed the memorandum of understanding with three national investors to build NTB convention center (NCC), sharia hotel and properties for offices in the area of Islamic Centre of NTB with the total budget more than 400 billion rupiahs but the MoU is becoming sleeping MoU up to this time.

#### **Setting IC NTB as A Center of Civilization: Pre-Condition and Its Requirements**

The general election in 2018 posted Zulkifliemansyah as a successor to Zainul Majdi as Governor of West Nusa Tenggara Province. He introduced NTB *Gemilang*,

highlighted West Nusa Tenggara as his vision in his five years of administration. Making Islamic Centre of NTB as the center of civilization then became one of government prime programs. After more than one year since Zulkifliemansyah has been elected as governor, there are no significant changes that indicate the movement to set the Islamic Centre of NTB as truly the center of civilization. It should be acknowledged that the current state of Islamic Centre of NTB has been presenting Islam in its civilization dimension as mentioned before; it has been an important social capital for NTB society especially Muslim Lombok society but it does not enough to cover whole dimensions of Islamic civilization. Thus, there are so many things that have to be accomplished to set the Islamic Centre of NTB as truly the center of civilization.

First of all, the Islamic Centre of NTB has to be the center of Muslim unity and sovereignty. In the long history of Islam, *al-masjid al-jami'* has been representing unity, vitality, and immunity of Muslim society. Mosque, regardless of its size, place, and luxury, is the most important tool of Muslim society's mechanism to prove that they are exist and able to defend Islam from any deviation or intervention (Mu'nis 1981). This is the true meaning of mosque as *waqf* for Allah, the true owner of the mosque is Allah, it is the house of His Almighty on the surface of the earth. Nobody can claim ownership of any mosque. Everybody has the same right to access any mosque at any place (Faruqi 1997). Therefore, the Mosques of Muslims always stand on people's side, not rulers. And that is the nature of the mosque in Islam (Mu'nis 1981). Parallel with the role as the place to perform worships to Allah, Mosques were the place where Muslim society produced a high quality of Muslim scholars, preserved justice through independent processes of the court, and secured strong cohesion among Muslim society in a social and economic context. Setting Islamic Centre of NTB as center of civilization, therefore, means putting it as asset of Muslim society with all of it consequences; flourishing its education, social and economic roles; and engaging all supports needed including budget support from any part including government part concerning with a strong, brilliant and productive state of Islamic *ummah* (Al-Aql 1998).

Based on this pre-condition, the Islamic Centre of NTB supposed to be the center to produce high-quality Islamic scholars through deep, focused, creative, and systematic processes of Islamic studies. Precisely, that is what has been done in the two holy mosques *al-haramayn as-syarifain* of Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia. Malik ibn Anas, the founder of mazhab maliki, one of four famous jurisprudence *mazhabib* in Islam, had a special chair to teach hadith in *An-Nabawi* Mosque of Medina (Uqlaina 2002). A most prominent scholar of Indonesia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was graduated from a high level of Islamic knowledge transfer given by great *ulama* of Hijaz in the *Al-Haram* Mosque of Mecca (Azra 1998). Two oldest and wide influencing universities in the Islamic world, al-Qarawiyyin University of Morocco and al-Azhar University of Egypt were mosques before transforming to higher education institutions (Mu'nis 1981). It is no doubt that some influencing figures of contemporary Indonesian Muslim scholars are graduated from these two universities. All these par excellences examples mean that the Islamic Centre of NTB in the future projection can upgrade its intellectual and scientific role as what had been shown by those great experiments. And that is what supposed to be.

This expected upgrading will not move from space. Islamic Centre of NTB has enough social capital to make it real strong support from Muslim society of NTB, public policies intervention of government and the most important thing capable Muslim scholars graduated from prominent higher education institutions in middle east countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Jordan. The only pre-condition required is a strong commitment and more serious effort from all parties engaging Islamic Centre of NTB to boost participation of society, provide a bigger budget to finance all programs planned and

improve all aspects of management to make it available with agenda to set **Islamic Centre of NTB as a center of civilization**. Once this upgrading established, Lombok will be world destination not only in terms of halal tourism but also in terms of civilization experiment as seeking knowledge lays in the first place. Most great Muslim scholars and adventurers in Islamic history were combining seeking knowledge and a long trip to the centers of Islamic civilization to accomplish their great passion to leave an immortal legacy for Muslim and human being everywhere at the surface of this earth. It means that the beautiful nature of Lombok could marry the glory nature of Islamic sciences.

This will be a nice starting point for the Islamic Centre of NTB to attract people's attention from all over the world to come and give a multiplayer effect for economic growth and social prosperity. Islamic Centre of NTB then will be in connection with other grand mosques of Islamic countries drawing faith road as the base of all civilization aspects including economic growth and social prosperity. This is the true meaning of enlightening NTB as the vision of the recent province government. Faith (*iman*) in this perspective is coming back to its natural position as the spirit of civilization (Ibn Asyur 1992), replacing current development paradigm where economic aspect treated as the infrastructure of other aspects of life including spiritual and human resources development (Ziegler 2003). This paradigm is in concordance with Indonesia's founding father's original intention to develop an independent Indonesia as they put spiritual aspects in the first place than another.

Islam is the soul of Sasak **people's identity and NTB society in general**. In a civilizational approach, setting the **Islamic Centre of NTB as the center of civilization means putting** Islam back to Sasak identity. In the long term, Sasak people that host the Islamic Centre of NTB will never experience a sort of alienation in their identity anymore (Hanafi 2012). The place of identity is primarily in the soul not in the body. Based on ideal identity with no alienation, Sasak Muslim society deserves to experience a quantum leap of civilization. Islamic Centre of NTB with an established concept and implementation as the center of civilization as explained above is the best trigger to obtain that goal. Islamic Centre of NTB then will not just be a marker of identity for Sasak people in terms of the viewed landscape but also in terms of roles it plays in making Islam compatible with the newest human inventions on a global level.

## CONCLUSION

It is no doubt that the Islamic Centre of NTB has been changing the landscape of Islam in Lombok that well known as the Island of thousand mosques. Original intention to build this landmark is to prove that Islam is compatible with modernity, democracy, and the newest inventions in the field of humanity, science, and technology. In other words, it was set up to be a center of civilization. Setting up the **Islamic Centre of NTB as the center of civilization**, firstly, **means** upgrading its capacities and roles to cover all aspects of life starting from spiritual domain to science, economic, social, and public policy fields. Secondly, part of these civilizational dimensions has been implemented in current activities of the Islamic Centre of NTB although so many challenges of getting its done mainly in lacking the budget to build required capacities and dominant intervention of government. In the future, thirdly and hopefully, Islamic Centre of NTB has to be upgraded to get nearer from original and ideal intention to set it up as the center of Islamic civilization by inviting more support and participation from Muslim society either from elite or common people in term of building intellectual, managerial and financial capacities. So, it could be projected that the Islamic Centre of NTB will be the spotlight of Islamic civilization not only in West Nusa Tenggara but also in Indonesia and the Islamic world.

Based on the current state of the Islamic Centre of NTB and its future projection, this paper recommends some agendas as follows: first, the Legal state of the Islamic Centre of NTB should not be under and treated as an asset of government. It should be put back to the Muslim society domain, under the autonomous mechanism of the Muslim community to engage optimal participation, flourish roles played, and upgrading capacity to make it available as an international level of the Islamic center. Second, Based on the original intention of building Islamic Centre of NTB, *Hub al-Watan* grand mosque has to be completed with supporting building set for education, scientific research, business, offices and hall purposes to complete role of Islamic Centre of NTB as the center not just for performing praying but also for a high level of Islamic studies, developing Islamic economic, and engaging all social-political capital of Islamic *ummah* in NTB. Third, the Islamic Centre of NTB needs a blueprint of upgrading in its way to become an international Islamic sciences institution. At this point, the researcher thinks that further serious researches on developing a blueprint of future IC NTB are immediately required



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