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KEYNOTES
A COMPREHENSIVE FRAME WORK FOR ACEH DEVELOPMENT
UNDER THE ROLE OF SIYASAH SHARIYYAH: TOWARD A
VISIONARY ACEH DEVELOPMENT

Saim Kayadibi and Yasemin Kayadibi

Department of Economics, Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Sciences,
International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), email: saim@iium.edu.my and
skayadibi@yahoo.com

Postgraduate Student at the Department of Psychology of Education, International
Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), email: yaseminkayadibi@yahoo.com

Abstract

Due to the strategic position and natural resources of Aceh province, foreign
powers always kept their eyes on this area. It is a historically well-known
reality that religious Acehnese people always struggled to protect their lands
and natural resources in the province against foreign invaders since they
have been very fond of their freedom and dignity. Therefore, the history of
Aceh is full of struggles given against foreign occupiers. In that respect the
province really needs serious projects and strategies in order to use its
natural resources in an efficient way for the development of the area.
Indonesia's special province, Aceh, needs to implement these projects and
strategies through economic, political and social co-operations with other
countries especially Muslim countries. These projects can only be
materialized via taking into the consideration of the universal values of
Siyasah Shariyyah (Shariah oriented public policy). Therefore, this article
tries to determine substantial ways for the development of Aceh province in
terms of economic, political and social aspects.

Keywords: Aceh Development; Shariah oriented public policy; Essential
Values; OIC countries;

Introduction

With rich natural resources and young labor force, Aceh shows a potential hope for
the future. If Aceh uses its own facilities, it would make sustainable development
without being dependent on any external powers. First of all, a peaceful environment
has to be created in the region through establishing a mutual relationship with the
central government, because without peace no success would be materialized. The
people of the province must focus on development and investment. Muslim people
and governments have no other options than collaborating between each other. We
are nothing than friends and brothers of each other. The faster and healthier
development can only be achieved via engaging and supporting each other.
Unfortunately, despite all the richness of natural resources of Islamic countries, the imperialist powers wanted to convict them into poverty, hunger and backwardness. In order to achieve their goals they have been making double standards and injustices towards Muslim people everywhere. Logically to fight back against these injustices, Muslim people must aware of their values and resources to use them efficiently for the sake of their own people. The highest level of opportunities has to be created to utilize the resources of the province. For these, international co-operations especially with OIC countries are highly significant.

Surely, as will be discussed later, sustainability of the development of the province is subjected to simultaneous development both spiritual and physical satisfactions. Therefore, this side of development never be ignored for eternal happiness as the parameters of the spiritual developments will be elaborated through the concept of Maqasid Shari’ah with the guidance of Siyasah Shari’ah.

A Comprehensive frame work for Aceh Development:

The combative spirit nature, which Acehnese people have, would encourage them to strategise their development model within a short period of time. That spirit will be the main tool for their natural reawakening. Existence of young labour force and their will to work is an evidence for this claim.

For this, firstly, the region's natural wealth, and resources should be determined. Later on, these natural wealth, and resources should be invested through using national facilities instead of inviting international investors at the first level. Nevertheless, if the national sources are not enough equipped for these, then the international investors, who are firstly among the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) are invited offering some opportunities to take their attention toward the province such as tax exemption, free land to establish factories, business etc. On the other hand, insisting on that the priority must be given to Muslim countries.

Operating banking and finance system is also a vital issue for ultimate success; therefore, in order to invest the earned money, Islamic banking and finance system must be introduced. If money is not used in Islamic way, a long lasting development will never be achieved because usury (riba) destroys the business and the investments. Hence, the role of Maqasid Shari'ah in that respect is highly essential.

Sooner the people of Aceh begins to sell, export what they produce to outside, the vitality naturally comes to the economy. Instead of consuming, the society must be focused on producing more than what they have consumed. If it is implemented, suddenly the province will become one of the developed countries like Japan. More importantly, economic power of the government must be increased so that the investment can be distributed equally entire the province via the power of the government.

On the other hand, the natural resources must not be invested through taking temporal help from international interest based operated institutions like IMF. Since these organizations work with interest, the development sooner or later be collapsed and modern slavery, unconditionally be materialized. It is an undisputed reality that it will be very difficult to overcome the swamp of debt which enslaves the whole nation. For that, I would give two very close example from Muslim countries like Malaysia and Turkey. Sooner they recovered their economy when they stopped dealing with IMF and now it is obvious that Turkey is one of the fastest growing countries in the world only because of the decision made by new Turkish government not to work with IMF anymore. Consequently, the natural resources and wealth must be invested
through own facilities or mutual collaborations with Muslim countries in other words, at least priority should be given to Muslim countries.

Every possible opportunity must be invested for the development of the province, like the strategic position could be used for ship transportation around the neighbour countries. Natural beauties, historical values, agricultural and forest products of the province can be efficiently used and invested.

In addition to these kind of investments, national and international relationship should be increased with OIC, ASEAN or other organizations in order protect the people’s rights and values easily. Not only with economic and trade organizations but also with all scientific organization, universities, institutions, social organizations like NGO’s should collaborate interchangeably, in order to exchange knowledge and experience like with MoU’s should be made. Such collaborations would increase the quality of investment and the quality of people in terms of education, labour force, modernizing the equipments and the mentality of the people.

Political stability is one of the significant tools for sustainable development. Therefore the province should establish good relationship with the central government. Separation definitely decrease the strength of the province, therefore working together with the central government would increase the power of the province. In other words, political, religious, economic, and scientific institutions should work and cooperate together in harmony for complete development.

One of the main tasks of the government is to play a medium role for promoting the real well-being of all the people who are living within the country, irrespective of their colour, age or sex. Therefore, the government should make plans for development of the region through providing opportunities like inviting and bringing investors to the province from international contacts and increasing incentives for the realization of the complete development.

The Development based on the Shari‘ah Oriented Public Policy:

First of all, in order to achieve an overall vigorous development in the region a strong and a competent government, which is compliant with the main principles of Islamic values, is needed. Islamic values, in other words, the Shari‘ah oriented public policy is defined as “Siyyasah Shari‘ah is a broad doctrine of Islamic Law which authorizes the ruler to determine the manner in which the Shari ‘ah should be administered.”[1] For this the final goal of all Islamic teachings is to be a blessing for mankind. This is the main purpose for which the Prophet (pbuh), was sent to this world.[2] This goal is achieved through promoting the falāh or real well-being of all the people living on earth, irrespective of their colour, race, nationality, age or sex. This is a vital aspect of the universality of the Islamic values.[3]

The development of a country or a society must not be confined to material well-being since the material aspect is not enough for full satisfaction. People’s needs must be satisfied spiritually because increase in income and wealth will not bring ultimate happiness. Therefore, physical and spiritual aspect of the people must be increased simultaneously. The material satisfaction might bring temporarily happiness while the spiritual satisfaction brings eternally satisfied mental peace and happiness which is interchangeably related to justice, brotherhood, equality, dignity and respect.

For the long term development the government must consider the people’s security of life, religion, property, lineage, intellect and honour, individual freedom, education,
marriage, proper upbringing of children, family, social solidarity, minimization of crime, eliminating corruption. Without securing these values the society will not be developed and civilized but corrupted easily. The satisfaction of all these needs is basic needs of human being and must be achieved and these have been highlighted in Islamic literature under the broad term maqāsid al-Shari‘ah (objectives of the Shari‘ah).

The ultimate purpose of all creation is the compliance of the created with the will of the Creator.[4] Therefore establishing an economically and spiritually developed society is also one of the purposes of Allah (swt). The main goal of maqāsid al-Shari‘ah is to serve the interests (ja‘l al-masālih) of all human beings and to save them from all kind of harms (da‘r al-ma‘fasid),[5] as the scope has been either directly derived from the Qur’an and the Sunnah or from personal efforts used the tool of ijtihad by a number of scholars.[6]

Although this concept was developed by a number of scholars before Imām Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī (d.505AH/1111AC) who classified it into five major main categories as we have stated above these are religion (dīn), life (nafs), intellect (‘aql), prosperity (nasl), and wealth (māl).[7]

The reason why so much emphasis is given to human beings is because of his place in the side of Allah (swt). For sustainable development, human beings have great responsibility towards people and the Creator as he is considered khalīfah or vicegerents of God, on the earth; he then is the main source of development both spiritually and physically. Therefore human beings must be put in the centre of attention. In addition to that all kind of developments and betterment must be originated from the manner of human beings since Allah (swt) indicated in the Qur’an “God does not change the condition of a people until they change their own inner selves”[8], the people is the main architect of the development of the society socially, economically and politically.

Conclusion:

Indonesia’s Aceh province with its rich natural resources will be utilized efficiently and developed economically, socially, and politically by working together hand in hand with NGO’s and governmental organizations. For this, the above mentioned values have to be materialized without giving any chance to local and provincial disputes. Since the province has enough natural resources and hard-working spirit is a great challenge for the people of the province and these creates the basic dynamics of the development insha Allah.

References

[6] Al-Juwaynī (d.478/1085), al-Ghazālī (d.505/1111), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209), al-Āmidī (d. 631/1234), 'Izz al-Dīn 'Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1252), Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728/1327), al-Shātibī (d. 790/1388) and Ibn ‘Āshūr (d.1393/1973), al-Raysuni, etc.

