

## Public Space Issues in Bali Tourist Beaches

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### 1 ABSTRACT

This paper presents a review of issues associated with tourist beach development in Bali. An empirical study is used to clarify the issues in Bali tourist beaches. The rationale behind this paper is because Bali is generally considered as one of the best tourist destinations in the world, and due to a key tourist asset is its beaches. Many beautiful panoramic beaches are located in the southern coast of the island; among them are Kuta, Jimbaran, Pecatu, Nusa Dua, Sanur, Candi Dasa, and other. These have developed rapidly as tourist attractions and resorts. However, most resorts have developed naturally without planning. Only Nusa Dua resort was developed through planning and design stages.

Today, the environment of the tourist beaches is under serious threats; due to erosion, leading to the environmental damage of the beaches and loss of land in some parts of the coast, though a handling effort has been done recently in the major resorts. Another threat is the development of tourist accommodation and facilities along the beach which are too close to the coastline. These do not comply with the national Law and Regulations. These two threats affect the width of the beach which becomes narrowed leading to insufficient width in accommodating public activities. These activities include; tourist activities, art and cultural attractions, ritual for the Balinese, as well as the livelihoods of fishermen. Therefore, the loss of beaches as public spaces will significantly impact on the social, economic and cultural/religious life of the Balinese.

### 2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BALI

Bali is a tiny island, located approximately eight degrees south of the Equator. It has a tropical zone with 5,632.86 square kilometres of extravagantly fertile land which are mostly cultivated with crops. Volcanic mountains occupy the island's hinterland sloping steeply to the sea in the northern part, and more gradual slopes in the South. With a coastline of approximately 436.80 kilometres, its abundant coastal resources are many and varied here such as white/black sandy beaches, coral reef and associates, mangroves, sea grass beds, and dunes which are important coastal resources.[1]

Bali is an enclave Hindu from the Islamic majority in Indonesia which has approximately 3.5 million inhabitants. Bali has a unique culture rooted in Hindu philosophy and their specific customs. After Independence, Bali had been proclaimed as a tourism island and a major international tourist destination. Most travel & tourism guides have chosen Bali as one of the best world travel destinations. Up to now, tourism in Bali relies mostly on the cultural and beaches.

#### 2.1 Cultural Identity

In the early eighth century, it was recorded that the historical development of Balinese culture strongly related to the development of the Hindu religion taking place in Bali. The Hindu religion takes a key factor in the notion of Balinese cultural and religious identity. The golden age of Balinese culture took place when Bali under the rule of the Majapahit Dynasty based in East Java or West of Bali Island. During this time, the agriculture system of Subak, art and architecture, ritual ceremonies all thrived significantly on the island. The Kingdom Palaces and the Priest's houses became centres for the development of their culture. The Majapahit era occurred during the fourteenth-sixteenth century. After this era, the Dutch then colonised Bali in the earliest twentieth century in which their influence also introduced new values particularly in architecture. Even with this external influence, the roots of Balinese culture still derive from their religion. [2]

#### 2.2 Philosophy

The basic philosophy of Balinese Hinduism is how to achieve a balance between humankind and nature in terms of micro-macro cosmos. This is referred to as "cosmological balance". They believe that a harmonious balance will bring their life into serenity and happiness. This philosophy derives from the belief that

humankind is similar to nature in that it consists of three divine parts in which each part follows its own nature and character. These parts, for example, could be described as head, body, and feet. From this, all things in nature can be distinguished abstractly as consisting of three elements. Environment or land, village, building, structure, wall, pillar, and other building details also consist of three divine divisions each with their own characteristics. Moreover, humankind is also considered to consist of three layers such as soul-mind-physical body or inside-middle-outside (inner-middle-outer). And in turn human life consists of birth, life, and death.

### 2.3 Concept of Space

Within Balinese philosophy a concept of Kaja-Kelod or North-South (Mountainward-seaward) can be identified. Within this, concept of space can be divided symbolically into three zones; each of those is mountain, midland, and sea. The mountain as a head is a primary part of the zones regarded as the purest place. The midland as the body or middle zone which is a place for dwelling and other human activities, and the sea is an impure zone as a symbol of feet. The impure zone does not mean that it is an unsuitable place for a shrine indeed. Many shrine places are built in the three zones in order to maintain cosmological balance. The symbolisation of the three zones in the land or earth is also transferred into villages, temples, palaces, and dwellings. At the village level, for instance, there are three temples, called Tri Khayangan which form the main identity of the traditional village. These temples are located at north, middle, and south of the village.

To maintain a balanced, the existence of temples, dwellings, and open spaces are considered as essential places. These are because the three places are also associated with the philosophy of Tri Hita Karana meaning three causes of serenity and happiness of humankind. This philosophy teaches adherents to form harmonious relationships between humans and God, human and human, as well as human and the environment. The external environment is seen as one of three essential places within Balinese culture. As a consequence, it has to be preserved and protected in order to maintain a harmonious environment. To keep this, it is not only maintained through a physical approach but also through offering ceremony as one of important parts of Balinese belief. The ritual ceremony takes place usually at mountain, lake, forest, farm, graveyard, cross and T junction, coastal area, beach, sea, and others.

### 2.4 Beaches

From the philosophy and concept of space, a beach is an open space which amongst its function has to accommodate ritual activities. The ritual activities relate to temple, humankind and cremation ceremonies as well as harmonious beach environments. The most well attended ritual activity takes place the day before the Balinese New Year. The cremation ceremony is the most regular ritual event on the beach. Furthermore, there are a lot of temples along the beach with different functions and hierarchies. In some places, fishermen have a special shrine to offer respect before going to the sea. From this point of view, it is clear that beaches are sacred areas, though these areas are categorised as public space according to the Indonesia National Policy. This policy states that littoral regions are protected areas and disaster-prone areas which can be used for public only. [3]

## 3 DEVELOPMENT OF BALI TOURIST BEACHES

The tourism industry is one of the top foreign exchange industries in many countries, including Thailand, Philippines, Singapore, Fiji, and also Indonesia. [4] In addition, tourism is also known to stimulate economy of the areas, so that it is very often described as ‘new kind of sugar’, ‘tool for regional development’, ‘invisible export’, ‘passport to development’, and other terms.[5] Nowadays, the combination of domestic and international tourism has become one of the world’s largest and faster-growing industries in terms of volume of income and employment generation.[6] According to UNWTO, the annual growth of international world tourist arrival increased by 4.6 % in 2011 (nine hundred eighty three million) and 6.4 % in 2010 (nine hundred forty million). In comparison to other regions, Asia and Pacific (including Indonesia) received an increase of 6.0 % which is the second largest percentage increase in tourist arrival in the world after South America. [7] In terms of value, the UNWTO in its World Tourism barometer of June 2009 reported that the growth in income from this sector reached \$ 944 million in 2008, up 1.9 % from 2007. [8] This evidence indicates that the tourism industry and tourist arrival in that region is experiencing a long period of growth.

Focusing on Bali, according to Bali Tourism Statistic in 2010, the number of foreign tourists arriving Bali in 2010 was 2,493,058 and 4,825,068 of domestic tourists, so that the total number is 7,318,126. [9] This figure was recorded from the main gate of Bali; Ngurah Rai International Airport and Gilimanuk Harbour, excluding other gates such as Padangbai, and Benoa Harbour. While the growth rate of tourist arrival in the last five years is 13.26 % per year. Data from the Statistics Office of Bali Province in late 2010 recorded that the total number of properties providing accommodation and the number of rooms in Bali was 2,190 and 45,408 respectively, it means that over the last five years there was an increase of 5.05 % in the number of hotels & other accommodation and 2.5 % in the number of rooms. Badung Regency embraces the areas of Kuta, Nusa Dua, Tanjung Benoa, Pecatu, Canggu is the largest number of total room for accommodation which is up 62.47 % of total room in Bali, followed by Gianyar Regency and Denpasar Municipality. [10]

### 3.1 The Development of Coastal Tourism Resort

From the beginning, the increasing growth of tourism in Bali produced a positive outcome with the opening of Bali Beach Hotel (recent name: The Inna Grand Bali Beach Hotel) in 1966 and Ngurah Rai International Airport in 1967. Both facilities are located at Sanur and Tuban/Kuta Beach. Although both facilities had negative impacts on the coastal environment, such as Bali Beach Hotel constructed its waste water treatment tank at offshore (Figure 1) and the International Airport constructed their runway crossing shoreline by approximately 800 meter (Figure 2). It seemed that Bali had been proclaimed as the centre of tourism in Indonesia and expected tourist coming to Bali could spread to other regions in Indonesia.[11] Since then, the development of coastal tourism resorts at Sanur and Kuta had grown without planning and coordination. The unplanned and uncontrolled tourism resorts indicated by lack of infrastructure especially access to the beach, lack of public facilities, worse sewerage system, discharging water disposal to the sea, building frontier offences, and others had led to a high building density and threats of environmental disaster.



Figure 1: Bali Beach Hotel's waste water treatment tank at shoreline – offshore (BBCP, 2006). Figure 2: International Airport's runway with cross structure by approx. 800 metre (BBCP, 2008)

Meanwhile the resorts of Sanur and Kuta had been abandoned to grow themselves; the central government was interested in constructing a model of tourism resort as a centre of tourism resort taking at other location in Bali. In 1968, they asked some experts in planning and design from developed countries to develop the tourism resort model. Based on the experts recommendation, in 1970 the central government reached an agreement with the United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP) as the financing agency, the World (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development-IBRD, and the International Development Association-IDA) as the executive agency for the preparation of a regional tourism plan for the island of Bali.[12] An emphasis of the need is to concentrate the development of tourism resort providing international standard accommodation in an area with minor negative impacts. The Plan was designed by the France consultant; SCETO (Societe Centrale Pour l'Equipment Touristique Outre-Mer) was completed into six reports and approved by the central government in 1971 and through President's Decree in 1972. [13]

The SCETO succeeded in designing Nusa Dua enclave as an ideal site to be the centre of tourism resort in Bali. The aims of enclave tourism resort development of Nusa Dua are to minimise the interaction between tourists and local community, to provide natural demarcation of tourist areas, and other borders. Besides producing the physical planning, they also recommended to establish two institutions for managing tourism development and control. The two institutions mentioned were Bali Tourism Development Board (BTDB) as giving consultation to the government in the development of tourism in Bali and Bali Tourism Development Corporation (BTDC) as managing the implementation of Nusa Dua Master Plan. [14] The institution of

BTDB had had a significantly important role to control and secure the impact of tourism. Unfortunately, all foreign experts as technical experts of BTDB left this institution in 1979, due to the possibility of political interest and abuse of power. Since the Government of Province was taken over the function of BTDB, they were not able to control the faster-growing tourism resorts. New resorts were built in other places and beaches, such as Tanjung Benoa, Pecatu, Candi Dasa, Tanah Lot, Lovina Beach, and other beaches. An excursion road built to connect Nusa Dua resort with Sanur and Kuta resort changed to be public access, which are very crowded.

### 3.2 Unplanned Versus Planned Coastal Tourism Resort

Even though the central government succeeded in developing Nusa Dua resort as a model of tourism resort in Bali, it failed to set out Nusa Dua resort as the centre of tourism development. And also it failed to execute the initial aims of the enclave tourism resort development. New resorts were built in other places and beaches, such as Tanjung Benoa, Pecatu, Candi Dasa, Tanah Lot, Lovina Beach, and other beaches. Even an excursion road built to connect Nusa Dua resort with Sanur and Kuta resort has changed into a public access, which has become very crowded today. From this point of view, there are essentially two types of tourist resorts in Bali: the unplanned and the planned resort.

As the only properly planned resort, Nusa Dua was designed through ecological considerations. For instance, a Central Sewage Collection and Treatment System were built too far from the sea to avoid water infiltration to the sea. Watering the garden and other landscape of the resort are supplied from the treated sewage effluent and well-field. The resort has a large open space as every plot area uses Building Covered Ratio or Floor Area Ratio of approximately 35 %, following Building Codes.[15] Whilst setback line of the structures to coastline was assumed around 60 metre from High Water Level (HWL). With wide and beautiful sandy beaches stretching along the coast supported by calm wave, it deserves this resort as one of the best resort areas in the world. Nowadays, the management of Nusa Dua resort is still under BTDC. With the authority of BTDC, the resorts' beaches, however, is not for public.

Meanwhile, other resorts were unplanned which each tourist facility was owned by private sector. The owners bought and built their land according to land certificate, although a part of their land was used previously by public as an access to the coast or to beach temples. Some cases took place in Kuta, Pecatu, Sanur, Candi Dasa and other places. They tended to ignore public interest as they are secured and guaranteed by the law. With profit oriented, they built their land as effective as possible and attempted to take advantage in every front, it includes encroaching the beach as public areas little by little. The Building Covered Ratio tends to be more than 35 %, since the owner extend commonly their facilities after operation. In addition their building structures were too close to the coastline which assumed not accurate from Local and Regional Regulation. This condition is due to less control and monitoring as well as weak law enforcement.

## 4 PUBLIC SPACE ISSUES IN BALI TOURIST BEACHES

As mentioned above, Bali beaches are sacred areas and also important public spaces whilst the tourist hotel operators treat the beaches in front of their properties is a vital asset to satisfy their tourist guests so that they tend to use them as much as possible. Besides the impact of tourism, beaches are also under threat from natural disaster. The issues of public space in Bali tourism beaches can be categorised into two factors; human activity and natural disaster.

### 4.1 Eroded Beaches

There is inevitable that eroded tourist beaches have resulted from a combination of natural disasters and human activities, leading to the significant change in their shoreline. According to the Bali Beach Conservation Project (BBCP) Inception Report 2006 recorded that eroded beaches were up to 51.5 km in the year of 1978, 70.33 km in 2000 to be 91 km in 2006.[16] The erosion took place in almost all coastal areas in Bali, which were dominantly moderate erosions (Figure 3). While hard eroded beaches were recorded at three locations, one of them is Candi Dasa Beach resort (Figure 4). The report also identified that the hard erosion taking place is due to climate change, coral mining, waste disposal, fishing activity, inaccurate hard structures built along the coast, and other human activities. Nowadays the eroded beaches in Bali are predicted to reach approximately 100 km, since there is no protection in the most coastal areas. This condition has resulted in the narrower beaches and definitely lack of public space.



Even though, the central government has rehabilitated the main tourism resorts in Bali such as Tanah Lot (2002) Sanur, Tanjung Bena and Nusa Dua (2006), and Kuta Resort (2008), the erosion cannot be stopped. To maintain the beach's space in these resorts, the government has prepared a sand stockpile located in West Sanur area. [17] But the cost to transport the sand to the location and to fill it on the beach needs a lot of budget which has to be financed by the government regency. The problem is not solely on the cost of beach maintenance but also after running out sand stockpile. To dredge the sand from the previous source at Geger beach, it will not be easy anymore since it needs a huge of money and also needs hard socialisation to the community in terms of getting approval from them. While the resort beaches have eroded continually, the others have been serious damaged even have lost in some parts.

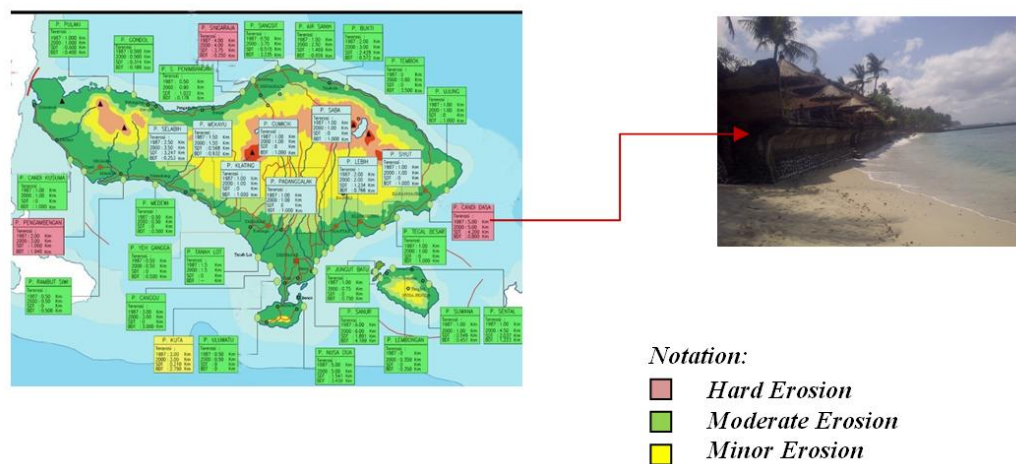


Figure 3: Eroded Beach of Bali Island. Source: Bali Beach Conservation Project (BBCP, 2006). Figure 4: Candi Dasa Beach Resort

#### 4.2 Conflict of Interest

There are different perspectives from Balinese community/public, the government, and tourism companies concerning about the function of the beach especially in tourism beaches. The different perspectives have become a conflict of interest from the beach users, and it will have a high risk to be friction even confrontation from the parties if there is no clear solution particularly from the government as the agent of policy authorities. The involvement of the government of regency and province to manage conflict of interest in these areas is essential. The National Policy No. 22/1999 and No 26/2007 state that both the governments have been responsible to manage the beaches. It means that management of conflict must be handled mainly by the government. From the both policies, the government of regency has been more responsible than the province.

However, the government of regency has given a mandate to preserve the beaches to a traditional village, called Desa Pakraman. The reason is to give their authority back as a part of the traditional village territory. But the situation is not similar to two centuries ago when the Desa Pakraman had got directly a mandate from the King to manage their territory, so they were so powerful to maintain the beaches as ritual areas. Today the situation is clearly more complex, most of them have only tasks to organise ritual rites when take places and to take parking and entrance ticket. Only Desa Pakraman of Kuta and Legian has full attention to manage their beach territory, although they could not handle all problems. They still need some helps to the regency, such as manpower, heavy equipments, and other materials.

Meanwhile, from empirical data, other villages have various problems in managing their beach territory which depends on internal and external factors. Sanur resort, for example, it seems that conflicts of interest are not only from the beach users, but it also comes from the member of villages. Among them are the administrative village of Sanur Kaja and Kauh, Desa Pakraman of Intaran Sanur, Sindu Traditional Sub-village, Youth Organisation of Batu Jimbar Sub-village, and other groups. Even though they are powerful, there is less coordination among them. On the other hand, the resort locations which are too far from the traditional village, tends to use the beach optimally, for instance Geger, Pecatu, Dreamland, Jimbaran, Candi Dasa, Canggu Beach, and others. At this time, the government of regency are still continuing to open wide investment in tourism sector in order to increase their local income. An awareness to manage conflicts of interest in the beach is not to be established yet, so that the conflict will be more complicated in the future.

### 4.3 Private Beach

From the first step, Nusa Dua was designed as an enclave tourist resort and private resort to avoid the negative impacts of tourism to local culture and community. This private resort was approved by the province and central government. This is because the rationale was good and reasonable; however it means that there was contradiction from the notion of Balinese Hindu Society, and also disagreement from the National Policy in which the beach is sacred and public area (Figure 5). Though an access to two temples which located at the two small islands has been available, the nuance and atmosphere for preparing ritual rites at the temples is strictly different (Figure 6). Because of this sample, the beaches at the northern and southern side of Nusa Dua resort tend to be private, even the beaches at Geger Beach. At those locations, hotel operators use the beaches in front of their property as much as possible, backed up by their security guards.



Figure 5: Nusa Dua's aerial photo with artificial reefs as Groins after Project (BBCP, 2006). Figure 6: Two small islands as an identity of Nusa Dua Resort (BBCP, 2006)

### 4.4 Lack of Access and Public Facility

Public access is a determining factor whether the beach is to be private or public. With the lack of public access to the beach, it is difficult to say the beach in front of the resort is public space. Most unplanned tourism resorts have been indicated by lack of public access as mentioned above. In some places, the Balinese have to get permission from the hotel operators access their beach temples for ritual ceremony. This is due to no public access to their temples. This is a very unfortunate situation. Another problem is the lack of public facility in most tourism resorts. When the beach rehabilitation took place in the four locations, the central government, through the project built some public facilities such public toilets, tourist information centres, public showers, and others, but those are only in Kuta beach. Sanur resort has some small public toilets, built by the community initiative. The main reason is lack of areas to build these facilities. And also there is no initiative from the government of regency to redevelop the existing unplanned resorts by providing public facilities along the coast. If the government state that the beaches in front of the tourism resort are public space, they ought to utilise facilities as the needs of public.

## 5 CONCLUSION

This paper has considered the issues associated with tourist development in the beach areas of Bali, in which it can be summarised as follows:

The initial development of Nusa Dua enclave resort designed to mitigate negative impacts of tourism on Balinese culture and local community unfortunately did not perform as expected, indicated by the rapid growth of uncontrolled beach development in other places which are close to the local community. This development growing continually that cannot be controlled again. Building codes requiring the setback of building structures from coastline by 100 metres also failed to be implemented, leaving most accommodation too close to the coastline. Weak control and monitoring might be one of the main reasons allowing the problem to occur. Moreover, a desire by the government to encourage investment in tourism for economic development without putting in place measures to protect socio-culture and environment has exacerbated problems, particularly in public space issues.

The issues have been identified such as; eroded beaches, conflicts of interest, private beaches, lack of public access and facilities. The recent issues relating to public space in the beach tourism resorts seem difficult to

be stop. Loss of the beach's space from offshore and onshore due to erosion and encroachment is an indication that the issue could not be stopped. In the future, the public spaces issue are set to become a more contentious issue and meet more resistance. Furthermore, marginalised public interests, friction and confrontation are some serious threat in the beach usages.

To manage the problems especially public space issues, there are several important steps and strategies which should be implemented immediately. These are:

There is a need for the local and regional government to evaluate the development of Bali tourism as a whole and develop a strategy for its management. The strategy should recognise that development without consideration of human and environmental conservation is a real failure and a poor step for the next generation. For this purpose, stakeholders must have the same vision and mission in setting out local wisdom of cosmological balance as the key role of tourism development, and also this has important parallels with aspects of the concept of sustainability. An organisation body like BTDB constituting a synergy between the local and regional government is essential to be established to control and monitor the development of tourism especially the tourism resorts

In addition, it is a better way to improve the existing resorts rather than to extend and develop new resorts. The beach identified as public spaces and scared areas must be a priority to be implemented, supported by tight control and monitoring. No space should be designed as private beaches for any reason or argument.

Although the implementation of regulation about setback line of building structure from the coastline to all existing buildings are almost impossible to implement, the organisation body should push the hotel owners to show their land certificates for clarification whether they take public areas or not. If they take public areas, it must be recovered leading to prosecution. After that, the placement of benchmarks is essential to monitor the position of the existing buildings and other hard structures, equipped by an advance technology in mapping and monitoring system such as Geographic Information System (GIS) for covering the whole resort beaches.

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