

# The Impact of COVID-19 in the Procedure of Religious-Worship and Social Life, In Islamic View

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## **Abstract**

*This article discusses the effects of a coronavirus pandemic in social life. Coronavirus is a global problem that has yet to be resolved until now, it has changed behavior in life, especially in the procedure of religious-worship and social life. The author find that the differences in understanding and attitude related to COVID-19 was caused by knowledge and mental readiness. So the case of COVID-19 corpse will not occur if they have understood and readiness even though it is clear that the coronavirus has changed the way of worship and social life.*

**Keywords:** *COVID-19; Religious-worship; Social life; Knowledge; Mental readiness*

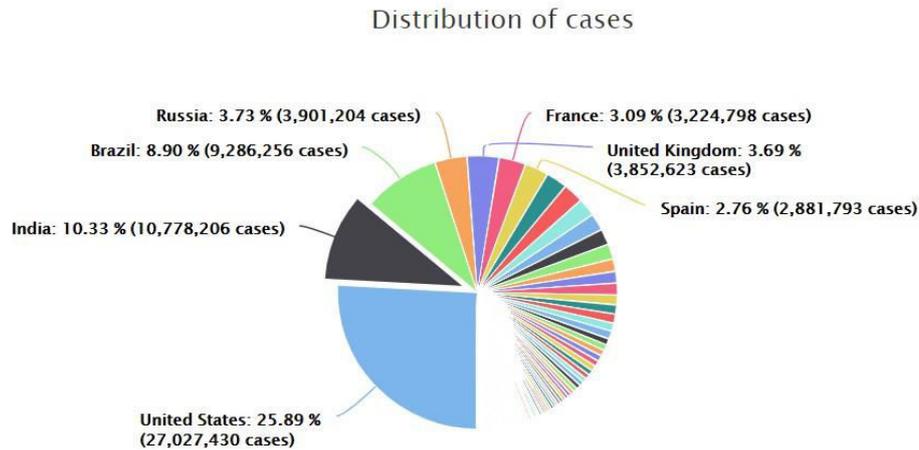
## **1. Introduction**

The General Director of World Health Organization (WHO) TedrosAdhanomGhebreyesus spoke at a press conference in Geneva, March 11, 2020, that COVID-19 has been categorized as a pandemic, because the virus has spread more widely throughout the world. Europe now “there are more cases and deaths reported than all of the world combined, except from China”, Europe has now become the epicentre of the pandemic (AFP, 2020).

Coronavirus pandemic 2019-2020 or known as the COVID-19 is caused by a new type of coronavirus named SARS-CoV-2. COVID-19 was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China in December 2019 after several people were an outbreak of pneumonia of unknown, the treatment procedures and vaccines given were ineffective. The emergence of the disease was thought related to Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market where there was also sale of live animals (Editorial, 2020).

Worldometers.info noted the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) situation until Februari 2, 2021, consist of 212 countries, with a total of 104,485,479 cases, 2,265,049 died, and 76,364,682 recovered.

### Countries cases distribution



Source: Worldometer - [www.worldometers.info](http://www.worldometers.info) 

Source: <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/worldwide-graphs/>

Now, coronavirus not only claimed thousands of lives but also changed the ways of human life throughout the world, starting from the interaction of others and the process of relating to God. Some people confine themselves at home, to avoid crowded places, and postpone trips to other places (Diseko, 2020). On the contrary, others change the procedure from shaking hands and hugging become elbow bump greeting as practiced at the Indonesian Presidential Palace such as Erick Thohir and Doni Monardo, and Jusuf Kalla and Sri Mulyani (Fin, 2020).

## 2. Literature Review

Islam is a religion that teaches and commands in cleanliness and purity. In the Qur'an the command to keep cleanliness and purity is 43 times (Qur'an: 428-429). Like in the verse of Qur'an, 2: 222 "*innallāha yuḥibbut-tawwābīna wa yuḥibbul-mutaṭahhirīn*" [Truly Allah loveth those who turn unto Him, and loveth those who have a care for cleanness]. In other verse of Qur'an, 33: 33 "*innamāyurīdullāhuliyūz-hiba 'angkumur-rijsaahlal-baitiwayuṭahhirakumtaṭ-hīrā*" [Allah's wish is but to remove uncleanness far from you, O Folk of the Household, and cleanse you with a thorough cleansing].

The Qur'an itself explains that it becomes an antidote or medicine for the sick, as mentioned in the verse of Qur'an, 17: 88 "*wanunazziluminal-qur`ānimāhuwasyifā`wwwarah̄matullil-mu`minīnawalāyazīduz-zālimīnailākhasārā`*" [And We reveal of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy for believers though it increase the evil-doers in naught save ruin].

There are several hadiths of the Prophet that describe pandemics, the Hadiths of Aisyah R.A. like:

From Aisyah RA, he said, I asked Rasulullah SAW about tha'un, then Rasulullah SAW told me, in the past, tha'un is punishment that Allah sends to whomever He wants, but Allah makes it a blessing for believers. So no one gets hit by tha'un, then he keeps himself at home patiently and hopes for His pleasure while realizing that tha'un will not happen to him other than it has become Allah's stipulation for him, surely he will get a reward like the reward of a martyr.

From Abdullah bin Amir bin Rabi'ah, Umar bin Khattab RA took the journey to Sham. When he arrived at Sargh, Umar received news that an epidemic was hitting the Syam region. Abdurrahman bin Auf told Umar that Rasulullah SAW had said, 'If you hear of a plague in an area, then you don't enter it. But if an epidemic occurs in the area you are in, then don't leave that place.' Then Umar bin Khattab turned around leaving Sargh

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1. The role of religious institutions in prevention of COVID-19

The Coronavirus pandemic has impacted religion in various ways, including the cancellation of the worship services of various faiths, the closure of Sunday Schools, as well as the cancellation of pilgrimages surrounding observances and festivals. Like Indonesia, the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) issued a fatwa on the ban of holding Friday Prayers in congregation in certain areas during the coronavirus pandemic. The ban was outlined in MUI Fatwa Number 14 of 2020 concerning Organizing Worship in Situations of the Covid-19 Outbreak. The fatwa issued on Monday, March 16, 2020 (MUI, 2020), the MUI said Friday Prayers could be replaced with Zuhr Prayers in their homes, where conditions for the spread of Covid-19 were out of control in a life-threatening area, Muslims should not hold Friday prayers in that area (CNN, 2020).

MUI's fatwa as: First, every person is obliged to make efforts to maintain health and stay away from everything that can cause exposure to disease, because it is part of maintaining the main goal of religion;

Second, people who have been exposed to the coronavirus, must protect and isolate themselves so that transmission does not occur to others. For him, Friday prayers can be replaced with Zuhr prayers, because Friday prayers are a compulsory worship that involves many people, so there is a chance of mass transmission of the virus. For him, it is forbidden to carry out sunnah worship activities that open up opportunities for

contagion, such as pilgrims to pray five times/ rawatib, Tarawih and Eid prayers in mosques or other public places, as well as to attend public recitals and grand tablighs;

Third, people who are healthy and who have not been known or are believed not to be exposed to COVID-19, must pay attention to the following matters: a) In the situation that he is in an area with high or very high transmission potential based on the provisions of the authorities, he may leave Friday prayers and replace them with the Zuhr prayer at the residence, and leave the congregation to pray five times/ rawatib, Tarawih, and Eid at the mosque or other public places, b) In the situation that he is in an area where the potential for transmission is low based on the provisions of the authorities, he is still obliged to carry out religious duties as usual and must guard himself from being exposed to COVID-19, such as not having direct physical contact (shaking, hugging, kissing hands), bringing own prayer rug, and often washing hands with soap;

Fourth, in conditions of the uncontrolled spread of COVID-19 in a life-threatening region, Muslims may not hold Friday prayers in the area until conditions return to normal and must replace them with Zuhr prayers in their respective places. Thus, it is not permissible to hold worship activities that involve large numbers of people and is believed to be a medium for the spread of COVID-19, such as pilgrims to pray five times/ rawatib, Tarawih and Eid prayers in mosques or other public places, and to attend public recitals and recitation the assembly;

Fifth, in the condition that the spread of COVID-19 is controlled, Muslims are obliged to hold Friday prayers and may hold worship activities that involve many people, such as pilgrims to pray five times/ rawatib, Tarawih and Eid prayers in mosques or other public places, as well as attend public prayers and recitation the assembly while maintaining themselves not to be exposed to COVID-19;

Sixth, Government made this fatwa as a guideline in setting COVID-19 countermeasures policies related to religious issues and Muslims must obey them;

Seventh, the corpse handling exposed to COVID-19, especially in bathing and waving must be done according to medical protocols and carried out by the authorities, with due regard to the provisions of the Shari'a. Meanwhile, for praying and burying, it is carried out as usual while keeping to not being exposed to COVID-19

Eight, activity that cause panic or cause public harm, such as buying up or hoarding basic necessities and masks and spreading hoax information related to COVID-19 are banned (haram);

Ninth, Muslims should get closer to Allah SWT by increasing worship, repentance, forgiveness, zikr, reading QunutNazilah in every obligatory prayers, multiply blessings, alms, and always pray to Allah SWT to be given protection and safety from calamities and distress, especially from the COVID-19 outbreak.

Quoting Hilmy, in the MUI's fatwa above, the religious position in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, must adopt and refer to medical protocols issued by authoritative institutions before providing religious views regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. That is, there is no paradox between religious reasoning and health reasoning.

Both are should support and strengthen each other to prevent, stem, and stop the spread of COVID-19. Conformity between health reason and religious reasoning is to maintain the safety of life or human life on the one hand and on the other hand, namely to eliminate danger or damage (Hilmy, 2020). The Koran also forbids Muslims from falling into destruction (QS 2: 195). There is also a hadith which confirms that we must not make damage to ourselves or others. According to the principles of fiqh, all forms of damage or danger must be removed.

On the other situation, the existence of distance in culture or religion such as maintaining distance (social distancing) must be obeyed together with full awareness, for avoid from the worse transmission of that virus. Indeed, people do not have to panic in responding to this coronavirus, but need to be vigilant, because the panic can reduce immunity that can ward off various viruses. In this context, the core of our vigilance attitude lies in how far we use our reason and common sense in responding to the coronavirus outbreak based on the principles of health, humanity, and public benefit (Hilmy, 2020).

### **3.2. Funeral refusal of positive COVID-19**

Coronavirus outbreaks hit 212 countries have changed lifestyles and mindsets in various countries, depending on the understanding of the country and its citizens. Like Indonesia, the formation of the COVID-19 response task force starts from the center which is controlled by the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB), then followed up by the Governor, Regent and Village level through RT/RW (Wibowo, 2020). Providing correct information and education to the whole community is preventing the spread of coronavirus. The contradictory thing is the communities reject of the corpse of COVID-19 in various parts of Indonesia, it is very troubling especially by the family of the corpse. Due to a lack of information and education, they thought that with the burial of a positive corpse COVID-19 would transmit, even with the standard protocol of COVID-19.

The heroic action of Banyumas Regent AchmadHusein in giving an explanation to the residents of Tumiyang Village, Pekuncen District, Banyumas Regency who rejected COVID-19 positive corpse by blocking ambulance carriers. Even to make sure he participated in demolition of the body of COVID-19 while saying: the body will not transmit the corona virus, the transmission will be far greater sourced from people who are still alive (Anugrah, 2020).

Many incidents, regarding about rejection of corpses COVID-19 in several regions, then the Ministry of Religion issued the rules for the burial of COVID 19 as follows: Arrangement of corpse, (1) arrangement of corpse COVID-19 must be carried out by hospital officials which determined by the Ministry Health; (2) The corpse of COVID-19 is covered with a shroud or plastic which is impermeable to water. The corpse can also be covered with wood or other materials that are not easily contaminated; (3) The body that has been wrapped should not be opened again, except

for urgent needs such as autopsies and can only be done by officers; (4) The body is buried no more than 4 hours.

About corpse prayer contains the following: (1) The implementation of corpse prayer is carried out at the referral hospital. If not, the corpse can be done in a mosque that has undergone a thorough sanitation inspection process and disinfects after the prayer; (2) Corpse prayer is carried out as soon as possible by considering the allotted time which is no more than 4 hours; (3) Corpse prayer can be carried out even by one person.

Concerning the burial of the corpse contains: (1) The location of the burial must be at least 50 meters from the groundwater source used for drinking and at least 500 meters from the nearest settlement; (2) The corpse must be buried at a depth of 1.5 meters, then covered with one meter high soil; (3) After all the body procedures have been carried out properly, the family can participate in the burial of the body.

The notice of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion was made in order to maintain peace and comfort for the public regarding the handling of COVID-19's corpse. What should be done by the community is not a rejection of the funeral of COVID-19 Body, but it gives motivation and empathy to the family of the body, not the other way around.

### **3.3. COVID-19 Vaccine in Islamic View**

The world, including Indonesia, began to vaccinate COVID-19. Wednesday (13/1/2021) President Joko Widodo became the first person to get the Sinovac vaccine from China. Sinovac's halal status came out after the Auditor Team explained that there was no haram content, as stated by the Head of the The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) for Fatwa and Halal Affairs, Asrorun Niam Sholeh who emphasized that Sinovac is holy and lawful.

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) once issued a fatwa regarding vaccine in Islam, namely the rubella vaccine, which is haram because it uses pork, the prohibition of pork is explicitly explained in the Qur'an, 2: 173 and the Sunnah. The prohibition of pig, because it impurity and the dirtiest and filthiest animal, so that humans who often eat pork will change their DNA to be similar to pigs, considering that the DNA of pigs and humans are similar. Islam itself supports the existence of COVID-19 vaccine as long as the materials used are halal, because the presence of vaccines supports the preservation of the soul as part of the maqasid sharia which is the core or the spirit of Islam.

## **CONCLUSION**

Coronavirus pandemic has brought enormous changes in life throughout the world, both in the economic and cultural fields. Various efforts in prevention and treatment have been carried out by the whole world, the most unique thing is that it has changed the procedure of religious-worship and social life that is starting all the work from home to work and worship, especially for Muslims who practice Ramadan. On the

other hand the importance of empathic planting to the family of COVID-19 so there is no rejection of the corpse, but rather empathic attitude and love for their family.

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