

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Indonesia's Own Jurassic Park: The Komodo National Park and Its Controversies

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By Harsh Mahaseth



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Jurassic Park directed by Steven Spielberg is a class movie. Since the release of the movie, numerous people have hoped and wished to experience a real-life Dino-park. Well, Indonesia is planning to have one! With the Komodo Dragons in the spotlight.

Indonesia's President, Joko Widodo, with a goal to eradicate poverty, increased infrastructure immensely in Indonesia when he was first elected in 2014. This not only drastically changed the country's appearance but also the economy. Later on, with a mission to bring the country within the world's top 5 largest economies, President Jokowi introduced vision 2045 in 2019. The one sector Indonesia could rely on to boost this much-needed economy is the tourism sector. The country is home to remarkable flora and fauna, unimaginable landscapes, and well-rooted culture.

One important project that the Government has decided to work on is the Komodo National Park. This UNESCO recognized World Heritage Centre, is located in the centre of the Indonesian archipelago, between the islands of Sumbawa and Flores, which is composed of three major islands Rinca, Komodo, and Padar, and numerous smaller volcanic ones. It is home to thousands of giant lizards, whose behaviour and aggressive appearance have led to them being called 'Komodo Dragons'. Their existence is unique to these islands that are perfect for their survival. The park also protects the extensive marine environment around the islands, with sparkly corals, whales, dolphins etc and has attracted several backpackers from Bali since the 1990s.

While, tourism and pollution that comes with it, already seem to affect the park, the new infrastructure measures have increased the destruction. The planned construction of a resort on Rinca Island has sparked concerns over illegal fishing, pollution, and the deterioration of the health of the Komodo Dragons. Many native Indonesians and those living in nearby villages have raised protests over the massive destruction of trees in the park. With pictures of construction workers violating the habitat of the Komodo Dragons surfacing, numerous ecologists and reformists have expressed anger towards the Government. It is believed that increasing numbers of tourists will affect the animals' mating habits. There are also concerns about poachers targeting Komodo Dragons and deers, their main prey. In fact, these concerns are not new, they had surfaced a couple of years back too, leading to discussions regarding banning tourist visitation in 2018 as 176000 enthusiasts visited the park that year.

As the construction at the park triggered outpouring anger amongst Indonesians, Wiratno, a senior environment ministry official, said rangers would ensure the safety of dragons roaming near the construction, which will include an elevated deck, a dam and an information centre, to be completed in June 2022. He said, they will intensively make checks of whether the Komodo dragons are under the buildings, remnants of buildings, and under the trucks carrying material.

UNESCO has provided a statement on this Rinca Island project. They have confirmed that the authorities did not inform them, regarding the expansion plans, as they are required to do so by operational guidelines. At the organization's request, Indonesia had submitted a report. After reviewing the same UNESCO has requested the Government to not continue with the project. The Komodo Dragons are endangered species and it is unknown what will happen if this project continues.

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The G20 is an international cooperation forum consisting of 19 giant economies. G20 membership consists of representatives of developed and developing countries as well as the European Union. The G20 is a world economic cooperation forum designed to deal with world economic crises such as those that occurred in 1997-1998 and 2007-2008. During this period the world experienced a major economic crisis that led to hunger, poverty and other crisis consequences. At the beginning of 2020 the world experienced a COVID-19 pandemic which caused economic growth to slow down due to almost all countries closing borders and reducing the scale of trade. Therefore, The COVID-16 pandemic has triggered a global economic crisis. In 2022 the G20 presidency ...

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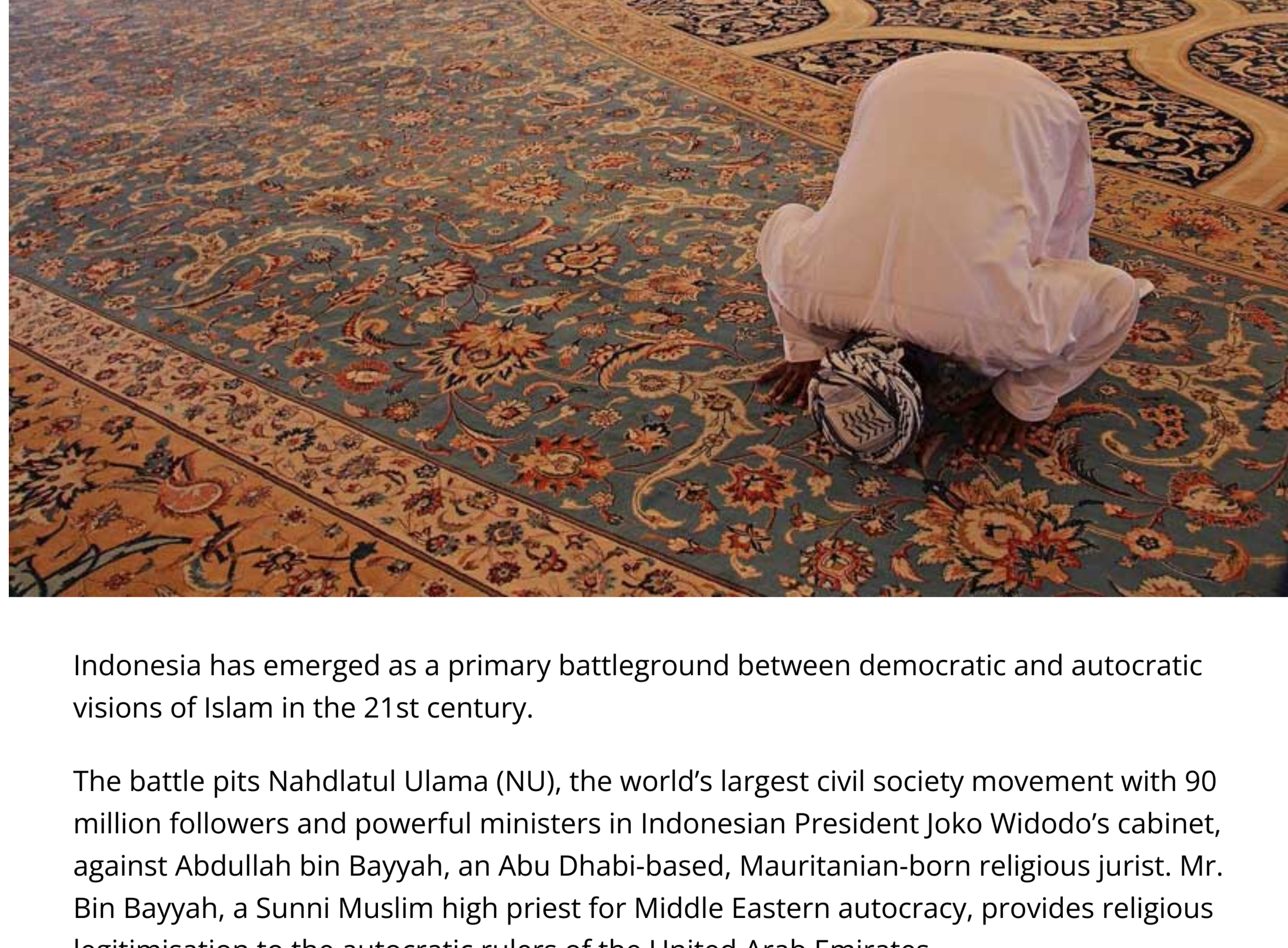
Indonesia is a country rich in biodiversity that in each region of Indonesia has a lot of natural wealth in the form of medicinal plants that have many benefits. However, with the large number identified as medicinal plants, only 283 species are officially registered with BPOM that can be used as medicine and have been used by the public (Gadjah Mada University, 2019, #). But Indonesia has not been optimal in maximizing its natural wealth, especially in maximizing the potential of medicinal plants to be used as herbal products that can be used by local Indonesian and international communities to improve the branding of the quality of Indonesian herbal products and increase local potential as a strategy to improve the economy of the country. Indonesia's potential ...

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The battle pits Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the world's largest civil society movement with 90 million followers and powerful ministers in Indonesian President Joko Widodo's cabinet, against Abdullah bin Bayyah, an Abu Dhabi-based, Mauritanian-born religious jurist. Mr. Bin Bayyah, a Sunni Muslim high priest for Middle Eastern autocracy, provides religious legitimisation to the autocratic rulers of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Widodo risks finding himself in the battle's crossfire. Although closely associated

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