

## Special Event Impacts for Direct Stakeholders: Perspectives of Indonesia's Independence Day Celebration

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### ABSTRACT

Indonesia's Independence Day Celebration (I IDC) as one of great assets to attract better tourism development. The increase in the number of high visits is basically a potential that must continue to be developed. The I IDC has its own uniqueness and distinctive aspects for tourists to experience or participate. I IDC is celebrated throughout Indonesia with various cultural activities according to each province's local wisdoms. This event is a national joy and certainly reoccurs annually. This study aims to discuss the importance of holding an event as a tourist attraction together with its impacts on direct stakeholders and how the event or festival of I IDC commemoration can be a sustainably profitable tourist attraction for Indonesia. This study used descriptive method, and the data collected through literature review taken from various sources such as academic books, journals, newspaper articles, and publication in electronics media. The results found that I IDC would serve as a potential sustainable tourist attraction which will breed great economic output as well as building better community-based tourism activities since it is celebrated annually. I IDC is considered a very special event which has the potential of boosting tourism development in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Attraction, Community, Events, Festival, I IDC, Profits, Tourism

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism can be perceived differently by some people. However, it is actually not limited only to specific areas such as accommodation, hospitality sectors, and entertainment sectors, but also tourism and its management are closely connected to all major functions, processes and procedures that are practiced in various areas related to tourism as a system. One of the areas that is included in the tourism system is a special event. A special event is a one-time or infrequent event outside the program or normal activities of the sponsoring or organizing body (Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2005). Thus, events can also be categorized as tourist attractions since they provide features or characteristic of something that induce one or more tourists to visit, seeking leisure experiences, recreational and cultural (Leiper, 2004). Events are celebrations of something the community wishes to share. Their objective is to attract the maximum number of people to participate or to provide the opportunity for a public, due to the fact that tourism is one sector that is the mainstay of the government to generate regional income and expansion of employment opportunities, in addition to introducing national



and regional identity and culture. Tourism development can be done by expanding and utilizing the potential of regional tourism (Rawung, Salindeho, & Mantiri, 2019).

Special events are celebrated in order to meet various needs and values of the host community and stakeholders. The purposes of events vary significantly depending on the needs of the stakeholders. Each entity of the stakeholders conducts events for specific aims such as providing entertainment and education to the host community. Furthermore, events have been recognized as a part of marketing aspects where companies are able to leverage their products. Therefore, events planning and management must be thoroughly prepared and assessed so that the events may be run successfully. In line with this, one aspect in the event processes which is often left to the end is the signage aspect.

Thus, this paper is going to discuss the importance of holding an event as a tourist attraction together with its impacts on direct stakeholders and how the event or festival of IIDC commemoration can be a sustainably profitable tourist attraction for Indonesia. The paper will further discuss why the IIDC event is able to generate more tourists and boost profits for Indonesia, in terms of receiving financial impact.

## RESEARCH METHOD

Research methodology used for this research was done through thorough literature review taken from various sources such as academic books, journals, newspaper articles, and publication in electronics media. The gained information was then synthesized with personal critical analysis to provide new insights for better special-event management.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

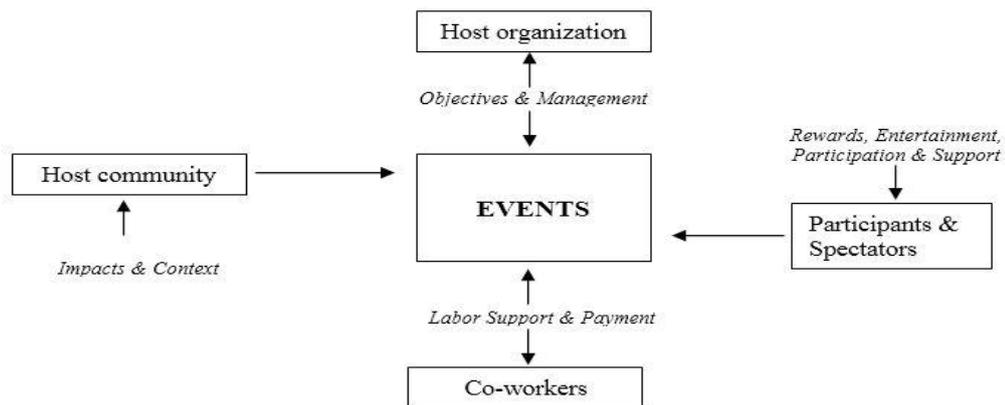
### Special Events and Direct Stakeholders' Relationships

Allen, O'Toole, Harris and McDonnell (2005) further described special events as the celebrations of specific rituals, presentations, and performances that are initially planned and created to mark special occasions in order to obtain particular social, cultural or corporate objectives. In other words, the term 'event' used to describe a wide range of activities, many of which have quite different characteristics. Events vary from local community-based events such as Folk Festivals, to major events such as Olympics. Benefits of festivals to communities can be extensive, particularly when the draw is from outside the region. Community events and festivals can make a significant contribution for rural development with strategic planning, well-defined goals, local level partnerships and funding. However, rural communities often organize tourism events to inject cash into their economies. This cash is not enough to achieve comprehensive rural economic development. Events assist the tourism businesses of the region but not enough to revive the entire economy (Irshad, 2011).

According to a survey conducted by the international Festival and Event Association (IFEA), the special events industry is estimated to include some 4 to 5 million regularly reoccurring events and has a significant economic impact globally (IFEA 2007 cited in



Irshad 2011). The advantages of festival and special events are demonstrated more explicitly in rural settings, particularly in boosting local economies, continuing employment, and rural destination promotion. However, the impacts of events are closely related to the stakeholders' importance and perspectives as well. Thus, events need to contribute valuable things to direct stakeholders. Figure 1 shows the relationship and effects between special events and the stakeholders' perspectives.



**Figure 1:** The relationship of stakeholders to events  
 Adapted from Allen et al (2005 p. 87): *Festival and Special Event Management*

### Host Community's Perspectives

The success of special events depends on the strong support of host community since it holds responsibilities to the events. Participative and cooperative involvement of host community is needed for the success of special events. Kim, Uysal and Chen (2002) outlined those festivals and special event are the cultural resources of an area that are usually organized to create positive image of a place and to bring money to the local economy.

Special events prove to absolutely contribute to the mental health, well-being of communities and raise the awareness of the cultural significance. Pesona Bahari Takabonerate festival, Kepulauan Selayar, Sulawesi Selatan is a recurring event which has been conducted for the past seven years. This event is an example of how community perceives the importance of an event as to preserve their cultural attractions. During the event, tourists and visitors are able to explore the cultural sites and do hiking at the historical venues within the area (Liputan6, 2016). The same perspectives can be seen during the Toraja Tourism Expo 2016 where the event was held to mainly entertain tourists but still having the aim at exposing tourist to Toraja's sacred sites.

Moreover, events may facilitate the creation of new networks and groups, and foster dialogs across communities (Hilbers, 2005). Social well-being of the host community might be met by constructing supporting infrastructures. Events may 'bridge' this need through providing public facilities such as transport and housing. Hall (1992) provided an example of the 1972-Olympic-Games held in Munich where there was a boost to urban



development projects. The Olympics enabled the Bavarian capital to jump ten years ahead in its development programs as federal government improved the construction of transport. Moreover, special events can generate potential employment for the local community since job opportunity may come from those specific events (Fredline, Deery & Jago, 2006).

### **Host Organization's Perspectives**

A host organization consists of corporate, government and community sectors (Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell, 2005). Host organizations conduct events for different purposes; primarily, they seek certain objectives such as developing economic growth as well as preserving cultures. Certainly, the purposes should strongly link to the theme and venues where and when the events are going to be held. Most of the purposes of event organizers are to generate profit; however, for many it is not. Some organizers pursue different motivations such as to provide information, entertainment and nostalgia. This can be seen in the Wintersun Festival at Coolangatta, Queensland-Australia. The organizer has taken this event as to entertain spectators. During the Jakarta International Java Jazz Festival, visitors are entertained by various jazz music and international and local singers to perform. For nostalgic purposes, aged visitors may remember their youth-life experiences by watching and wandering around the venue (Kartajaya & Nirwandar 2013).

Another aim by organizer is to build cultural values. Danau Toba Festival 2016 has been planned to attract 60,000 visitors (CNN Indonesia, 2016). This can be reckoned as an event for the community, in the way that community will be able to be engaged and obtained mental entertainment. Meeting and greeting friends, colleagues and relatives during the event may refresh the 'brotherhood tight' among society.

### **Attendants' Perspectives**

Attendants visit special events for the needs of novelty, social interaction and 'escape' for daily routines. These relate to the needs for social-psychological (Getz 1991 cited in Xiang and Petrick 2006). Xiang and Petrick (2006) further explained that first-time attendees may be motivated by the excitement of experiencing 'something new' whereas the repeat visitors might pursue 'event-novelty' as a corresponding satisfaction. In other words, first-time visitors were merely motivated by inquisitiveness compared to repeat visitors. This example was particularly discovered during a hot air balloon festival studied by Mohr in Xiang and Petrick (2006).

A study conducted by Formica and Uysal (1996) which analysed the main motivation of residents and non-residents in the Umbria region of Italy in attending an international jazz festival, revealed that local visitors were driven by the need for socialization, those who came from outside region were mostly interested in entertainment (Kim, Uysal & Chen, 2002, p. 129). The need for entertainment may be combined with the needs of nationality-status. This can be found at the celebration of FIFA World Cup where attendees were motivated to come in order to give support to their national team.

### **Participants' Perspectives**

Tantowi Ahmad, Lillyana Natsir and Susi Susanti are badminton players who won gold medals during the Brazil Olympics 2016 and Barcelona Olympics 1992. They all claimed that the drive for achievement motivated them to take a part partake. Another example, Ricky Martin was hardly known before 1998; however, he participated in the FIFA World Cup 1998 held in France as a theme-song singer. As a result, his career boosted significantly after the event. He might pursue the need for fame or popularity.

A motivational factor which relates to the hierarchy needs proposed by Maslow in Wood, et al (2004) may be found at Swell Sculpture Festival 2006 held at Currumbin, Queensland-Australia. A participant specified her main motivation was to be appreciated for her artwork (Personal Interview). Thus, the main drives for participants in special events strongly link to personal needs such as acknowledgement, achievement and appreciations. Undeniably, the participants to special events may also have different motivations in participating. A need for social acknowledgment and acceptance may be found at Mardi Gras Sydney Festival where the gay and lesbian people parade to express their existence (Hall, 1992).

### **Government's Perspectives**

There are various motivations for government to hold special events. Mainly, they are concerned with the economic, tourism, social, culture, and political benefits (Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell, 2005). It is true that one of the objectives for conducting International Furniture Craft Fair Indonesia (IFFINA) is to bridge between investors and producers to make businesses. Automatically, if the businesses take place, then the government may benefit from the businesses by getting income tax (Kartawijaya & Nirwandar 2013).

A good example on how government benefits from events was in the case of 1988 Brisbane International Exposition, Queensland-Australia. During the preparation phase, Australian government provided substantial supports to construct new infrastructure and redevelopment of the South-Bank area of Brisbane (Hal, 1992). The main idea was to promote a positive image of Brisbane and Queensland to the rest of Australia and the world in order to generate more economic investment and tourists' visitation. Moreover, government may also deal with the purpose of region-redevelopment through special events. Li (2003) cited in Xiang & Petrick (2006) explained this phenomenon whereby local government made use of Jacksonville Riverwalk 2002 Festival in North Carolina, USA to rebuild the downtown area; consequently, local community engendered pride toward their region.

Another example of regional development through special events may be drawn from the annual 'Speed-on-Tweed Festival, Australia. General Manage said 'Speed-on-Tweed' was significant in terms of its overall contribution to tourism development in Tweed. This can be seen through the growing number of visitors where more than 30,000 people turned up to the 2006 Festival. That is why The Tweed Economic Development Corporation (TEDC), with the assistance of Southern Cross University, NSW-Australia, planned to conduct a thorough study on the economic impact of this event.

Preserving customs in ethnic communities and the application of corporate culture may attract government to hold events (Spiropoulos, Gargalianos & Sotiriadou, 2006). An example can be drawn from a case occurred in Italy in 1970s where the government responded to a social problem after series attacks by the Red Brigades; evening street life in Italy was on the wane. Accordingly, the Mayor of Rome organized a festival to take over the 'city-of-the-night' as a means of re-establishing the traditional street-life (Hall, 1992, p. 19).

### **Co-Worker's Perspectives**

The fundamental success of an event lies in its supporting human resources. Human capital should be considered long before an event takes place. Host organizers should examine the needs of human capital for each level in the entire team. The team serves as the 'face' of events; therefore, each member from key managers to the security officer bears and contributes the same responsibility to the success or failure of the events (Allen, O'Toole, Harris & McDonnell, 2005). Event organizers should definitely evaluate the skill-requirements of team members when selecting who are going to be included in the events. Therefore, event managers should carefully appraise the processes of recruiting, training, coordinating and rewarding all team members for particular events (Goldblatt, 2005).

It is no doubt that some team members are involved in events for the needs to get payment. However, some workers are attached to events to pursue the need for social satisfaction and self-recognition as found at Pinasthika Creative Festival, an advertising creative contest in Indonesia where most team members are those who come from creative people within advertising industry having a purpose of building collaboration among each other.

### **Factors and Impacts That Make an Event Successful**

There are a number of important contributing factors that may elevate the success of an event. Goldblatt (2005) and Irshad (2011) proposed some of them as follow:

#### **Increasing Visitors' Length of Stay in Region/Town**

The main purpose for an event to be successful is that visitors come and stay from the beginning up to the end. This indicates that visitors love and enjoy the performances and activities.

#### **Increasing Visitors' Expenditure in Region/Town**

The longer visitors stay to enjoy an event, the more likely they spend their money. Consequently, it will have a direct impact on the internal stakeholders such as restaurants, hotels, and souvenir sellers. They are able to generate more income.

#### **Improving Destination Awareness**

One successful factor is that an event may be able to produce improvement of a destination image itself. This means that a destination branding may be elevated throughout the festival so long the event is performed well and obtains positive



responses. This will consequently breed beneficial effects for the destination in order to promote the special event.

#### **Increasing Civic Pride of Community Solidarity**

It is very clear that an event is able to elevate community's pride since an event may automatically be attached to a destination and community's identity. This can be seen in Jember, East Java when this destination holds Jember Fashion Carnival. Local community in Jember may then form a certain believe that they are more fashionable compared to other regions in Java or all over Indonesians. Thought this belief may not be exactly true, but the effect the event breeds has shown a positive outcome.

Important factors that an even organizer need to take into accounts that the offered events shall provide something unique in attracting attentions and able to trigger and finally stimulate tourists' or visitors' inner drive to participate and visit the festival. In this case, a festival may be compatible with tourists' preferences and personal tastes. Look at the case of music festival such as the Java Jazz, Indonesia. Loyal visitors keep participating and attend the festival due to the fact that the event or festival actually touches target market's personal tastes. In other words, a festival may even have its own 'loyal followers who will regularly participate and enjoys the performances.

#### **The Economic and Marketing Impacts of an Event for the host**

A tourist attraction is something that induces one or more tourists to visit, seeking leisure experiences; recreational or cultural (Leiper, 2004). Thus, events can also be categorized as tourist attractions since they provide features or characteristics which attract visitors' attention. It is clear that an event will generate certain economic impact to a host community. The economic impacts of event on the macro-economy of a region are categorized into primary and secondary economic impacts (Irshad, 2011). The primary is the direct economic impact measured by surveying participants or measuring business sales. Secondary impacts are those that result from the introduction of new money into economy. Many or all events have been conducted for the purposes of pursuing profits. Consequently, an event may also look at its strong relationship with marketing and sustainability program. Irshad (2011) proposed events can do the following for marketing aspects:

1. They can attract tourists and visitors, both national and international.
2. Events help to capture attention and promote attention and infrastructure.
3. Events may also attract investment.
4. Cultural events may generate employment and economic diversification

#### **IIDC As a National Sustainable and Potential Event to Generate Income**

Indonesia commemorates its Independence Day every 17 August. This has been conducted since the first year of independence declaration back to 1945 and it surely becomes national identity and culture. Indonesians living in all parts of the archipelago will celebrate and enjoy the event since this is a national celebration, everybody is attached. More specifically, the event also touches all levels of community's 'institutions' from play groups to mayor's office and up to Presidential Level, private or public organizations, all religions, tribes, social classes, and all demographic levels.

### **What The Indonesians Do During IIDC?**

The date has been marked as a 'red date' which means it's a national holiday. Thus, most Indonesians are not on duties or in certain official obligations except for certain institutions, mostly governments are required to do formal ceremonial celebrations. This day becomes a 'national day' when most Indonesians feel the 'pride of a nation'. National anthem and other heroic songs will usually be turned on and sung throughout the day. The red and white flags will be posted in front of most of Indonesians' houses. This is a special day to commemorate Indonesians' history of struggling for the independence.

Types of customary activities during the IIDC commemorations happen from village levels up to national celebrations in forms of flag ceremonies and various typically traditional Indonesian games and competitions such as palm climbing (Panjat Pinang), tug of war (tarik tambang), dangdut balloon dances, school and office decorations, the cleanest village competitions, modern and traditional sports competitions such as running with sacks (lari karung) and racing marbles (lomba kelereng). There will usually be laughs and joys throughout those days coming from the participants, spectators and visitors.

### **Timing of Celebration**

The timing for the IIDC celebration usually takes a longer period besides having the peak commemoration on that specific date itself. Some organizations, regions, or institutions may start the commemoration activities a week before and after 17 August. Clearly, the commemoration usually last for about two weeks in a row. Thus, during this period, Indonesia will be very lively and 'looks' pretty to the eyes of visitors and even to its own residents.

### **What Are the Implications to Potential Sustainably Profitable Tourism?**

Comparing to current other big events in Indonesia such as Jember Fashion Carnival in Jember Java, Festival Borneo in Kalimantan, Festival Danau Toba in Sumatera, Festival, Festival Pesona Bahari Takabonerate in Sulawesi Selatan, Festival Bunaken in Sulawesi Utara and Festival Pesona Saronde in Gorontalo, the commemoration of Indonesia's Independence Day obtains gets far better attention. Thus, it must be noted that the potential to attract tourists and visitors will be much more during this occasion considering the length of the celebration and the various attractions occur throughout the commemorations. This is very beneficial for a destination marketing development to generate income and have more visitors. The event obviously acts as a sustainable tourism element due to the fact that this is an annual celebration which will be celebrated and surely be 'there' every year. Looking from the perspective of tourism marketing, IIDC has already become a type of sustainable tourist attraction since all stakeholders in Indonesia, or even overseas, will conduct, celebrate, and even participate. Bear in mind that other short festivals mentioned above may provide some great performances and attractions, but the uniqueness of Indonesian traditional games and activities may not be available during those festivals. In fact, these attractions only occur during IIDC moment and happen in all over provinces.



Not to forget that, at the national level, there are two momentary celebrations of flag ceremonies led by the President of Indonesian Republic which are actually very attractive for tourists to see. Though tourists do not necessarily have to be in Jakarta at Istana President to witness this event, they can still see it through live broadcast. Similar flag ceremonies may also be available at any levels within Indonesia's government systems. Tourists may alternatively see this phenomenal event at village, city, or province levels.

Another advantage that can be proposed if tourists come within this time period of IIDC commemorations is the low budget expenditure for tour operator or even to the Tourism Board at city, province, and national levels. It is true that the celebrations will usually be self-funded coming from the related parties that hold the activities. The direct implication is that government does not need to spend a great number of funds to hold performances and attractions since the communities may do on their own.

#### **Special IIDC Package & Integrated Marketing Communication**

The potential of getting more tourists' visitation to Indonesia during the period of this national celebration will surely be greater if the occasion receives well strategically-planned marketing strategies; more specifically, better integrated marketing communications. The meaningful support of Indonesian Government and other stakeholders is required to enhance the awareness of this potential income generated event. Accordingly, to strongly support the demand for tourists to come and visit Indonesia during this season, a strong collaboration among Tourism Department, Indonesia Tourism Board, Destination Marketing Organizations, Tour Operators (inbound and outbound) is needed to be formed in order to find the best ways of implementing marketing communications strategies.

Surely, the exposure of marketing communication or promotional campaigns must be generated and spread out widely and massively. This can be done through both traditional ways by using advertising campaigns using various media, printing and electronics, and modern ways of communications; internet marketing and social media assistances. It is strongly suggested that the promotional campaigns be done heavily using internet and social media because people around the world can easily be connected through social media. This means the viral marketing communications can go quickly and personally reach people or even the specific target market. It should be noted that the role of Indonesian Embassy and Consulates overseas to promote the success of the event is also encouraged to take place. Taking into an account, IIDC is an event which cannot actually be displayed live; to have cultural shows and performances overseas might be difficult to carry on. Therefore, marketing collaterals capturing IIDC events, performances, and or activities must be displayed massively in those locations.

#### **Economic and Tourist Roles for IIDC Event**

Events as tourist attractions are dependent on regional and local audiences. To encourage tourist to visit IIDC event, then the figure below may be taken into consideration on how to create strategies in every entity by applying effective and efficient marketing communication formulas. This is done in order to boost the attention for tourists and visitors, getting intention, creating desire, and finally push action to visit



and participate in the related event. Figure 2 illustrates the main economic and touristic roles of events. Destination Marketing Organization must look closely each entity and formulate strategies to gain tourists' attentions to lure them visit Indonesia during the IIDC moment.

The role of destination marketing is crucial at this point. Though some experts may interpret the meaning of destination differently, the tourism destination marketing defines it as the end journey, trip, travel or visitation of a tourist or visitors (Hermantoro, 2011). In relation to this, Destination Marketing Organizations need to work intensively to analyze effective strategies to cope with each sub point described in the figure.

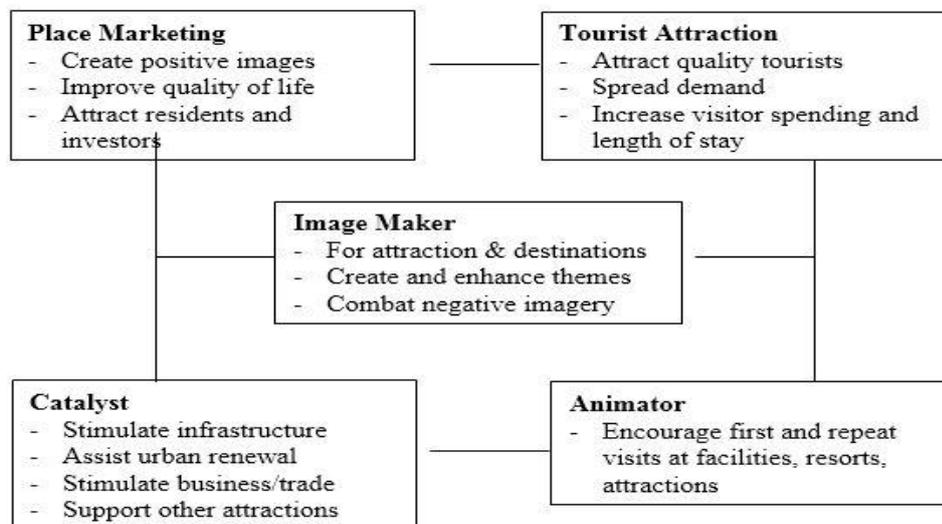


Figure 2 illustrates the main economic and touristic roles of events, *Adapted from Economic and tourism roles of events Getz 2005:13*

### CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that tourists will visit a destination for its uniqueness that a place offers. At this course, IIDC is celebrated merrily and happening in all parts of Indonesia. This will be something very unique that tourists will experience. Tourists do not have to be very selective to visit a destination during this moment since they may be able to personally experience and may even be involved in various activities. Tourists do not only act as spectators, but also, they become participants for the events. Taking parts in a uniquely attractive games or activities which are not found at tourists' native countries are indeed special thrills for them. Thus, this exciting feeling that tourists may experience has to be put along the top priority.

Accordingly, IIDC will serve as a potential sustainable tourist attraction which will breed great economic output as well as building better community-based tourism activities since it is celebrated annually. IIDC is considered a very special event which has the potential of boosting tourism development in Indonesia. Looking at the nature of this

specific event, IIDC has its own unique attractiveness in order to lure overseas tourists to visit Indonesia since there are various traditional activities, games, and celebrations occur during the event. These will certainly provide tourists with great experiences once they are able to witness or even experience personally by taking parts in the celebration of IIDC. Thus, this annual event will be a massive tourist attraction for Indonesia to get more income from tourists and visitors. Income generated may happen not only in one part of Indonesia, but also throughout the entire archipelago. However, it should be noted that government and all direct and indirect stakeholders must pay attention on how to keep developing and improving the commemoration of IIDC to be one of the greatest tourists attractions for Indonesia. This paper does not discuss on how to formulate marketing strategies for IIDC event but rather to discuss the importance on how to put IIDC event as one of the top priorities for government and other stakeholders to pay attention and analyze for better Indonesian tourism growth and sustainability. Appendix I provides positive and negative impacts for a host country when holds and conducts event. This is to provide insights on how an event may have effects on the host community.

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