

COALITION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF AUTHORITATIVE RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IN MAINTAINING HALAL PRODUCT LAWS: A STUDY ON THE INDONESIAN CONCIL OF ULAMA

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a new perspective on the relationship between traditional leadership and fatwa/ Islamic law decree of the Indonesian Council of Ulama concerning halal (Muslim law approved) products. Focusing on the system of ulama leadership, model of leadership, and fatwa of halal products, this study used a qualitative approach of ethnographic methods. By taking the authority of the Indonesian Council of Ulama as the object of study, it was found that the traditional leadership could perform an effective function of maintaining the fatwa of halal products as an Islamic legal system applied to both traditionalist and modernist Muslim societies. In this context, the Ulama Council as a tribal authority of traditionalist and modernist ulama, Muslim scientist, and their lineage was based on the ties of the Islamic original system concerning ulama as the inheritors of prophet legacy (warasatul anibiya') in the leadership form of coalition or jami'ah.

Keywords: Leadership Model, Legal Consequence, Fatwas of Halal Products.

INTRODUCTION

Every social group and small or large scale organization needs a leader. The development of a country or nation is rooted in the existence of a society with various forms of non-formal organization and leadership styles or traditional leadership systems. Zainuddin (2005) states that in the theory of religious organization the formation of traditional leadership came from the needs of Muslim community members to maintain the traditions of religious, social, economic, and cultural life based on the Islamic law. Furthermore, the leadership was given to religious scholars or leaders believed to be the inheritors of the prophet's duties and have the capacity for Islamic religious authority, honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, articulateness, and intelligence and to be a religious leader who could uphold and maintain the purity of aqeedah (creed), sharia (a code for living), and muamallat (conduct of economic activities) in the lives of Muslim communities. This condition was composed from traditional to modern leadership (Weeks, 2016).

It is also found that the influence of role strengthening in the institutional or organization adaptation to the nation state legal system was of great importance. From 1975 to 2018 the

Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) issued 143 fatwas on religious cults/ sects (14), ibadah or worship (37), socio-cultural issues (51), along with foods, beverages, medicines, cosmetics, technology, and Islamic economy or business (Jamaa, 2018). All of the fatwas have thus proved that the ulama could contribute significantly to the development of contemporary Islamic law in Indonesia.

Fatwas of halal products are an integral part of muamallat or Islamic business law. They have attracted a great deal of attention since the discovery that pork fat was used by the Indonesian venture of Ajinomoto in their production and that the machine slaughter or mechanical slaughter was used for the chickens were violating Muslim food laws (Al-Asyhar, 2003). Both of them which were front page news resulted in the decline of Muslim consumers' trust in producers, purchasing power of food products, and national economic growth of around 80% (Al-Asyhar, 2003). In addition, that in 2019 Indonesia's Food and Drug Agency raided over 170 thousand packages of illegal and expired food with an economic value of at least US\$236 thousand and pork-tainted Korean-imported instant noodles such as U-Dong Instant Noodles forbidden for Muslims could explain why the Muslim consumers' trust in foreign investors and importers has declined, particularly since the halal lifestyle boom in Indonesia (Yunitasari & Anwar, 2019).

The leadership system of ulama as the inheritors of prophet's duties could be seen as an integral part of the existence of Islamic law. Bar (2012) asserts that Muslim communities without ulama as their leaders are not Muslim communities since the application of Islamic law and traditions (urf) along with the existence of ulama, Islamic organizations, Muslim societies, and organizations such as the MUI for the actualization of the ulama leadership system.

The leadership of Islamic organizations including the MUI is legitimized by the Indonesian government as an institution providing Islamic fatwas to maintain the purity of the aqidah, Islamic law, and muamallat according to the Qur'an, hadith (words, actions and silent assertions of prophet Muhammad), ijma' (a consensus amongst Muslim jurists on a particular legal issue), qiyas (analogical reasoning), ijtihad (independent reasoning) (Nafis, 2011). In this case, Bar (2012) confirms that the leaders of the ulama called mufti (Islamic jurists) are influential in directing the status and behavior of Muslim communities in accordance with the Islamic law.

To strengthen the life and tradition of Muslim communities according to Islamic law that could interact in the global era without losing the identity of Islamic tradition, the traditionalist and modernist ulama and Muslim scientists in the MUI are expected to form a coalition in the bonding system of warasatul anbiya (the inheritors of the prophet legacy) as the Great Man, determined on the basis of religious Islamic knowledge authority, honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, articulateness, and intelligence in deciding and communicating the halal fatwa for halal certifications. Bass and Bass (2009) state a fundamental notion of the Great Man theory, i.e. people were born with traits making them natural leaders. The leadership models is thus not permanent but depend on their own knowledge authority, infallibility, courage system and the personality of warasatul anbiya which could affect the sustainability of their capabilities to be Muslim leaders.

In order to afford a new insight into the actualization of traditional leadership of the MUI for maintaining the fatwa of halal products in the realities of contemporary Muslim society, the research problem formulated was on how the role of ulama leadership in the MUI seeks the ulama leaders to maintain Islamic life models, tradition, and moderate values.

Traditional Leadership of the Indonesian Council of Ulama

In his seminal published posthumously classification of legitimate authority, based on the obedience ground Max Weber introduced the traditional, legal (or bureaucratic), and charismatic legitimate authorities (Greene, 2017). Whereas the respected customs or tradition that gave birth to the obedience to traditional leaders and the formal rules and regulations that did to the bureaucrats are stable and permanent, “*a gift from God*” or charisma that did to charismatic leaders such as prophets historical figures lasts shorter (Adair-Toteff, 2017).

Within Islamic Leadership Paradigms proposed by Bar (2012), the traditional type of authority originating from the authority of ulama leadership in the MUI consists of prophetic authority, tribal authority of a sheikh, scholarly authority, hereditary of authority and coalitional authority. According to El Syam (2017), the five Islamic leadership systems belong to the Great Man or the authoritative man system. He also notes that the traditional leadership in Muslim societies such as the ulama belongs to Islamic legal traditions in Muslim societies because they are legitimated by the warasatul anbiya system and also called the Great Man such as the Prophet Muhammad.

The first ulama leadership system is the prophetic authority also called the Great Man. One of its characteristics is that the authority is gained through the achievement of individual capabilities such as possessing charisma due to the expertise of religious knowledge along with being an honest, truthful, trustworthy, sincere, communicative, and intelligent person to uphold Islamic law, worship, muamalat, and solve the problems of Muslim community according to Quran verses. The figure, as Satori and Agung (2017) point out, could only be found on ulama as the inheritors of prophet legacy whose capability is developed through the regeneration of religious leaders. The prophetic authority based on the warasatul anbiya doctrine is characterized by the infallibility, courage, and nobility of the leaders. This could be seen in Iran where most of ulama are under the state's control and part of the bureaucracy as they are awarded the authority to control religious, social, economic, cultural issues based on the Islamic law in Muslim society and institutions such as the Jami'a and they protect other group spaces with relevant political ethics that restrict the power of state (Bar, 2012).

The second leadership system is the tribal authority of a sheikh. The MUI could be called a tribal authority of sheikh. Characteristics of the ulama authority are based on the hadith of the ulama as the inheritors of prophet legacy as also believed by Indonesian traditionalist Muslims or Nahdlatul Ulama/NU (Revival of the Ulama), a traditionalist Sunni Islam movement, at the levels of provinces, cities, districts, sub-districts, and villages as the power base. With this in mind, Bar (2012) confirms that the tribal authority of the sheikh system rests on the Islamic tradition (urf) and consensus between parties in Muslim society on the basis of power.

Another type of authority reflected in the MUI is the scholarly one. The ulama could be given a position in the MUI after fulfilling the personality requirements of warasatul anbiya and mufti, expertise in religious or scientific knowledge or Muslim scientists, and support of Muslim communities from all Islamic organizations.

The fourth ulama leadership system in the MUI could also be viewed as hereditary models of authority for some of the members hold positions in the MUI because they were born into well-known ulama families which were regarded as noble families by Indonesian

traditionalist Muslims. The model, according to Bar (2012) was because of the respects for nobility and lineage. In Indonesia, they are of religious ones. This leadership system applies to traditionalist Muslim societies of NU.

The last ulama leadership system is a coalitional one. In this system, traditionalist ulama of NU, modernist ones of Muhammadiyah (followers of Muhammad, another Indonesian major Islamic non-governmental organization), and Muslim scholars of Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals fulfilling the personality requirements of warasatul anbiya, mufti, religious expertise, or extraordinary achievements in a certain situation form a coalition in the MUI. The above models have been exemplified in some famous figures in the MUI (2018). Muhammad Ali Yafie, for example, the then chair of the MUI (1995-2005) of NU was not only a social fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) expert but also a grandson of sheikh Abdul Hafidz Bugis. Another figure, Muhammad Achmad Sahal Mahfudz, the then chair of the MUI from 2005 to 2010, a son of Mahfudz Salam from the Nahdatul Ulama organization is an expert in Islamic jurisprudence and economics. Ma'ruf Amin, the then MUI chair (2015-2019) from NU and the current Vice President of Indonesia, who is an expert on Islamic economics law, is a son of Mohammad Amin, grandson of Sheikh an-Nawawi al-Bantani. Bar (2012) adds emphasis on the coalitional authority of the sheikh system such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia where the coalition of the tribal authority of the sheikh is dominated by the Wahhabi or ultraconservative tradition and religious schools. The Wahhabi scholars have changed the structures of power in the Kingdom by establishing an ulama council authorized to give the fatwa in accordance with the Wahhabi schools. Such a leadership system is called situational leadership while the ulama leadership of hereditary models occurs in normal situations. The coalitional leadership system in the MUI classified as the tribal authority of sheikh have play the role of issuing fatwas of Islamic law, worship, and muamallat based on the personality of infallibility and courage also called the Great Man.

The nature of infallibility and courage in the coalitional leadership system of the ulama could be defined as authority, honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, articulateness, intelligence, responsiveness, proactiveness, and anticipatory attitudes. The traits could be seen when in deciding fatwas the ulama of the MUI have gone through correct procedures, mechanisms, and methods based on the Qur'an, hadith, ijma', qiyas, and ijihad. Before establishing the fatwa of Islamic law, a study of an issue is based on the opinions of the Imams of four Islamic law schools and verses of the Quran. Issues with clear law (al-ahkam al-qath'iyat) are honestly and well decided on the basis of Quran. On the other hand, for issues unsettled in the four schools of Islamic law, the fatwas are passed after the ulama bring together all of the four school Imams through the method of al-jam'u wa al-taufiq (compromise). If unsuccessful, the determination of the fatwa is now based on the results of tarjih (comparing an opinion with another to choose the strongest opinion) through the method of muqaranah madzhibi (a comparative fiqh study) using the rules of ushul fiqh muqaran (a comparative study on the principles of Islamic jurisprudence). For the issues that cannot be settled by looking up the opinions of Imams of four schools Madhab's opinion, the fatwas are passed on the basis of the results of ijihad jama'i (collective independent reasoning) through the methods of bayani (discursive reasoning), ta'lili (analogical

reasoning), qiyasi (inductive reasoning), istihsani (juristic discretion), ilhaqi (to equate the law of a case that does not exist), istishlahi (to deem proper), and sadd al-dzari'ah (blocking the permissible acts which lead to an evil). Furthermore, the stipulation of fatwa considers mashalih 'ammah (welfare/ public interest) and maqashid al shari'ah (goals or objectives of sharia). The process of establishing fatwas collectively thus involves all ulama from various Islamic organizations and Muslim scholars through the meetings of the MUI fatwa commission (Jamaa, 2018; Widigdo & Hamid, 2018).

For example, the stipulation about halal products could give Indonesian Muslims a real insight into the news on 34 items of food and beverage products tainted with pork which was strictly haram (forbidden) to be consumed by Muslims. The fatwa/ sharia decree was decided by the MUI in the view of Qur'an (2:16, 171; 5:88; 16:114) on the Muslims' obligation to consume halal foods necessity of Muslims to consume halal foods and Qur'an (2:173; 5:3; 6:145; 7:157) on the prohibition for Muslims on having haram foods. In terms of hadith, the fatwa was based on those narrated by Muslims, Ahmad, Ibn Majah from Ibn 'Abbas and 'Ubadah bin Shamit about the halal and haram status of something consumed and by Daraquthni about the Muslim obligation to not violate all that is forbidden by Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala (The most glorified, the most high). Finally, it is fundamental to note that one of ushul fiqh (principles of Islamic jurisprudence) goes "*The original ruling of beneficial things is permissible; while for harmful things it is prohibited*" (Council of Ulama, 2009; Hasan, 2014).

The fatwas on halal products in turn have contributed to setting the standards of halal products. They are products permitted under the Islamic Law and must fulfill the following halal requirements according to Islamic law as detailed by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2001) and Secretariat of Indonesian Council of Ulama (2019). Firstly, they do not consist of or contain pigs and pig derived ingredients. Secondly, they do not consist of or contain anything considered to be haram or unlawful materials according to Islamic Law such as ingredients derived from human organs, blood, and dirt. The third is that they consist of or contain all materials derived from all lawful land animals slaughtered in compliance with Islamic sharia procedures. Fourthly, they must be prepared, processed, transported or stored using any appliance or facility that was free from anything unlawful according to Islamic Law such as pigs. They could be prepared, processed, transported or stored using facilities having been previously used for non-halal animals and plants such as pigs and hemp provided that proper cleaning procedures, according to Islamic requirements, has been observed. Finally, they are all foods and beverages that do not contain alcohol.

To guarantee that a certain product has been in compliance with Islamic sharia standards, the MUI issues halal certificates for products declared halal after going through the registration process, audit, and meeting of the MUI Fatwa Commission (LPPOM-MUI, 2019). Companies taking part the process of halal certification must follow a procedure prescribed by Assessment Institute for Food, Drug and Cosmetics of the MUI/ LPPOM-MUI (2008). All of the facilities related to the products under the certification process must be audited by LPPOM-MUI halal auditors. The audit involves all of the materials and documents of the material including all part of the purchasing process. The materials, specifically for substances suspected of being tainted,

are examined and undergo laboratory tests to obtain the result. Results of the LPPOM-MUI audit and examination are then written in an Official Record. They are also reported to the Commission Fatwa of the MUI that will conduct a meeting to decide whether the product could be declared halal based on the sharia consideration.

Leadership Function of Islamic Tradition in Maintaining the Fatwa of Halal Product

The MUI leadership at national, provincial, city/ district, and sub-district levels is typically formed from Islamic organizations such as NU, Muhammadiyah, and Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI). The MUI Fatwa Commission called Mufti can be found from national to sub-district levels. Abdillah and Novianto (2019) and the MUI (2005) highlight that the type of relationship between the chair of the MUI and that of Fatwa Commission at all levels belongs to coordinative, aspirational, and structural administrative ones. At national level, the chair of the MUI performs a function of providing fatwas concerning religious affairs, Islamic law, ibadah (Islamic worship), and muamallat to the central government as consideration for solving Indonesian Muslims' contemporary religious problems. Secondly, on behalf of the MUI the chair issues edicts concerning fatwas of Islamic law, ibadah (worship), and muamallat collectively as a guideline for the chair of the MUI at provincial, city, district, and sub-district levels in responding to the contemporary issues of Islamic law. The chair is also to strengthen institutional cooperation with the chair of the MUI at all levels, ministry of Religious Affairs, related governmental institutions, and religious leaders for unity and legality of the fatwas. Another function that the chair fulfils is of informing, coordinating, and implementing the fatwas through coordinating meetings with not only the chair of the MUI at the provincial, city, district, and sub-district levels but also related institutions. In addition, the chair of the MUI at each level is, under the direction of the chair of the MUI at an upper level, to convey the fatwas issued by the national chair of the MUI to the heads of regional government, provide and inform the fatwas hand in hand with the chair of the MUI at a lower level through coordinating meetings with the chair of regional Fatwa Commission, all chairs of Islamic organizations, religious leaders, and leaders of mosques. Aydın (2018) along with Cameron and Quinn (2011) note that the hierarchy of organizational culture referring to a formalized-structured work of the leaders' authority to make rules/ policies or to keep the organization united is important means of integrating internal processes, adapting to external conditions, communicating, confirming, and coordinating among the leaders and subordinates easily to maintain the rules, norms or attitudes.

To serve as chair of the MUI and Fatwa Commission, one must meet the required personal qualifications as explained by Secretariat of Indonesian Council of Ulama (2019) along with Widigdo and Hamid (2018). A candidate for the Office of chair of the MUI must be no younger than 40, have character traits of warasatul anbiya, i.e. honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, articulateness, and intelligence in upholding Islamic law, worship, muamallat. In addition, one must master the sciences of the Qur'an', tafsir (exegesis of the Quran), hadith, fiqh, ushul fiqh, masailul fiqh (fiqh related issues), sirrah nabawiyah (the Prophet's biography). One must also gain educational experience of being religious cadres in the MUI, Majelis Bahtsul Masail (a forum for discussing contemporary religious issues) of NU, Majelis Tarjih (Muhammadiyah's institution for answering religious problems). Furthermore, one should be one of the founders or managers of Islamic organizations and educational institutions of da'wah

(inviting people to the Islamic life). Jauziyah (2000) has confirmed that to be eligible to a mufti, one should master the sciences of the Qur'an including its naskh wa al-mansukh (abrogation) and ta'wil (the allegorical interpretation of the Quran), those of hadith including its naskh wa al-mansukh, master the Arabic language. In summary, the candidate must fulfill all of requirements for ulama or muftis.

Some former chairs of the MUI, for example, such as Muhammad Ali Yafie (1995-2005); Muhammad Achmad Sahal Mahfudz (2005-2010); Din Syamsuddin (2014-2015); Ma'ruf Amin (2015-2019) were the representatives of Islamic organizations and Indonesian Muslim communities. Having the capacity as trusted scholars and the authority as muftis, they were viewed as authority by the government and the Indonesian Muslim community (Indonesian Council of Ulama, 2005). Subky et al. (2015) add emphasis to the requirements that the ulama as messengers of the prophet should masters Islamic sciences comprehensively based on the Quran and hadith. The same requirements also apply to the MUI at other levels. The chairs of the MUI who should act as positive role models for the community are appointed through a meeting of ulama. This is regulated in article 19 paragraph 2 (Indonesian Council of Ulama, 2016). Having great authority and charismatic power, it not surprising if the ulama have a lot of followers (A'la et al., 2018).

The fatwas of halal products as the basis of halal certifications from the ulama have a great influence because the position of the ulama for the government and the Muslim community is considered as the inheritor of the prophet legacy as affirmed in a hadith reported by Abu Darda, "The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, *"The ulama/ scholars are the successors of the prophets. Verily, the prophets do not pass on gold and silver coins, but rather they only impart knowledge"*. Therefore, the Indonesian government has recognized the fatwas issued by the ulama as can be seen in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 18 Year 2012 concerning Food, Number 8 Year 1999 concerning Consumer Protection, and Number 33 Year 2014 concerning Halal Product Assurance (Agus, 2017).

In the Government Regulation Number 69 Year 1999 concerning food labels and advertisements, article 11 paragraph 1 and 2, the examination is carried out on the basis of guidelines and procedures established by the Religious Affair Ministry after by taking account of the considerations and suggestions given by the MUI as a legal religious institution making the decision whether as a certain product is halal. Sopa (2013) underlines that the fatwas of halal products were viewed as the government's reference to strengthen the laws and regulations on food, consumer protection, and halal product assurance.

The article also confirms that the label of halal could only be put on the basis of the fatwa decision of the MUI. It can be concluded that the fatwas issued by the MUI belong to the requirements for halal labelling. Furthermore, the information "*halal*" on label is allowed to the products having the certificates of halal only.

A Coalitional Authority in Strengthening the Capacity of Ulama in Maintaining the Fatwas of Halal Products

In the global era of information and communication technology, cooperative relations between countries, regions, institutions, individual industries or groups in the sectors of business,

imports and export have been much easier and faster, including in managing business. Halal food or beverage products are certainly more attractive to Muslim consumers as reported by Dinar Standard (2019), especially in Indonesia as the largest Muslim population in the world (**NationMaster, 2014**). Inevitably, that about US\$173 billion putting Indonesia into the first rank of Islamic economy food consumer markets has made the Indonesian government developed “*a dedicated Islamic economy strategy*” by strengthening halal economy in all of sectors which has put Indonesia into the fifth one of Global Islamic Economy powers (Dinar Standard, 2019). In their efforts to relieve the lard cases in 1998, the Indonesian government has established the Assessment Institution of Food, Drugs and Cosmetics of the MUI (LPPOM-MUI) since 1989. Its systems of halal certification and halal assurance have also been internationally recognized and even adopted by 45 foreign halal certifier bodies in 25 countries such as New Zealand (Khan & Haleem, 2016; LPPOM-MUI, 2020).

The preparation, process, transportation, or storage of food and beverage products without Islamic law (Islamic right jurisdiction) will not be guaranteed halal. Because of this, after considering the mandate of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia Year 1945 that the state must ensure the freedom of every believer in worshipping and practicing their religious teachings, the state must provide protection and assurance concerning the halal status of the product consumed and used by the people. All of production of food and related products and services, both domestic and imported ones, are to be halal certified. The government is thus responsible for managing the Halal Product Assurance (Law of Indonesia, 2014). In this point of view, the fatwas of halal product and fatwa-based halal certificates have become the basis of legitimacy of developing economic policies to protect Muslim consumers, producers, entrepreneurs, domestic investors, including open space policies for entrepreneurs and foreign investors to acknowledge Islamic economic law in all of the sectors of Muslim communities.

Government Regulation Number 31 Year 2019 regarding the Provisions of the Implementation of Law Number 33 Year 2014 concerning Halal Product was promulgated in Jakarta on the first week of May 2019 (Law of Indonesia, 2019). However, the regulation has not been widely disseminated yet by related institutions including but not limited to Ministries of Industry, Trade, Health, Agriculture, Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprises, Foreign Affairs, and Religious Affairs along with the MUI to domestic and foreign entrepreneurs along with the Muslim community. Such a relative lack of implementation and campaigning that all products entering, being circulated and traded in Indonesia must be halal certified has made illegal food products and pork tainted noodles products such as U-Dong Instant Noodle products still enter, are circulated and traded in Indonesia. Thus, the implementation of this government regulation must be carried out by involving all managerial components of the halal product assurance manager, i.e. the government through relevant institutions, the MUI, religious leaders, Muslim people through a good campaign and participation in the process of service and supervision of halal product assurance.

To anticipate unlawful, illegal food products from domestic and foreign entrepreneurs, investors and producers along with importers in the era of free trade areas which might cause conflict of interest for the wider Muslim community and the decline of Indonesia's economic

growth at the national and international levels, the leadership of ulama should not take conventionally the role in maintaining the fatwas of halal product for the legalization of halal product certificates.

The coalition of traditionalist and modernist ulama along with Muslim scientists in the MUI well organized in the structural, administrative, and hierarchical forms within a partnership system of the central, provincial, city, district, sub-district, and village governments is a form of effective communication network to strengthen the legality of halal product certification and capacity of ulama authority along with to tighten collective campaigns for and supervisions of preventing the entry and distribution of non-halal, illegal food products from foreign entrepreneurs, investors, and exporters in the era of free trade area within the limits of the Indonesian Muslim community. It is therefore necessary to strengthen the capacity of ulama leadership into the coalition so they are able to act as uniting figures. Additionally, together with all stakeholders of halal product assurance such as domestic and foreign entrepreneurs, investors, and importers, they have the authority to lead and preserve all materials and morals along with are able to anticipate and minimize the adverse effects of globalization in the arena of information, technology, and economy. In this context, not only the ulama leaders need the traits or characters such as honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, articulateness, and intelligence but also all of the stakeholders of halal product assurance such as foreign and domestic managers, entrepreneurs, producers, importers, and investors because their traits or characters or ethics are one of the factors that determine the success or failure of the halal life style movement (Wijaya et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

The leadership of the ulama in the MUI in the form of a coalition of traditionalist and modernist ulama along with Muslim scientists and lineage based on the origin system of Islamic ties in which ulama are the inheritors of prophet legacy (*warasatul anibiya'*) is called the tribal authority of the ulama as the Great Man and structural administrative authority. The religious cadre system through intensive education and training in the MUI, Majelis Bahtsul Masail (NU), Majelis Tarjih (Muhammadiyah) to build the infinite capacity of ulama from the religious organizations, regional (villages, sub-districts, districts, cities, provinces) to national levels. Furthermore, the leadership of ulama as a mufti plays a vital role as a partner of the central, provincial, city, district, and sub-district government. The ulama and government can be viewed as mutually supportive in reinforcing the existence of Halal product fatwas through a coalition and coordination to strengthen the capacity of ulama as the inheritors of the prophet's duties according to the function and level of leadership. All forms of power in the Islamic legal system must develop synergy with government policies through the principle of mutual supports for the welfare and safety of the people in accordance with the constitutional mandate. Thus, the ulama's leadership, even within the limits of traditional scope, could result in the legality of the perfectly legitimate fatwa of halal products as a reference for the government along with domestic and foreign entrepreneurs, producers, and investors. The halal product assurance itself could

profound implications for strengthening the national and international economic growth and being a control in the free market competition. Therefore, the leadership of the ulama and its fatwas of halal products have the continued existence with all of the uniqueness.

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