Strategies and Policies for The Acceleration of Bali Tourism Recovery

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Article Info	Abstract
Submitted: January 14 th 2021 Accepted: March 10 th 2022 Published: March 31 th 2022	Bali tourism has been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There- fore, efforts to revive tourism and restore the economy in Bali are needed. The main objectives of this study are (1) to analyze the efforts to build the trust of the tourists to visit Bali, (2) to analyze the policies to encour- age tourists to come to Bali. This study utilized a qualitative approach. The study was conducted in Bali, and data was collected through inter- view, observation, and documentation techniques. The key informants in this study were the Heads of the following institutions: Bali Provincial Tourism Office, Statistics of Bali Province, Bali Provincial Health Office, and Bank Indonesia. The result of this study revealed that building trust from the tourists to visit Bali can be done by suppressing and reducing the spread of COVID-19, repetition of public awareness socialization campaigns about health protocols implementation, providing healthcare facilities, medical personnel, and paramedics, tight travel control at Bali's entry and exit points, vaccination of tourism workers and the community, and implementation of green zones. Furthermore, the strategies to encour- age tourists to come to Bali are free covid corridor, meeting incentive conference exhibition, work from Bali, influencer collaboration through the "We Love Bali" program, and digitalization of inclusive tourism. This study is essential to be conducted to assist in restoring tourism and eco- nomic conditions in Bali.
	Keywords : tourism: economy: trust: travel: tourists

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INTRODUCTION

Background

COVID-19 pandemic has caused a massive downturn that the tourism industry has seen in its history. All kinds of tourism activities have been stopped; flights were grounded, hotels were closed, international travels were restricted and even prohibited. In the past, the global tourism industry experienced a downturn after the 9/11 terror attack. A year later, Bali was hit by a similar disaster, which resulted in the collapse of the island's economy. Compared to the impact of that terrorism, the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry is much more severe. The ongoing pandemic has kept people wondering when it will end and ultimately created shared challenges for all tourism stakeholders to address.

On March 23, 2020, three days after warnings and appeals for COVID-19 cases were publicly announced by the national government, the Provincial Government of Bali immediately took various anticipatory

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steps to minimize the spread of the virus. The Bali government, in an integrated manner through the Circular Letter of the Governor of Bali Number 45/SatgasCovid19/III/2020, appealed for physical distancing, implementation of WFH (work from home), closures of the schools, shopping centers, and tourist attractions, as well as establishing mutual cooperation task forces at the traditional village level. The spread of COVID-19 in Bali was increasing day by day. The majority of the cases happened at three main clusters, namely (1) traditional and religious ceremony cluster, (2) family cluster, and (3) office cluster.

This situation became a major concern for policymakers in formulating and implementing strategic preventive policy measures. The government then enacted community activity restrictions following the Instruction of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 02 of 2021, Regulation of the Governor of Bali Number 46 of 2020, Circular Letter of the Governor of Bali Number 3355 of 2020, and Circular Letter of the Governor of Bali Number 01 of 2021. By these efforts, the trend of COVID-19 transmission in Bali decreased since early December 2020. Even though the spread decreased by the end of 2020, the transmission rate increased again in 2021, with the number of cases reaching an average of 330 by the end of January 2021.

The surge in covid-19 cases in Bali caused a decrease in the number of foreign tourists visiting Bali. Apart from the stringent regulations in each country concerning international travel, the number of COVID-19 cases in Indonesia also became a concern for international tourists. The number of foreign visitors to Bali declined drastically. The positive growth recorded during the past six years experienced a massive change in 2020. This can be seen in Graph 1.1 about the number of foreign tourists visiting Bali from 2015 to 2020. Based on a year-on-year comparison using http://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/eot 9 the data of 2019 and 2020, the cumulative percentage of international visitors coming to Bali decreased by -83.26% (Statistics of Bali Province, 2020).

Bali contributes 55.26% of national foreign exchange from the tourism sector, which means a decline in the number of foreign visitors in 2020 had the potential to cause a loss on tourism-generated national revenue. According to the estimated inbound path of foreign tourists to Bali in 2020, which was released by Bank Indonesia, the potential loss of foreign exchange was expected to reach IDR 108 trillion. This estimate was stated in a detailed calculation that the potential loss of foreign tourists reached 5,227,322 people, with the average expenditure per tourist being USD 1,409,90. Therefore, with the United States dollar exchange rate against the Indonesian rupiah of IDR 14,692, the potential loss of foreign exchange due to COVID-19 is IDR 108,280,280,657,027 or equivalent to USD 7.4 billion (Bank Indonesia, 2021).

The problem then is how to design the right policies to build the trust of the tourists with the current restrictions and limitations caused by the pandemic. As a concrete step to address this problem, it is necessary to prepare appropriate analysis and strategies to accelerate tourism recovery on a micro and macro scale. Therefore, the objectives of this study are 1) to analyze the efforts made to build the trust of the tourists visiting Bali and 2) to analyze the policies made to encourage tourists to come to Bali.

LITERATUR REVIEW

Faulkner (2001) noted an increasing number of disasters and crises affecting the tourism industry, from natural to humaninduced events. When a disaster occurs, the public seeks crisis management information to determine whether the disaster will affect them and what they should do about it (Reynolds & Seeger, 2005). e-ISSN 2407-392X. p-ISSN 2541-0857 Similarly, based on the Regulation of the Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia Number 10 of 2019 concerning Tourism Crisis Management, it is stated that: "In tourism crisis management, the emergency response taken is by during disasters is to execute communication strategy to disseminate information."

One theory that can be used as a reference in disseminating information is the theory of human information behavior, also known as information behavior. Wilson (2000) states that this theory can be defined as the totality of human behavior in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking, and information use. However, it should be noted that the process of information seeking of each individual is different, so segmentation is needed in the information delivery process. As stated by Daellenbach, Parkinson & Krisjanous (2018), in the context of disasters, segmentation has the potential to identify the groups in the population that may be more vulnerable and have a better understanding of what can motivate them to improve preparedness. Targeted initiatives are those that precisely match the audience profile and increase the opportunities of reaching that audience, grabbing their attention, and reaching an agreement. Similarly, Dietrich, Rundle-Thiele, & Kubacki (2016) state that identifying the unique characteristics of the market segment allows for better understanding, enabling a greater ability to build and deliver targeted and effective initiatives for each segment.

Tsai et al. (2016) suggest that although the local government may have their community disaster prevention plans, and the government seeks to meet the public demands for safe conditions, the community must also help each other and face the disaster together. In addition, by jointly improving the economic and social resilience, the government and the community will be able to establish effective economic and http://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/eot social resilient mechanisms at a regional scale to increase the self-reliance capacity in the event of a disaster.

The community's ability to face, adapt to, and recover from pressures caused by a disaster is known as resilience (Pelling, 2003). For tourists, the availability and accessibility of information are the main factors behind the perception of individual and social group risk (Rindrasih, 2018). Correct information about disaster will help them build awareness and preparedness for it. Although it sounds negative, early information about the disaster will minimize the risks that can occur.

Thus, it can be illustrated that for managing disasters such as the current COVID-19 pandemic, conveying accurate information based on the community segments will be an effective step to build the economic and social resilience of the community. When this economic and social resilience can be firmly and evenly established, the community will comply and participate in implementing health protocols consciously and with discipline. Such discipline and compliance to the protocols will be better when they come from the community's awareness and understanding of the situation, which can be obtained through straightforward, firm, and welltargeted information rather than coercion. This awareness will ultimately lead to comprehensive community resilience to suppress the spread of covid-19 cases, which becomes the main requirement for the recovery of the tourism economy in Bali (Ardani and Harianto, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was conducted with a qualitative approach. This research was conducted in the province of Bali in the period May - December 2021. Data were collected through three techniques, namely (1) interviews, (2) observations, and (3)

10

documentation. The key informants of this study are the Heads of Bali Provincial Tourism Office, Statistics of Bali Province, Bali Provincial Health Office, and Bank Indonesia. This study focused on two data collection techniques utilized as materials for analyzing the phenomenon that occurs. The first technique used is passive participant observation to observe the phenomenon without being directly involved in the related activity. The second technique used documentation by collecting data is through records of the events that already happened. Documents can be in the form of writing, pictures, or monumental works of an individual. The results of the study are believed to be more credible if they are supported by existing academic papers.

The techniques for data collection in this qualitative method are used with the following considerations: (1) limitation to move around caused by COVID-19 pandemic, (2) passive participant observation and documentation are considered capable and sufficient to provide an overview of the historical situations that have occurred during COVID-19 pandemic to date. Through this method, policy strategies are systematically formulated to accelerate Bali's economic recovery through tourism activation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Building the trust of the tourists visiting Bali

The parameter of the tourist confidence to revisit the destination and the readiness to reopen the tourism is the decrease in COVID-19 cases. One aspect that can be used to see tourist confidence is the trending popularity of searching the word "Bali" through search engines. This trend can be measured through Google Trend. From search history at domestic scale, there has been a decline in search activity for the keyword "Bali" on search engines from March 2020. Based on the keyword data stored in Google big data or Google suggestion, there are three most popular queries netizens are paying attention to when searching about "Bali", which are "Covid Bali", "Corona Bali", and "Covid 19 Bali" (Yuniarso, et al 2021).

Based on the above data, it can be observed that the trust of domestic and international tourists is focused on the queries about the condition of Bali related to COVID-19. Thus, comprehensive, integrated, and thorough measures are needed to stop the COVID-19 spread. These measures must also be accompanied by efforts to build social and economic resilience. If the community does not have social and economic resilience, the COVID-19 outbreak will take longer to stop.

Creating community resilience, especially amongst the tourism workers, needs to be done through funding assistance and access to information on opportunities to distribute the products they produce. It should be realized that the tourism workers who lost their jobs will feel insecure and uncomfortable about their lives. In addition to direct cash assistance through village funds, special funding assistance should also be given to them. This takes into account that the sector of accommodation and food & beverage is the leading sector in the GRDP of Bali Province. Therefore, it is natural that when this sector slumps, tourism workers are the first ones to receive funding aid.

Providing direct funding assistance or opening access to funding will also drive incentives for consumption, which eventually will keep the economy running. However, it should be noted that (1) data collection on the affected tourism workers must be conducted accurately and adequately. Funding aid can be done by considering several criteria, such as the place of work, years of service, and the skills possessed. Furthermore, another thing to consider later is (2) the ease and consistency of the

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funding assistance to stimulate the distribution of business opportunities in the community that will contribute to their survival. Interest rate reductions and procedures to apply for financial aid can also be collaborated with various banks and financial institutions, both at the national and regional levels. A concrete realization of this initiative is the credit application system for Balinese people the through kurbali.com, which makes it easier for the people to access funding. The socialization about access to funding information can also be done through the companies where the tourism workers were previously employed. These companies, such as hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and others, have a database of their employees that can be used to assist in disseminating the information quickly. For daily workers, such information can be shared through association organizations that become the information gateway.

In addition to the funding assistance, it is also necessary to open access for tourism workers who have lost their income to shift to other industries in order to be independent and able to support their lives. For instance, those who have skills in cooking, farming, or producing goods and services can be given access to information on where they can sell or distribute their products, what media they can use to promote their products and other things that will help them generate income. A concrete step that can be taken is by creating a dedicated application that serves as an online marketplace for the tourism worker to sell their products and encourage the local community to support and prioritize shopping through this online application.

The vaccination process is also the key to accelerating the decline of COVID-19 spread. Priority and equal distribution of vaccines to the community will surely assist in reducing the number of COVID-19 cases. The first and foremost step to recover tourism in Bali is to suppress or http://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/eot eradicate the spread of COVID-19 on the island. This should start by providing a sense of security for the community. Obligations and demands for discipline to the community must also be accompanied by fulfilling their right to have a sense of security. Therefore, guaranteeing the community's sense of security, particularly concerning the individual economic conditions, will drive collective efforts to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. The accelerated decline of COVID-19 cases will gradually build the tourists' confidence to consider plans for return visits.

Consistency to build TRUST: Through repetition of public awareness socialization campaigns on the implementation of health protocols

The social and economic resilience of the community must be carried out with commitment and consistency. Suppose the economic resilience can be realized through funding assistance and access to information, which are parts of the community's rights to attain a sense of security and comfort in living through the pandemic. In that case, the next step is to request the community to fulfill their obligations to comply and implement health protocols with discipline.

In general, there are several things that can be done to build tourist confidence about the health protocols which are implemented in Bali, including (1) implementing and campaigning standardized health protocols in a disciplined manner, (2) providing healthcare facilities, medical personnel, and paramedics, (3) strict supervision on the implementation of health protocols by a dedicated team and task force, (4) tight travel control at the entry and exit points in Bali, (5) vaccination of tourism workers and the community, and (6) implementation of green zones on select tourist destinations. These six items will be described in detail by explaining the measures taken to build trust.

12

Implementing and campaigning standardized health protocols

It should be realized that the ongoing pandemic has caused public boredom mainly due to the stringent restrictions in place. To minimize boredom, especially in implementing health protocols, the information and the methods of socialization campaign must be conducted by classifying the community segments based on their geography, demographics, behavior, and psychographics. Through this grouping, it will be possible to choose the suitable media and method to re-socialize the health protocols that the public must comply with and implement.

Social communication efforts in the form of campaign repetitions on health protocols, which are executed appropriately, effectively, and efficiently, and with harmonious language, content, and context, can be customized based on each community segment. In addition, it is also essential to convey that the primary key to economic recovery for the Balinese people is through tourism recovery. One requirement for tourism recovery is the urgency to reduce the spread of COVID-19 as soon as possible. The media used to communicate this message should also be selected based on the consumer segments. Integrating digital and traditional communications can be done so that the message can reach a mass audience while at the same time also optimizing it to be received personally by each individual in the community.

Providing healthcare facilities, medical personnel, and paramedics

The campaign about health protocol implementation needs to be supported both by the readiness of infrastructure and human resources, which are the availability of a good quantity of qualified medical personnel and paramedics. Building the trust of the tourists can be supported with information on the distribution of healthcare locations for the prevention and control of COVID-19, particularly around tourist destinations. These destinations can refer to the green zones area, which becomes the tourism priority. In the future, other destinations will be able to participate in preparing the facilities and human resources that will support the reopening of Bali to welcome the tourists again.

Supervision on health protocol implementation (CHSE and 7M)

The implementation of health protocols in the tourism activity must go both ways, from the tourism service providers and the tourists themselves. The implementation of CHSE (Clean, Health, Safety, and Environment Sustainability) certification is necessary for building the trust of the tourists. The actors in the tourism industry must fully understand and implement the health protocols based on CHSE standards. Furthermore, the CHSE certification will also assist them in providing a sense of comfort and security for the tourists (Yuniati, 2021).

On the other hand, the community also needs to support the implementation of health protocols in an orderly and disciplined manner. This can be done by following 7M which are wearing mask (memakai masker), washing hands (mencuci tangan), keeping a safe distance (menjaga jarak), limiting mobility (membatasi mobilitas), increasing immunity (meningkatkan imun), staying away from crowds (menjauhi kerumunan), and obeying the regulations (menaati aturan). In addition, a policy to do a judicial operation by involving civil service police, department of transportation, army, police, and law enforcement team is also needed, especially when considering that there are still some clusters in the community that do not comply with health protocols. "Discipline" is a keyword to reduce and suppress the number of COVID-19 spread to build the trust of the tourists.

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Tight travel control at the entry and exit points in Bali

The previous social campaign must also be followed by a collaborative implementation of the programs by all actors in the tourism industry. The readiness of the tourist screening system and procedure at every tourist entry and exit point is essential to show Bali's consistent effort to build the trust of domestic and international tourists. For example, the procedure and simulation of Bali Tourism Free Covid Corridor (BTFCC) and the SOP of health protocols for passengers, employees, and tenants, as well as healthcare facilities at the Ngurah Rai International Airport, can be some key actions to successfully build the tourist trust, especially in the eyes of the international community.

Vaccination of the tourism workers and the community

The vaccination program has been carried out since the beginning of 2021 and is still ongoing. It is expected that vaccination can be done to all Indonesian people, with a priority given to those residing in Bali. According to Rhismawati (2021), the Governor of Bali expected the island to have achieved herd immunity by December 2021. To achieve this target, the vaccination program was divided into three stages targeting three different groups, which are (1) the first vaccination stage was for health workers, (2) the second vaccination stage was for the senior citizen, teachers, army, police, civil servants, hotel employees, private employees, traditional market sellers, and groups who often deal with the public, and (3) the third vaccination stage was for the people who do not have frequent contact with the public, such as housewives and others.

Suparta (2021) states that by May 2021, Bali received 1.3 million doses of vaccine and later was provided with an additional 673,180 vaccine doses. In total,

Bali received 1,973,180 COVID-19 vaccines of AstraZeneca and Sinovac types. The Balinese people who participated in the vaccination program reached 1,268,115 people. From this number, 895,394 people already received their first dose of the vaccine, and 372,721 people already received their second dose. Based on the Governor of Bali's target to obtain an additional 500,000 doses of vaccine from the third week of May to June and July 2021, it was projected that 3 million Balinese people could participate in the vaccination to achieve herd immunity.

The apparent challenge during the vaccination program was on educating the public about the importance of implementing comprehensive vaccination for everyone in Bali. Education should be delivered with the right means of communication and through the right media based on the target community. A detailed explanation of vaccine knowledge, vaccination process, the necessary requirements, and other technicalities need to be properly conveyed. Vaccination, although it does not make a person immune to COVID-19, it is medically believed to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by 65-75%. This vaccination will contribute to building the trust and confidence of the tourists as it will reduce the chances of contracting COVID-19.

Implementation of green zones

Three out of four destinations have been designated as green zones in Bali. They are Ubud, Sanur, and Nusa Dua. According to Wiratmini (2021), Nusa Penida was also nominated to be one of the green zones; however, only three destinations were chosen in the end. The appointment of green zones was based on several technical requirements that each destination had to meet, such as having adequate healthcare facilities, accessible laboratories, and sufficient medical personnel.

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The implementation of green zones is expected to serve as an example in the campaign to build the international community's trust that Bali is still a worthy and safe destination to visit. The implementation of green zones must be properly guarded so that they will become the pilots for the implementation of quality tourism through wellness-based tourism activities that prioritize the safety, health, and happiness of the tourists visiting the three destinations. These three green zones must become role models for other destinations so that the parameters of the implementation of CHSE can be measured and directed properly.

The six steps above in building the trust are in line with the big picture of the strategies from the Ministry of National Development Planning (2021), which divides three main steps to revitalize the Balinese economy, namely: (1) restoring the industry and people's income, (2) restoring the tourism activities, and (3) restoring Bali's economy as a whole. Once again, one key to consistently building the trust of the tourists is through repetition of health protocol implementation and socialization campaigns. This will serve as an alarm with a snooze button that can be pressed repeatedly to keep reminding the people. The content and context of this implementation and information should also be adjusted to match the different segments of the target audience and communicated through the right media. This will ensure the message can be received by the general public while also being personalized to target individuals by integrating traditional and digital media for communication.

Strategies to Support the Acceleration of Tourist Visits

The strategy to build trust must be continued by creating incentives for tourists to visit Bali immediately. Even though there are still restrictions on international travel and border closures in various http://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/eot 15

countries, consistent and continuous communication is needed to promote Bali's readiness to welcome back the tourists. There are several things that can be done as a trial to persuade and encourage tourists, which include (1) simulating the implementation of health protocols through Free Covid Corridor, (2) event executions, (3) work from Bali campaigns, (4) influencer collaboration, and (5) digitalization for tourism inclusivity. The following explanation describes these five trial strategies as follows.

Free Covid Corridor (FCC)

The FCC concept is a step to simulate the flow of travel for tourists to visit Bali safely and conveniently. From filtering tourist arrivals, collecting data through e-HAC (electronic-Health Card), access to the destinations in the green zones, 3T (Testing, Tracing, and Treatment) implementation, until improving PCR tests. These all will provide assurance and confidence for the tourists that they can enjoy their visit safely, comfortably, and with peace of mind.

Events (MICE)

To prove that Bali is safe to visit can be started from domestic tourists. One of the big markets for tourism is the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) segment. Although almost all MICE events are held online during the COVID-19 pandemics, with the implementation of health protocols based on CHSE standards and 7M, there is still an opportunity for MICE events to be held offline. Given that Bali has many potential locations for MICE, then the events should be prioritized to take place in Bali. Furthermore, these events will also add to the portfolio that proves Bali is ready to host events with excellent health and safety protocols implementation.

Work from Bali

Digitalization brings changes to many things, including the way we work. Telecommuters or digital nomads are a growing trend in this decade. The rise of virtual offices and coworking spaces also supports this work style as they do not have to work from the same place or office. This has created a new tourist market with characteristics of working while vacationing. Bali can capture this emerging market, especially since most workers are required to work virtually or not from the office due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has also caused restrictions on international travel; hence it is difficult for tourists to move from one country to another. As a result, many tourists cannot go to their home countries and must extend their stay in Bali. This situation is an opportunity for Bali to promote work from Bali initiative in collaboration with the tourists. Here, they can act as ambassadors to promote the convenience of working from Bali to their colleagues at home. They can also share that the island is safe to visit for leisure travelers or those interested in working while vacationing. Moreover, it should also be noted that most of these telecommuters or digital nomads come from A and B social economic status, which are the upper-middle-class with purchasing power.

Collaboration with influencers ("We Love Bali" Program)

One strategy of digital marketing communication to attract attention, especially from today's millennials, is by working with influencers. The development of social media has promoted a consumer behavior that wants to find references about the destination before visiting. YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook are popular social media where people look for these references, which came from the testimonials shared by other travelers who have visited the place.

"We Love Bali" is a program that involves influencers from various community circles. This program becomes an essential component to build opinion and give stimulus to spike the interest from the tourists to visit Bali again. In this program, the influencers shared their experience visiting the destinations around Bali while also highlighting the new health and safety protocols to keep Bali safe to visit. These contents will allow the public to see that Bali is ready to reopen its tourism industry.

This collaboration with influencers should be optimized with simulation and documentation of their experiences as tourists while visiting the destinations in Bali and how the island implements health and safety protocols. In the future, efforts are needed to integrate backlinks from various digital media to help boost the traffic of visits to expand the audience reach, especially to tap into those potential tourists and stimulate their desire to visit Bali again.

Digitalization on tourism inclusivity

The restriction and limitation to travel during the COVID-19 pandemic have caused tourists to put their travel plans on hold. Surely there is a longing in their hearts and minds to resume travels and feel the amazing experiences again. As we leverage their desire for travel and create a nostalgic experience, tourists can be tempted to remember their memories of traveling even though they cannot travel directly. It is possible nowadays through various information technology facilities.

The opportunity for tourists to satisfy their longing for a vacation can be provided virtually with the assistance of today's technological advancement. Not only vacations, if it is properly integrated, this virtual traveling can also be used to do a real transaction. Information technology optimization can be done through

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collaborative efforts between the government, information system developers, and the community around the tourist destination. A concrete example of this collaboration is the use of augmented reality technology that is connected to online marketplace applications. Augmented reality will allow tourists to do virtual traveling to various destinations in Bali. The conventional outlets by the tourism workers that are located around the actual destination can also be included in augmented reality. Thereby, when the tourists make the virtual trip through augmented reality, they can also interact with the sellers and make purchases of goods through an integrated online marketplace in that augmented reality. Big data is necessary for this initiative, and therefore, a collaboration between the government, developers, and the community is mandatory. In the future, this virtual traveling can be promotional content that will help tourists experience traveling and purchase local products without visiting the place directly.

CONCLUSION

Tourism and Balinese economy recovery can be achieved by building the trust of the tourists, reducing the spread of COVID-19, repetition of public awareness socialization campaigns on the implementation of health protocols, providing health facilities, medical personnel, and paramedics, tight travel control at the exit and entry points in Bali, vaccination of tourism workers and the community, and implementation of green zones. Therefore, the tourists will feel safe and comfortable to travel. Furthermore, the strategies to encourage tourists to travel to Bali are Free Covid Corridor, MICE events, work from Bali program, influencer collaboration through the "We Love Bali" campaign and inclusive tourism digitalization. All of these will assure tourists that Bali is safe from COVID-19.

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17

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19