Spice Route Activities As a Development Strategy Sustainable Tourism

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Abstract  
All development activities in the tourism strategy will be able to be used or synergized with tourism activities. Tourism activities can be a solution to get people out of poverty. Several regions have succeeded in using tourism to develop their regions. However, the use of tourism resources must also be in line with sustainable development, including tourism based on local culture and empowerment of community groups. History also shows that in the past, Indonesian waters played an important role in the navigation of local people’s ships and foreign ships in the flow of trade traffic, cultural diplomacy and the spread of religion. Through sustainable tourism development, apart from increasing its attractiveness, it is also able to support strengthening efforts to preserve the natural and cultural environment in the region or destination. The existence of the Spice Route program, with its advantages and disadvantages, has opened up opportunities for sustainable tourism through the concept of marine tourism as a tool that can provide inspiration, memory or collective awareness of the long history of the formation of national civilization. Apart from that, the Spice Route program as a national program is an effort to reconstruct trade routes for commodities, especially spices, between tribes and nations in the past, which placed Indonesia as the axis of world commerce and at the same time opened Indonesia to world civilization. One active participation in tourism is to raise the attractiveness of areas along the Spice Route as Indonesian tourist destinations based on maritime and agricultural cultural roots. This research is qualitative research with an approach used based on literature studies. From this research, it is concluded that sustainable tourism development requires a comprehensive community involvement strategy from all stages of development, from the planning stage to the implementation of development.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has major potential in the form of marine resources. Indonesia, as an archipelagic nation, showcases extraordinary wealth from two main sources: the sea and the land. The abundance of natural resources in Indonesia provides significant potential to enhance the welfare of its people (Nikawanti, 2021). As a country with more than 17,000 islands, Indonesia is adorned with a sea rich in marine life, making a substantial contribution to both the economy and the daily lives of its inhabitants. The potential of Indonesia's marine resources is an integral part of the statement. The Indonesian seas harbor remarkable biological wealth, including coral reefs, fish, and other marine resources (Ikbal et al., 2021). The utilization of marine resources has the potential to contribute significantly to the fisheries sector, marine industry, and tourism. Fisheries, as one of the key sectors, provide employment for millions of people and a vital source of protein for the population.

Not only marine resources but Indonesia also possesses wealth in terms of terrestrial natural resources (Sabet & Ari, 2022). Tropical rainforests, volcanoes, and biodiversity on the land create a foundation for various economic sectors, including agriculture, forestry, and nature tourism. Agriculture, as the backbone of the economy in many regions, utilizes Indonesia's fertile land for diverse food production. However, challenges such as deforestation, land degradation, and climate change are also part of the complex balance between resource utilization and environmental preservation. Therefore, sustainable policies and wise governance are necessary to ensure that the utilization of Indonesia's natural resources can be long-lasting, supporting sustainable development and engaging local community participation. With proper management, Indonesia can continue to reap the benefits of its natural resource wealth to enhance the welfare of its people while maintaining environmental sustainability (Mardani, 2018).

Many things can be done to develop the rich potential of marine resources, ranging from education, fisheries to tourism (Achmad, 2022). In the tourism sector, it is very possible for a sustainable tourism development approach through the concept of marine-based tourism to be used as a tool not only to highlight the potential diversity of marine attractions, but what is more important is to support efforts to preserve resources, especially the roots of maritime culture. History proves that Indonesia's agricultural products, in the form of spices, have a role as the main commodity and at the same time form trade routes that connect not only interregional trade nodes in the archipelago, but also world trade nodes. The high value of spices has made the lives of the people and the economy of many kingdoms, including kingdoms in the archipelago at that time, inseparable from spices. Denium emphasized that according to several plant experts, before the 15th century, spices such as cloves, nutmeg and mace only grew and were produced in the archipelago, especially in Maluku (Utomo, 2017). Even before AD, the archipelago as a region producing spices, sandalwood and gold was known in the Middle East, Europe and India by being marketed throughout the world through local shipping ports in the eastern region of the archipelago (Utomo, 2017). It has been recorded that since the beginning of AD, many kingdoms, such as Rome, Ancient Egypt, India, dynasties in China, and kingdoms in the Southeast Asian region have had trade relations with spice-producing kingdoms in the archipelago. This condition shows that Indonesia's territorial waters in the past were an important international ship shipping route,
and this is proven by the large number of shipwreck artifacts found by fishermen or stolen by treasure seekers (Ardiwidjaja, 2018a).

This trade has finally formed a spice trade route (Spice Route) between regions inside and outside the archipelago. In fact, several kingdoms outside the archipelago are trying to control spice-producing sources (Sulaiman et al., 2018). Literally the Spice Route does not mean that the commodities traded are only spices, but also other domestic commodities, such as rice, diamonds and sandalwood. In fact, commodities originating from abroad brought by traders from India and China, such as cloth, silk and porcelain, were traded or exchanged for domestic commodities. Trade routes that traded spices and other commodities, such as sandalwood, gold, and so on in ancient times, have fostered cross-cultural, religious, artistic interactions, as well as the exchange of other values, such as ideology, politics, and economics. According to (Marihandono & Kanumoyoso, 2016), the history of the spice trade in the past has not only brought the archipelago to interact with the world, it has also strengthened the character of the archipelago and become a symbol of the maritime and agricultural civilization of the Indonesian nation.

Current globalization, which is melting the geopolitical boundaries of a country, including Indonesia, has fostered intercultural interactions which will definitely bring major changes that have an impact on the order of life of its people (Estuningtyas, 2018). This impact can be seen from the shift in ethical and cultural values in national life, the decline in creativity and independence, and the most extreme is the weakening of national identity and character due to the lack of historical and cultural insight and knowledge as a reflection of the civilization of the Indonesian nation. As a country that has major potential in the form of marine resources and maritime culture, Indonesia should have a great opportunity to become one of the largest maritime countries in the world, where the roots of development and the main income of the country's economy, including tourism, are from its marine potential (Kurnia, 2022). The government continues to make various efforts to overcome the impacts of these changes. One of them is through the launch of the Spice Route preservation program as a national program for 2021-2024. This program is an effort to reconstruct historical and cultural evidence of the Indonesian nation's Spice Route, which can become the basis for placing Indonesia as the world's maritime axis in the future. It is hoped that in 2024, the long history of the Spice Route as the identity of Indonesian civilization before the colonial period can be designated as world heritage. However, the success of realizing this program certainly requires cooperation from stakeholders. This research describes the active participation of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy through a sustainable tourism approach as a tool to highlight the diversity of attractions of regions along the Spice Route as tourist destinations to Indonesia. In this article, sustainable tourism development strategies will be outlined to strengthen cultural preservation efforts as a whole, starting from protecting, developing and utilizing cultural heritage, to fostering intangible cultural heritage at points as tourist destinations along the Spice Route.

**METHODS**

The research method employed in this study is qualitative research with a literature-based approach. This approach enables the researcher to gather, analyze, and synthesize information from various sources relevant to the researched topic. In qualitative research, the primary focus is on gaining in-depth understanding of the observed phenomenon,
allowing the researcher to explore diverse perspectives and interpretations related to the topic. Literature review serves as the primary method for data collection in this research. The researcher conducts searches and analyzes various sources of information such as scholarly journals, books, research reports, and other relevant documents related to Spice Route Activities as a Development Strategy for Sustainable Tourism. With this approach, the researcher can establish a solid conceptual framework based on a profound understanding of the research topic.

Furthermore, this research method also involves careful and systematic data analysis. Data obtained from the literature review is examined thoroughly to identify patterns, themes, and relationships among relevant information pertaining to the research objectives. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to unearth deeper meanings from the collected data, enriching the understanding of the role of the Spice Route in sustainable tourism development. Through the combination of qualitative research methods and literature review, this study aims to provide comprehensive insights into the sustainable tourism development strategy through Spice Route activities. In-depth analysis of the gathered information is expected to contribute valuable insights into understanding the potential and challenges in leveraging cultural and historical heritage to support sustainable tourism development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Globalization, which prioritizes sustainable development, has made tourism a tool that must sustainably guarantee long-term environmental, economic and socio-cultural benefits for the community, especially the community in the destination. Tourism relies heavily on a diversity of attractions in the form of unique natural and cultural environmental attractions in order to create added value for society in a sustainable manner. In the past, the spice trade played an important role in world civilization, becoming a commodity that was able to move history and change the world map (Ariwibowo, 2021). Spices are seen not only as trade products, but also as certain symbols in the culture of various societies in the world. Spices are a link between the archipelago which consists of islands and connect the archipelago with various nations which then results in cultural cross-breeding between ethnicities and nations, as well as creating dynamics in the order of people’s lives in the archipelago, thus forming a route called the spice route. It was so difficult to get spices at that time, that spices were increasingly seen as having magical powers that could function as medicines, preservatives, religious ceremonial tools, and cooking spices. It is not surprising that spices are something that many nations fight over.

Spices are not only a trading commodity, not only a source of prosperity for commercial transactions, this commodity then creates interactions between traders from various corners in which knowledge, culture, religion and experience are exchanged. Spices, which have become a trading tool, have become a space for meetings between people across nations, as well as a means of exchange and understanding between cultures that brings together various ideas, concepts, thoughts and even identities. Indonesia, situated at the crossroads of Asia and Oceania, shares land borders with ten countries, including India, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Timor-Leste, and Australia (Aminuyati et al., 2022). Since ancient times, spices have served as a primary trading commodity, creating a space for cross-cultural encounters. Through avenues of
cultural exchange and understanding, spices have facilitated the convergence of diverse ideas, concepts, and identities. Various spice treasures such as cloves, pepper, and cinnamon have connected Indonesia to the world, forging trade relationships that are not only economic but also enrich the cultural diversity and history of the region.

The existence of routes at that time functioned to move commodities, in this case spices, from one region to another in accordance with the supply and demand mechanism in trade, which encouraged the formation of trade routes (Siagian et al., 2020). Since the 16th and 17th centuries, Indonesia has been known as a paradise for producing spices such as cloves, nutmeg and pepper, which are endemic plants in Ternate, making it a target for world citizens, thus forming the Indonesian spice trade route. The spice route, in all its complexity, produces tangible or physical cultural heritage, including: ships, ancient ports, forts and ancient buildings, as well as the legacy of traditions related to culinary and spices. In the spice trade, the route itself then gave rise to a network. In contrast to trade routes, which mean routes and physical crossing points, networks are something that is invisible to the eye (Guntoro, D. W., & Sholekhah, 2023). Networking is a socio-cultural aspect that occurs as a result of commodity exchange involving trading partners from across nations. Networks were also very important in determining the production and distribution of the spice trade at that time. Networks leave cultural traces or traces of intercultural connectivity in the form of social formations (Sutanto, 2020). In relation to UNESCO, this is classified as an intangible cultural heritage.

Starting in 2020, the Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology is committed to carrying out the Spice Route campaign as a cultural route connection with the aim of gaining UNESCO recognition as a world cultural heritage. The development of human resources necessitates the adoption of an approach that generates alternative products, fostering community self-reliance in meeting their needs (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2018) (cited in Wahyuni & Qodir, 2021). In 2020, the Directorate General of Culture of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology committed to executing the Spice Route campaign as a link to cultural routes with the aim of obtaining UNESCO recognition as a world cultural heritage. This initiative reflects a tangible effort to build human capacity by leveraging cultural heritage, stimulating pride, and enhancing awareness of the importance of preserving cultural values for sustainable development.

The commitment to the Spice Route campaign signifies a strategic alignment with the principles of human resource development, emphasizing the role of cultural heritage in empowering communities. By encouraging the creation of alternative products and promoting self-sufficiency, the campaign not only seeks international recognition but also actively contributes to building a sense of pride and fostering awareness among the populace about the significance of preserving cultural values. In doing so, it aligns with the broader goals of sustainable development, recognizing the intrinsic link between cultural richness and human capacity building. As a first step, the Spice Route narrative was reconstructed by connecting cultural heritage (Cultural Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage) spread across all provinces. Various stories related to this cultural heritage are stitched together to form a new, liberating, Spice Route narrative that reflects its owners as free people. This narrative reconstruction emphasizes the active role of Indonesian sailors in
forming the Spice Route and requires support from all parties to make it a cultural movement.

**Image 1.** Map Of Spice Route Cultural Goodwill Points

The Spice Route includes various cultural routes from eastern Asia to western Europe connected to the Americas, Africa and Australia. A civilization trajectory takes various shapes, straight lines, circles, crosses, even in the form of networks. In Indonesia, the spice trade route covers many things. Not only does it stand at one point producing spices, but it also covers various points that can be found in Indonesia and forms a sustainable civilization trajectory.

It is hoped that the Spice Route Cultural Goodwill will be one of the triggers for the Spice Route Warriors to broaden their horizons, love and sense of belonging to the Spice Route which will be proposed as one of UNESCO’s world heritage. With the common insights shared by all Laskar Rempah, the information that will be disseminated through their various social media channels will be harmonious and sustainable. This program is expected to attract communities in 34 provinces in Indonesia through Laskar Rempah, to initiate various activation programs related to the Spice Route in their respective regions. The Indonesian people can be directly involved in the initiation of these communities to develop a sustainable economy and culture through the presentation and promotion of the Spice Route heritage. Through the Spice Warriors among Indonesian society, especially in their respective regions, to enrich understanding and increase public awareness that spices have a history or historical connection. It is hoped that the journey undertaken by Laskar Rempah can be a good reflection to further love, appreciate and spread stories about the richness of the Spice Route in Indonesia.

Referring to the potential and history of Indonesia's maritime history, the government has also proclaimed the development of Indonesia's territorial waters as a "world maritime axis", by inviting my seafaring ancestors. The hope is to revive the flow of ship shipping, including people's ship shipping, to grow stronger and develop. However, currently the flow of ship traffic is decreasing, and even traditional people's ships are becoming increasingly worrying. This situation is partly due to the development of a transportation network that is still land-oriented, the development of shipping technology by creating modern ships made of metal and fiber, and the lack of raw wood materials for making traditional ships.
Therefore, a sustainable and integrated maritime development strategy is needed, which is able to optimize the use of marine resources while preserving maritime culture. One of them is a sustainable tourism development approach through a tourism concept based on maritime cultural roots. The launch of the spice route program as an effort to reconstruct commodity trade, especially spices between islands, which was carried out by the ancestors of the Indonesian people and involved various tribes and nations in the past, has reopened opportunities to grow people's shipping traffic between islands, as well as increasing tourist attractions to Indonesia based on maritime cultural roots. Maritime tourism, which is still oriented as recreational and entertainment tourism to this day, can be optimized and placed as a tool, concept or way to strengthen efforts to preserve culture as a whole, starting from protecting, developing and utilizing cultural heritage, to fostering intangible cultural heritage at points of interest. Points along the spice trail. By utilizing the diversity of traditional forms of people's ships which are developed as traditional cruise ships, they will then become a mode of tourist transportation that connects traces of connection between these points as a sustainable tourist destination based on maritime culture.

The existence of the "Spice Route" program is an opportunity for marine tourism to be developed as a tool to support the reconstruction of the Spice Route, as well as increasing the attractiveness of points along the Spice Route as marine tourism destinations by utilizing the people's traditional ship transportation mode which has been developed into a traditional cruise ship. It is hoped that this mode of transportation will not just be a vehicle that connects the attractive points of coastal tourist destinations and small islands along the spice route, but will be able to elevate the diversity of traditional cruise forms into an attraction for Indonesia's maritime cultural heritage. The development of traditional cruises by utilizing the spice route provides various opportunities to strengthen the preservation of the existence and value of the spice route, both universal and Indonesian, including scientific values, social values, cultural values, economic values, and environmental values.

The issues of natural resources and human resources take center stage in development, presenting a contradiction between being assets or capital that supports progress and, simultaneously, potential burdens to advancement (Achmad et al., 2023). In alignment with this perspective, the development of traditional navigation utilizing spice routes offers various significant opportunities to strengthen the sustainability of the existence and values of these routes. The development of traditional navigation encompasses not only historical and Indonesian aspects but also creates diverse potentials on a universal level. Involving spice routes, which possess scientific, social, cultural, economic, and environmental values, provides a rich foundation for sustainable development. Scientifically, this development can enrich our understanding of the history of spice trade and unearth the sustainability values of these traditional practices. Socially and culturally, the development of traditional navigation can preserve and reinforce local identities, enriching cultural heritage (Ardiwidjaja, 2018b). From an economic perspective, spice routes offer opportunities for sustainable tourism and trade development (Setiawan, 2020). Meanwhile, from an environmental perspective, this development can be directed towards promoting sustainability principles, including the preservation of marine ecosystems and the reduction of negative environmental impacts.
By harnessing the potential of spice routes, the development of traditional navigation becomes a strategic step that not only enriches Indonesian values but also supports broader goals of sustainable development. Engaging various aspects of values, this development becomes a holistic approach to ensure that the wealth of human and natural resources becomes a positive force in sustainable development.

The strategies that can be implemented from spice route activities as sustainable tourism are as follows:

1. Position sustainable tourism development as a tool to achieve the final goals referred to and cover all activities related to tourism by paying attention to:
   a. integrated and organized efforts to develop the quality of life through the regulation, provision, development, utilization and maintenance of natural and cultural resources that are ecologically economically viable, as well as ethically and socially fair to society.
   b. preservation of natural and cultural attraction resources for future generations while still adapting to the needs of tourists and the current community and considering economic, social and aesthetic interests in managing resources while protecting the integrity of culture, ecology, biodiversity and life support systems (WTO, 1997: 34).

2. Strengthen a common perspective on changing the paradigm of the essence of sustainable tourism
   a. Tourism is not the final destination, tourism is a tool, concept, approach to achieving the final goal
   b. Tourism is related to the temporary movement of people from one place (routine area) to another place (new area) for various purposes, except earning a living.
   c. Tourism is closely related to attractions, which must be unique (different), and can only be obtained from the attraction of cultural resources and natural resources that are endemic (rare).
   d. Tourism contains the spirit of conservation, not exploitation (preventing the commercialization of nature and culture);
   e. Tourism is a process of economicization of experience and knowledge, related to the satisfaction of human needs;
   f. According to the Tourism Law, a destination is a geographical area located in one or more administrative regions in which there are attractions and activities, amenities, accessibility and communities that are interrelated and complement the realization of integrated and sustainable tourism.
   g. Tourism is a journey to gain satisfaction from experience and knowledge inspired by something seen, observed, felt and done at the destination.
   h. Tourism grows naturally based on, for and by the community in exploiting the attractions of the natural and cultural environment;
   i. Future tourism focuses on the quality of experience and knowledge in the destination.

3. Develop a collaborative management system in a network pattern of cooperation between sectors and disciplines in exploiting limited resources, potential attractions and geographical location along the spice route.

4. Ensure that sustainable tourism development is implemented taking into account:
a. The direction of sustainable tourism development at points as tourist destinations along the Spice Route includes:
   1) Culturally appropriate. That destination development is able to adapt to cultural norms and values as well as local community beliefs.
   2) Accepted in Social Life (socially accepte). That destination development can be accepted in the daily social life of local communities to become independent.
   3) Actively involving the community (people centered). That destination development is able to maximize tourism development from, by for the community.
   4) Fair (indiscriminative). That destination development can be carried out without looking at social status, religion, ethnicity and so on.
   5) Environmentally friendly (environmentally sound). That destination development is able to manage the value and existence of the natural and cultural environment in an integrated and sustainable manner.

b. The principle of sustainable tourism development at points as tourist destinations along the Spice Route must take into account important values from various aspects including:
   1) Environmental Aspects. Destination Ecosystems are determined by the existence and value of the inseparable unity of the natural environment and the cultural environment.
   2) Socio-Cultural Aspects. The existence of a diversity of resources in a destination has value that is beneficial to the daily social and cultural life of its people.
   3) Educational/Educational aspects. The natural and cultural environment in a destination is a capsule of knowledge that has educational/educational value for the community,
   4) Economic Aspects. Natural and cultural resources and their environment in destinations have economic benefits in creating opportunities for various types of livelihoods in a sustainable manner,
   5) Recreational Aspect. diversity of unique and authentic natural and cultural environmental resources in the destination, has a magnet to motivate people to visit and recreate,
   6) Aesthetic Aspects. The geographical condition of the destination environment with its diversity of resources has its own beauty value to be appreciated.

5. Establish a sustainable tourism destination development approach in tourist destinations along the Spice Route, by developing special interest tourism (niche market) which prioritizes elements of learning, enriching knowledge, appreciation and awareness as well as adventure, through developing the concept of integrated tourism products (composite tourism products) includes:
   a. Eco-Culture Tourism: Tourism products that combine the concept of cultural tourism, namely tourist trips based on cultural attractions such as cultural heritage sites, traditions and community lifestyles in order to gain new experiences and knowledge, especially related to cultural preservation, with the concept of
ecotourism, namely tourist trips to the natural natural environment which is carried out with the aim of gaining new experience and knowledge, especially those related to natural environmental conservation.

b. Rural Tourism: Tourist trips to rural areas to gain new experiences and knowledge related to the atmosphere of daily village life based on the uniqueness and authenticity of the cultural heritage, traditions and lifestyle of the people.

c. Educational Tourism. Tourist trips to a particular destination for the main purpose of gaining experience with direct educational content through interpretation and simulation approaches related to the unique natural and cultural attractions of the locations visited

d. Adventure Tourism: Is a negation of mass tourism for the purpose of gaining new experiences and knowledge which sometimes contains risks in the form of outdoor recreational activities in unique places (generally remote or inland suburban areas) and minimal infrastructure involving interactions between physical activities (High/Hard and Low/Soft) with nature and culture.

6. Optimizing traditional people's ships to be developed as the main mode of transportation in organizing spice route tourism in the form of traditional cruise ships. This traditional wooden cruise ship can be an attraction and can serve the needs of tourists and encourage the presence of tourists at tourist destinations along the Spice Route.

CONCLUSION

In general, it can be concluded that the Spice Route tourism development strategy leads to historical and cultural forms as a tourism attraction. Historical data shows that along the Spice Route there are many old ports that are still functioning today with their diverse communities. These ports are not only on the coast, but are also built with ports in the interior on rivers. Each region will develop tourism by utilizing the distinctive characteristics of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, as tourist attractions, both in urban and rural areas. Emphasis on the values of preserving past and present cultural heritage is something that must be done in utilizing this heritage as a tourism attraction. Such as ports on the coast and inland with their attractions, starting from shipping and traditional routes, traditional/folk ports, maritime and agricultural social and cultural life of the people, spice production systems, to the attractiveness of facilities, facilities and services that exist in each region, can used as a tourist attraction along the Spice Route. Based on the richness and diversity of natural and cultural potential at coastal points along the Spice Route, tourism is very likely to be a tool that can make Indonesia a world maritime tourism destination with one of its unique identities being the Spice Route and the diversity of traditional cruise ships.

Spice route activities include various cultural routes that gave birth to global civilization & revived the role of the people of the archipelago centuries ago. This program is determined to revive the historical narrative by showing the role of the Indonesian people in the formation of the Spice Route; documenting the roles of those in various areas of the spice trade; and reconstructing a series of common threads in one historical building. The spice trade route was so important and strategic in the 16th to 18th centuries that the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, several years ago has initiated several activity programs to
support the proposal for the Indonesian Spice Route to be established as one of the World's Intangible Cultural Heritages by UNESCO in 2024. To echo and support this proposal, the Indonesian Government, since 2020, through the Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture, in this case the Directorate of Cultural Development and Utilization, along with all UPTs (Technical Implementation Units) within the Directorate General of Culture, have implemented several activity support programs, including the Spice Route Festival Series of Activities, Creation of Spice Route Film Content, Spice Route Webinar, Exhibitions and Film Screenings through Mobile Cinemas as an effort to socialize and disseminate information related to the government program. Apart from that, this series of activities introduces the transit areas of the Indonesian spice route in the past with various traces of historical and cultural attributes of the spice route with the aim of making people more motivated to love Indonesian culture, especially the cultural history of the spice route which has extraordinary universal value (outstanding universal value) can live again in the memory of the people and in the end can further increase love for one's own culture and further strengthen one's identity as an Indonesian Nation and to reaffirm Indonesia's sovereignty which is built on a variety of cultures united through the warmth of spices for the advancement of national culture.

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