



# **The Missionary Movement Of Tuan Guru Bajang (TGB) In West Nusa Tenggara**

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## **Abstract**

This study discusses the missionary movement of Tuan Guru Bajang (TGB) in West Nusa Tenggara. This is a qualitative study. The research design is field research. The results of this study indicate that: Tuan Guru Bajang (TGB) Zainul Majdi, as a preacher, possesses exceptional competence and academic qualifications. His approach to delivering his sermons is calm and approachable, making his messages easily accepted by people from all walks of life. The target audience of TGB Zainul Majdi's preaching encompasses all segments of society, including those of different religious backgrounds. During his tenure as governor, TGB continued to fulfil his duties as a preacher.

**Keywords:** Dakwah; Tuan Guru Bajang; Nusa Tenggara Barat

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Majdi's presence in various religious forums seems to be a magnet for the people of NW and Muslims in Lombok in particular. The people of NW see the figure of their grandfather in Majdi. This has led the community to bestow upon him the special title of TGB (Tuan Guru Bajang). Tuan guru is an honorable title for religious leaders in Sasak society, and bajang means young. Tuan guru is the title given to religious leaders in West Nusa Tenggara. With their religious authority, they have entered the realm of practical politics and compete for influence. Tuan guru are the holders of Islamic religious authority in NTB. Through religious lectures and Friday prayers, they build loyalty among their students and followers. They also exert their influence through fatwas. Typically, the Sasak Muslim community in Lombok has a traditional culture, paternalistic consciousness, and an agrarian mentality. NTB, especially Lombok, is nicknamed "The Island of a Thousand Mosques," a symbolic name given that there are only around 300 mosques in Lombok, and the 2010 census reported 4,341,284 people, or 96 percent of NTB's population, as Muslim. Referring to the importance of Islam for the people of Lombok, the tuan guru plays a role akin to a social glue. Not only does he handle religious matters, but the tuan guru also manages Islamic boarding schools, participates in social activities, and even engages in business. The role of the tuan guru in NTB is similar to that of a kiai, a religious leader and teacher of Islam in Java. The authority of a tuan guru extends beyond the mosque and influences the entire island of NTB. The prominence of tuan guru is even embedded in the title "Tuan Guru" itself, which is passed down to their descendants. Due to their high social status, it is nearly impossible to implement policies or gain public support for an initiative without the active backing of these leaders [tuan guru]. (Kingsley 2010)

## **METHOD**

This type of research is qualitative research. The research design is field research.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Da'wah Movement of Muhammad Zainul Majdi or Tuan Guru Bajang (TGB) in West Nusa Tenggara**

The use of proper and effective methods is the most important element in supporting the success of a da'wah activity. A good da'wah message, if not supported by proper methods, will not be able to reach and be accepted effectively. However, the Quran has essentially provided a solid foundation regarding the principles that must be established in various da'wah methods. These principles are contained in QS. al-Nahl verse 125, namely: hikmah (wisdom), mauidzah hasanah (good advice), and mujadalah billati hiya ahsan (discussion with the best of arguments), which were then realized and reinforced by the principles of da'wah carried out by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The analysis of TGB Zainul Majdi's da'wah activities includes six indicators, namely the issues of the dai (da'wah practitioner), the mad'u (da'wah object), the maddah (da'wah material), the wasilah (da'wah media), the thariqah (method), and the atsar (da'wah effect).

#### **1. Dai**

As a Dai, he possesses the necessary qualifications, having been born as the son of Hj. Rauhun Zainuddin Abdul Madjid, the daughter of TGH. M. Zainuddin Abdul Madjid (Tuan Guru Pancor), founder of the largest Islamic organization in NTB, Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) and founder of the Darun-Nahdlatain Islamic boarding school, who currently serves as chairman of Nahdlatul Wathan (NW). Muhammad Zainul Majdi completed his elementary education at SDN 3 Mataram (now SDN 6 Mataram), graduating in 1986. He attended junior high school at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Mu'allimin Nahdlatul Wathan Pancor for two years and graduated from high school at the same institution in 1991. Before entering higher education, he memorized the Quran at the Ma'had Darul Qur'an wal Hadits Nahdlatul Wathan Pancor for one year (1991–1992).

Then in 1992, Majdi left for Cairo to study at the Faculty of Ushuluddin, majoring in Tafsir and Quranic Studies at Al-Azhar University Cairo, graduating with an Lc. degree in 1996. Five years later, he obtained a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree with the distinction of Jayyid Jiddan. After completing his undergraduate and master's degrees at Al-Azhar over a period of 10 years, Majdi continued his studies in the same university and department for his doctoral program. In October 2002, Majdi's dissertation proposal was accepted with the title "Study and Analysis of the Manuscript of the Tafsir of Ibn Kamal Basya from the Beginning of Surah An-Nahl to the End of Surah Ash-Shoffat" under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Said Muhammad Dasuqi and Prof. Dr. Ahmad Syahaq Ahmad.

TGB Zainul Majdi successfully earned his Doctorate degree with the distinction of Martabah el-Syaraf El Ula Ma'a Haqqutba or Summa Cum Laude on Saturday, January 8, 2011, during his defense (examination) with examiners Prof. Dr. Abdul Hay Hussein al-Farmawi and Prof. Dr. Al-Muhammadi Abdurrahman Abdullah ats-Tsuluts. His stance on the qualifications of a religious scholar was expressed in an interview with the online media outlet republika.co.id, where Arwanuddin (63) stated that:

Preachers are religious agents who convey religious values to society. Therefore, preachers must have high standards, and the training of preachers needs to be carried out more intensively. ("Arwan Nurdin (63), Akademisi, Wawancara, Lombok 27 Desember 2024," n.d.)

As a preacher, Tuan Guru Bajang (TGB) possesses competence and academic qualifications that are highly commendable. His manner of delivering his sermons is also very calm and easily accepted by all audiences.

## 2. Mad'u (Object of Da'wah)

For non-Muslims, TGB's missionary targets include students at various campuses in Indonesia, including male and female students at campuses throughout Indonesia, through his missionary safari movement. He also targets the diverse religious communities in NTB. According to one student, Abdullah Jundi (25), after attending one of TGB's missionary lectures during his missionary safari movement.

When the target audience of our preaching is non-Muslims, what is important is to show them the beauty of Islamic morals, as demonstrated by TGB in his punctuality in delivering his lectures, his friendly smile, and his use of language that is not derogatory, offensive, or unpleasant to hear, especially for non-Muslims. ("Abdullah Jundi (25), Mahasiswa, Wawancara, Mataram 28 Februari 2025," n.d.)

In his preaching, TGB always adapts to the audience he is facing so that he can attract the interest of the congregation to continue paying attention to his lecture.

## 3. Maddah (Preaching Material)

TGB Zainul Majdi's preaching material is very flexible, adapting to the target audience and the current conditions of the community. For example, when the community was caught up in ethnic, religious, and racial discrimination, TGB delivered preaching material that was appropriate for the situation at that time, as explained by Sarjan (43).

In his lecture, he explained that Allah forbids us from cursing other people's gods, things that are revered in other religions, or symbols that are revered in their religions. Because doing so could be tantamount to cursing Allah and cursing our own religion. ("Sarjan (43), Dosen, Bima 10 Januari 2025," n.d.)

Another event during the commemoration of Nuzulul Qur'an at the state palace was attended by the president and ministers, with a lecture delivered by TGB on the theme of "Togetherness in Diversity from the Perspective of the Qur'an." According to Arwan Nurdin (63):

In this case, TGB's preaching material adapts to the current situation, namely the month of Ramadan. In general, TGB's preaching material is moderate in nature, discussing diversity and brotherhood in state life, as well as reminding people to always carry out their duties as state officials who have a big responsibility covering the whole of Indonesia, which is full of diversity in customs, culture, religion, language, and so on. ("Arwan Nurdin (63), Akademisi, Wawancara, Lombok 27 Desember 2024," n.d.)

#### 4. Washilah (Media of Da'wah)

One of TGB's media of da'wah is through mass media, both print and online. Da'wah through print media is done through writing, or what TGB Zainul Majdi often refers to as da'wah bil qalam. On several occasions, TGB has written religious articles. As explained by Rizki (27):

Several articles and newspapers containing writings by TGB, such as Lombok Post and Ulumuna journal, which also actively writes books. Among the books written by TGB Zainul Majdi are: TGBNOMICS Iktiar NTB Untuk Indonesia, Tuan Guru Bajang Santri Membangun Negri, Ulama pemimpin Kiprah Tuan Guru Bajang Dalam Membangun Umat, TGB Ulama Dan Umara Memimpin Dengan Hati. ("Rizki (27), Wiraswasta, Wawancara, Mataram 28 Februari 2025," n.d.)

Dakwah through electronic media began in 1999 when TGB established a radio station called Radio Dakwah Hamzanwadi. According to M. Fachrozi Candra (26):

This radio station is very helpful to the community in addressing issues related to religious and social life. The core programme of this religious radio station is an interactive live programme with Tuan Guru Bajang called 'Anda Bertanya Tuan Guru Menjawab'. ("M. Fachrozi Candra (26), Karyawan Swasta, Wawancara, Mataram 28 Februari 2025," n.d.)

Such methods or strategies of preaching are very effective among the community, and the sermons of Tuan Guru Bajang and other religious leaders can be heard directly by the community whenever they need them.

Dakwah through online media is conveyed through social media, namely Facebook with the ID Dr. TGB. Muhammad Zainul Majdi and Instagram with the ID @tuangurubajang. M. Amir (54) explained that:

Dakwah through online media is packaged in the form of written articles or live visuals. Another form of TGB's dakwah media is through economic empowerment of the community, namely by establishing an institution to develop human resources who are ready and capable in economic development, namely LPWN. ("M. Amir (54), Biro Kesra Kantor Gubernur NTB Tahun 2017, Wawancara, Lombok 1 Maret 2025," n.d.)

LPWN (Wasyirin Najabah Education Institution) is an organisation engaged in education and vocational training in the fields of business, accounting, banking, hospitality, and tourism. This institution is considered successful in producing good outcomes, although not yet perfect, but at least there have been new breakthroughs in the efforts of Bi Hal da'wah. According to TGB Zainul Majdi, Bi lisan and Bil Hal da'wah should be prioritised by da'is.

According to TGB, preaching through political parties is a necessity, not something taboo, let alone negative. According to Lalu Muhammad Alamuddin Makbul (29):

Another form of da'wah (preaching) from TGB Zainul Majdi is through political parties. When TGB was involved in politics, he was deeply rooted in the values of da'wah, and when he preached, he never separated it from politics, which in this context means leading and guiding people towards love for their homeland (hubbul wathan). TGB's politics were clearly aimed at da'wah. TGB's politics aim to build a religious society. He views politics as a tool for da'wah to spread the moderate teachings of Islam, 'rahmatan lil alamin'. ("Lalu Muhammad Alamuddin Makbul (29), Anggota Nahdhlatul Wathan, Wawancara, Lombok 7 Januari 2025," n.d.)

#### 5. Thariqah (Method)

Tuan Guru Bajang's method of preaching is very modern and innovative, including through the use of appropriate media to target the community. According to Lalu Muhammad Alamuddin Makbul (29):

Whenever his name is mentioned at this Islamic gathering, the congregation becomes very enthusiastic because of his lectures. He is a complete figure because he is an educator and teacher to us. His words are pleasant when delivering the material, and he has a good method of presenting his lectures, which is why people come to listen to him. ("Lalu Muhammad Alamuddin Makbul (29), Anggota Nahdhlatul Wathan, Wawancara, Lombok 7 Januari 2025," n.d.)

According to Abdullah Jundi (25), a regular TGB worshipper at the Islamic Centre, that:

TGB's method of preaching is inseparable from QS. an-Nahl verse 125. There are three methods of preaching, namely the method of hikmah, which is logical statements in conveying absolute truth with good arguments and explanations. The second method is mauidzah hasanah, which is messages through stories about the prophets and companions that contain meaning and lessons. The third method is 'wajadilhum billati hiya ahsan,' which involves discussing and debating in a good manner using strong evidence. According to him,

da'wah is an integral part of Islam, a requirement for living an Islamic life. However, it is also required to spread the teachings of Islam to all humanity. In practice, da'wah often faces obstacles and challenges. These obstacles are not merely material or substantive in nature, but rather stem from inadequate strategies and methods. Therefore, methods or thariqah are essential in da'wah activities. ("Abdullah Jundi (25), Mahasiswa, Wawancara, Mataram 28 Februari 2025," n.d.)

#### 6. Atsar (Effects of Da'wah)

With his highly strategic role in society, both as a religious leader and community figure, a Bajang teacher, better known as TGB Zainul Majdi, has become a social actor who is widely regarded as a role model for the community (especially his followers), as explained by Lalu Ali Shodiqin (26):

As a religious leader, the teacher became the centre of attention for his followers who sought religious rulings and advice. Having served as Governor of West Nusa Tenggara for two consecutive terms, his image in remote areas of West Nusa Tenggara and even abroad was that of a teacher, not a governor. Interestingly, before becoming Governor, he was also a member of the Indonesian House of Representatives (DPR RI) and actively involved in politics. However, his role as a tuan guru always overshadowed his political identity. This demonstrates that every step he took and every day of his life was deeply rooted in Islamic values. Moreover, the development achievements in NTB are partly attributed to his religious outreach efforts. Through his approach as a religious leader, he successfully inspired the community to work together in building NTB. ("Lalu Ali Shodiqin (26), Mahasiswa, Lombok 27 Februari 2025," n.d.)

### CONCLUSION

Tuan Guru Bajang (TGB) Zainul Majdi, as a preacher, possesses exceptional competence and academic qualifications. His approach to delivering his sermons is calm and approachable, making his messages easily accepted by people from all walks of life. The target audience of TGB Zainul Majdi's preaching encompasses all segments of society, including those of different religious backgrounds. During his tenure as governor, TGB continued to fulfil his duties as a preacher.

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