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The Analysis of Drug Eradication Policy Strategies at the Northern Kalimantan - Sabah Border: A Policy Collaboration between Indonesia and Malaysia

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Abstract

To address the challenges of transnational drug crimes, the governments of Indonesia and Malaysia have joined forces to tackle the issue at the border between Northern Kalimantan and Sabah. Due to serious surveillance shortcomings in this area, especially in Northern Kalimantan, multinational syndicates are able to smuggle enormous amounts of drugs from Sabah to Northern Kalimantan and then to major Indonesian cities. This study focuses on an analysis of policy collaboration patterns between Indonesia and Malaysia to address this issue. The qualitative research method employed involved a case study with data collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and visual sources. Informant selection was performed using the purposive snowball technique to extract in-depth information. Additionally, the study utilizes a literature review and web searches to gather supplementary data, which are analyzed through a data reduction method. Research findings show that collaborative policies between Indonesia and Malaysia are implemented in the form of information exchange and joint patrols on land and sea borders. Despite the existence of this collaboration, its effectiveness is still limited owing to challenges in border management, inadequate infrastructure, minimal community participation, and law enforcement resource constraints. The study also revealed that the complexity of international drug networks and the lack of sustained commitment in information exchange contribute to the high levels of drug smuggling and circulation in the northern Kalimantan-Sabah border region.

Keywords: Indonesia, Malaysia, Drugs, Northern Kalimantan, Sabah

Introduction

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime(2017), drug trafficking and arrest have increased in Indonesia, Malaysia, and several other countries. Despite intensive efforts to address drug trafficking in Indonesia, the number of arrests has surged from 16,000 individuals in 2012 to 39,230 individuals in 2016. In Malaysia, there were 8,160 arrests of foreign nationals related to drug smuggling in 2016. This country is also known as a source of ecstasy distribution, which reaches several regions in Indonesia and Brunei(UNODC, 2017).

Indonesia is a target market for global drug syndicates owing to its three key characteristics. First, there is high demand for drugs in Indonesia. Second, Indonesia's strategic geographic location is close to drug production centers and has extensive borders. Third, law enforcement

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is ineffective in combating drug distribution networks (Simanjuntak & Rani, 2019). Consequently, drug smuggling from Malaysia to Indonesia, both by land and sea routes, continues. Drug syndicates often use several smuggling routes to import drugs from Malaysia to Indonesia (Simanjuntak & Rani, 2019).

In North Kalimantan, there have been several cases of drug smuggling in Malaysia via the Nunukan Regency. One of the main obstacles to ending drug use in this area is 14,000 other routes that run parallel to the border of Northern Kalimantan. These routes are frequently utilized for illicit purposes, such as drug smuggling in Malaysia (Sukoco & Assifa, 2018). Despite successful law enforcement in Indonesia, drug trafficking persists. In July 2019, a joint operation between the National Narcotics Agency (BNN), Indonesian National Police (Polri), and Customs successfully captured the smuggling of 38 kg of crystal meth from Malaysia to Samarinda through Tanjung Selor, Bulungan, and North Kalimantan (Metrotvnews.com, 2019). In May 2019, BNN North Kalimantan thwarted the smuggling of 3 kg of crystal meth from Malaysia through the border waters in Tarakan City (Merdeka.com, 2019).

This research aimed to explore and examine drug eradication efforts in North Kalimantan, with a focus on collaboration between Indonesia and Malaysia. This study will assess and understand the existing cooperation patterns between the two countries in addressing the drug problem at the northern Kalimantan-Sabah border. It will analyze the factors hindering the optimization of drug eradication cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia, attempting to comprehend effective collaboration forms to counter drug smuggling and ensure security in the northern Kalimantan-Sabah border area. Security cooperation, in this context, is defined as synergy among various parties aimed at creating stable conditions for national sovereignty (Muller, 2020).

The importance of this collaboration arises from the fact that combating drug trafficking at the Indonesia-Malaysia border, which involves transnational criminal actors, cannot depend solely on each country's domestic policies. The concept of transnational crime was introduced internationally in the 1990s during the 8th UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (Wagley, 2006). Transnational crime is often interpreted as large-scale and complex criminal activities carried out by specific organizations with the goal of supplying and exploiting the black market, often harming society (Sinaga, 2010).

In this context, Malaysia plays the role of a drug supplier, whereas Indonesia is the main market. International collaboration between Indonesia and Malaysia is required to solve the drug trade issue as it has the potential to negatively impact both nations. This cooperation can involve preventive, preemptive, and repressive actions to reduce the amount of drug circulating through the Northern Kalimantan and Sabah borders. This approach is reinforced by the fact that drug trafficking can threaten human security in the border regions of both the countries. Handling this drug problem can be strengthened through border security synergies. As expressed by Keohane, inter-country cooperation occurs because of "common interests that can only be realized through cooperation." (Keohane, 1984)

This study has a unique background that differentiates it from previous studies. It specifically highlights the bilateral collaboration between Malaysia and Indonesia in the fight against drug trafficking along the border between Sabah and Northern Kalimantan. Although some earlier research conducted by Fitriyanti (2014), Chouvy (2013), Satria and Tiara (2016), Wahyuri (2017), and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, (2018) particularly in Southeast Asia, offers insightful information on a range of topics pertaining to drug trafficking, money

laundering, and transnational crimes, this study stands out for taking a more targeted approach.

In this regard, this research concentrates more on the specific dynamics of the Northern Kalimantan-Sabah border, which have not been thoroughly addressed in previous studies. This research seeks to understand how bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia can be effective in addressing specific drug trafficking issues in this border region, considering the unique socio-geographic characteristics that influence drug smuggling dynamics.

Thus, the novelty of this study lies in its in-depth exploration of bilateral cooperation in a complex border region, often overlooked in the broader context of drug eradication policies and regional security. This research aims to provide new insights and policy recommendations for effectively addressing drug trafficking issues in the Northern Kalimantan-Sabah border, enriching academic and practical discourse in the field of transnational security and bilateral cooperation.

This research provides a unique perspective in the discipline of International Relations by emphasizing the cooperation between the governments of Indonesia and Malaysia in addressing drug trafficking in the Northern Kalimantan and Sabah border regions. While there have been many studies that have dealt with the issue of drug trafficking, this literature still lacks an examination of this issue from the perspective of foreign policy and bilateral cooperation between countries. Therefore, the focus of this research on the mechanisms and processes of cooperation between the governments of both countries in combating drug trafficking in the border areas contributes new and relevant insights.

This research details the factors that drive cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia in this context. Additionally, this study will explain the cooperation mechanisms implemented by both countries in drug eradication efforts in this border area. Identifying the challenges faced in this cooperative process will also be the focus of the research.

Moreover, this study aims to develop an optimal cooperation model that can be applied to eradicate drug trafficking in North Kalimantan. This model must ensure the safety of the community at the border. Thus, this research has the potential to make a significant contribution to understanding and addressing the issue of drug trafficking in the Indonesia-Malaysia border region.

Hence, the contribution of this research is not only to its specific case study but also to enriching the academic discussion on international cooperation in the context of International Relations, especially in cross-border issues such as drug trafficking. This approach allows a deeper understanding of how countries collaborate to address complex and challenging transnational issues.

Research Method

This research employs a case study method with a focus on the national level of analysis, particularly on international cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia in combating drug trafficking at their mutual borders. The selection of this method was supported by the highly specific and contextual characteristics of the research object. Data sources included observations, interviews, documentation, and visual materials, reflecting a multidimensional approach to collecting relevant and in-depth data. The informant selection was conducted through purposive snowball sampling, allowing the researcher to identify and extract information from individuals with substantive experience and knowledge regarding the

research topic. The selected informants included key officials from various institutions in Indonesia and Malaysia, including the Head of BNNP Kaltara, Nunukan Police Chief, Commander of Lanal Nunukan, Head of Customs Nunukan, Regent of Nunukan, and officials from the Royal Malaysia Police and Malaysian Anti-Narcotics Agency. This selection aimed to obtain diverse and comprehensive perspectives on the research issue. All informants interviewed stated verbally during the interview that their names and positions could be included in the manuscript.

Data analysis will be conducted using data reduction and interpretation strategies following the guidelines outlined by Daymon and Holloway(2002). The goal of this analysis is to elaborate on and understand the studied case in depth, as suggested by Stake(2010). To ensure reliability, this study involved several examination procedures. These include checking transcripts to avoid errors, preventing the use of unclear definitions and meanings, as recommended by Gibbs(2007), conducting regular discussions with the research team, and sharing analyses for data triangulation. This process also involved comparing data interpretations between researchers to ensure the consistency and validity of the findings.

Through this approach, this research aims to provide a comprehensive and reliable understanding of Indonesia-Malaysia cooperation in combating drug trafficking at the Northern Kalimantan and Sabah border, considering the complexity and local nuances as well as international policies.

Discussion

Indonesia-Malaysia Cooperation

Indonesia and Malaysia have jointly committed to combating drug trafficking in their border regions by land and sea. To formalize this commitment, both countries agreed on bilateral cooperation that encompasses information exchange, law enforcement implementation, and human resource development. This collaboration is manifested through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Indonesian National Police and the Royal Malaysia Police, focusing on combating the illegal trade of narcotics, psychotropic substances, precursors, and hazardous materials, and strengthening police cooperation. The MoU also includes agreements on information exchange and establishment of communication procedures.

Starting in 1967, this cooperation initially concentrated on security issues. However, as the era transitioned from communism and the Cold War to an era of international crime, Indonesia and Malaysia shifted their focus to cross-border crime issues. In response to this change, both countries decided to form a Joint Police Cooperation Committee (JPCC). This committee was inaugurated on December 15, 2006, during the 35th Common Border Committee meeting in Jakarta, and was ratified by the chair of the Malindo GBC at the time, Prof. Dr. Juwono Sudharsono and Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Abdul Razak.

The Joint Police Cooperation Committee (JPCC), a collaboration product between Indonesia and Malaysia, is divided into two main teams, each with distinct responsibilities. The first team was the Police Operation Planning Team (TPOK), and the second was the Police Training Planning Team (TPLK). Both teams consisted of representatives from the police chiefs of both countries. They plan and organize activities listed in the annual agenda calendar, executed by police personnel according to operational needs in the field.

The Indonesia-Malaysia cooperation focuses on drug eradication in the border regions of both

countries in a coordinated and cooperative manner. The primary reason for this collaboration was the shared goal of protecting citizens from the dangers of narcotics supplied by foreign networks. Given the geographical proximity between Indonesia and Malaysia, especially in North Kalimantan, approximately 70% of the narcotics entering this region originate from Malaysia. This makes North Kalimantan one of the main routes used by international networks to transport drugs from Malaysia to Indonesia.

Within the framework of JPCC cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia for drug eradication at the North Kalimantan-Sabah border, this study identified three main forms of cooperation. First, information is exchanged between the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) and Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM). Second, joint patrols were conducted by both police forces, on land and at sea. Finally, the capacity and skills of members of the POLRI and PDRM should be enhanced.

In combating drug smuggling at the border, POLRI and PDRM coordinate to monitor and address drug trafficking originating from Malaysia to Indonesia, and vice versa. This coordination involves direct information exchange among the police regarding individuals involved in drug smuggling in the border areas.

The coordination process begins with the arrest of drug-related suspects by the POLRI or the National Narcotics Agency (BNN), which was then developed to identify couriers or drug dealers associated with international networks. The next step involves coordination between POLRI/BNN and POLRI in Malaysia, who then coordinate with PDRM to share information about drugs entering Indonesia. The result of this process is the arrest of suspects involved in international drug networks, providing tangible evidence of effective cooperation between POLRI and PDRM.

Despite the coordinated efforts by the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) and the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) to combat drug smuggling in border areas, the research findings show that their success rate has not reached the anticipated level. Several factors have contributed to this lack of success.

One of the main factors is the inconsistent commitment of both state institutions, POLRI and PDRM, to follow up on any information related to drug smuggling. This creates the impression that drug eradication efforts do not receive a high priority in the agendas of these institutions.

Additionally, research also shows that there have been no significant arrests of major drug traffickers associated with international networks. This indicates an urgent need to enhance the efforts to combat these drug networks. More decisive and effective actions are required to identify, track, and confront the key actors in international drug trafficking.

More collaboration and commitment from both nations, as well as more resources and training for law enforcement, are required to improve the effectiveness of the fight against drug smuggling along borders. Additionally, continuous evaluation and improvement of existing cooperative mechanisms are necessary to ensure that drug eradication efforts can proceed more efficiently and effectively.

In this cooperation, the information exchange between POLRI and PDRM also includes information about the involvement of local residents in border areas in drug smuggling activities. Arrests and investigations in North Kalimantan Province indicate that the majority of circulating drugs come from abroad rather than being locally produced. Given the length of the border area in North Kalimantan, especially in Pulau Sebatik in the Nunukan Regency,

criminals often use local residents as couriers to facilitate their activities.

Due to its susceptibility to threats from both local and foreign sources, the border, especially in places like Pulau Sebatik in the Nunukan Regency—becomes crucial in the context of national security. Pulau Sebatik, one of Indonesia's outermost islands bordering Sabah, Malaysia, highlights the significant challenges faced by security forces in monitoring and preventing drug entry into Indonesia. This area is one of the main entry points for drug smuggling from Malaysia to Indonesia.

The Chief of the North Kalimantan Regional Police, Brigadier General Pol Indrajit, through the Director of Drug Investigation of the North Kalimantan Regional Police, Police Commissioner Adi Affandi, acknowledged that North Kalimantan is one of the 12 provinces in Indonesia considered a drug red zone. This province serves as a primary route for drug couriers to transport illicit substances from Malaysia. To address this issue, especially when dealing with illegal routes at the North Kalimantan-Sabah border, cooperation between POLRI and PDRM Malaysia has intensified. Initially, this cooperation consisted of meetings involving information exchange about drug smuggling, Indonesian migrant workers (TKI), and other illegal goods.

In this cooperation, joint patrols are conducted both on land and at sea, one to two times a year. The Nunukan Regency, which is located at the border, faces more complex issues. Apart from directly bordering Malaysia and the Philippines, the Nunukan Regency also has a long historical and emotional relationship with the region that is now a part of Malaysia. Many people utilize Border Crossing Documents (PLB) to enter and exit the borders of both countries, leading to overstays, illegal trafficking of Indonesian migrant workers, and other illegal goods such as drugs. Drug smuggling often occurs at traditional ports.

In this context, joint security is needed in the North Kalimantan and Sabah border areas of Malaysia, both on land and at sea. Joint patrols are the primary step in this security effort to address the challenges faced in the border region.

Joint patrols in the maritime border areas between the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) and the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) are known as "Rendezvous" (RV). These activities are conducted alternately in the maritime border areas of both countries. For example, in 2018, an RV patrol was conducted by PDRM Sabah together with the Criminal Investigation Bureau of Nunukan Regency and the Narcotics Investigation Unit (Reskoba) of the Nunukan District Police (Polres). This patrol focused on transit areas of drug trafficking, especially in the waters between Tawau and Sungai Nyamuk Port in Sebatik.

The total length of the border that needs to be monitored reaches 1,038 km, including the land border between Sarawak and Sabah (Malaysia), and the Malinau and Nunukan Regencies (Indonesia). With such a lengthy border, there are many opportunities for drug smuggling, both by land and by sea, from Sabah to North Kalimantan. There are approximately 1,400 smuggling routes in waters that are often used for smuggling with small boats or speedboats. Sebatik Island serves as a major entry point in drug smuggling operations, with its territory divided into two territorial zones: the northern part, covering 187.23 km², belonging to Malaysia, and the southern part, covering 246.61 km², which is Indonesian territory.

Owing to Sebatik's direct maritime border, there are thousands of illicit smuggling routes that connect Sabah and Indonesia (Sebatik Indonesia-Tawau), frequently utilizing small speedboats. The Aji Kuning River, located near the Border Security Post Tapal 3, has small river routes that

directly lead to the waters of Tawau, Sabah, and Malaysia. In addition to illegal routes, Sungai Nyamuk Port, an official entry point, is frequently used to smuggle drugs in the Sebatik Island area.

Drug smuggling from Malaysia to Indonesia via land routes often occurs in the Sebatik Island area, which has a direct border with Malaysia. This island has many "smuggling routes" that are less monitored, making it easier for drug smuggling syndicates to transport illicit goods from Malaysia to Indonesia. The weakness of the surveillance and security system on the North Kalimantan border with Sabah provides opportunities for smugglers to use these routes without detection by the security forces of both countries.

Four main areas in North Kalimantan have become hotspots for drug smuggling: Sebatik Island, Amal Island in Tarakan City, Bunyu Island, and several areas in the Malinau Regency. In response, joint patrols between POLRI and PDRM were conducted in the North Kalimantan border area in Sabah, Malaysia. These patrols rotate between the North Kalimantan and Sabah. For example, in 2018, joint patrols were conducted using border markers 7 and 8 between the Republic of Indonesia and Malaysia, involving personnel from the Sebatik Central Sub-sector Police, Sebatik West Police, and PDRM in the Bergusung area, Sebatik Island, Malaysia.

The main focus of these joint patrols is to address security and public order systems in border areas. The goal is to examine the readiness of personnel from POLRI and PDRM serving in the Sebatik Island border, enhance the security of the area, and identify measures to secure the border area, particularly in addressing the issue of drug smuggling from Sabah, Malaysia, to North Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Joint patrols conducted by POLRI and PDRM in border areas involve tracking the border markers often used by local residents to enter and exit the border area. During patrols, the team visits and checks the border-crossing checkpoints (PPLB) located in Pangkalan Aji Kuning, Sebatik Tengah District. They also inspected border routes at Marker 3 in Aji Kuning Village.

These inspections included checking passenger documents entering and leaving the border area between the Republic of Indonesia and Malaysia. Additionally, officers inspect the belongings of passengers as a precaution against drug smuggling or firearms. The primary goal of these joint patrols is to exchange information on potential security disruptions and public order along the border. Thus, coordination between Indonesia and Malaysia can be enhanced, allowing both countries to be more effective in preventing smuggling of Indonesian migrant workers and drugs. Such patrols are a crucial step in the joint efforts of both countries to address border issues and strengthen regional security.

Factors Inhibiting the Optimization of Cooperation

In an effort to combat drug smuggling on the border between North Kalimantan and Sabah, Indonesia and Malaysia face several obstacles to their cooperation. These obstacles can be categorized as internal and external. Internally, challenges include border management on land and at sea, infrastructure availability in border areas, limited involvement of local communities in stopping drug smuggling, and a shortage of law enforcement personnel tasked with border protection. Externally, hindrances arise from the presence of international drug networks targeting Indonesia and Malaysia as their primary markets, because of the high demand for drugs.

Border management in Indonesia and Malaysia, particularly in North Kalimantan, is a serious issue. These include uncertainty in border territory boundaries owing to the removal or relocation of border markers. Inconsistent policies between the central and regional

governments also pose problems. Economic disparities between the populations in North Kalimantan and Sabah and Sarawak exacerbate these challenges. Additionally, inadequate facilities and infrastructure in border areas, along with low political commitment from both central and regional governments in developing border regions, contribute to numerous interconnected economic, political, and health problems.

The land border area between Indonesia and Malaysia, spanning 2,004 km from Tanjung Datu in the west to the east coast of Sebatik Island in the north, separates the Republic of Indonesia from the states of Sabah and Sarawak. This study finds that this border area is mostly marked by small border markers that function merely as indicators without effective national boundary characteristics. These markers are often damaged, lost, or moved, usually because of activities by residents of both countries, including agricultural and business activities.

Owing to inadequate marker size and design, local communities are often unaware of their existence, leading to illegal activities in border areas, including drug smuggling. Drug smuggling from Malaysia to Indonesia is exacerbated by the geographical proximity between the two countries. Malaysia has an extensive land border with Kalimantan in addition to a maritime border. Drug traffickers from Malaysia often use clandestine routes on both land and sea alongside official routes such as flights and ports.

From the researcher's perspective, the border area plays a crucial and strategic role in improving the socioeconomic welfare of communities, both within and beyond the region. The border area also has strong connections with activities in other regions, at both the national and international levels. This situation not only affects the political context but also has significant implications for national defense and security.

Sebatik Island in the Nunukan Regency, North Kalimantan, located on the frontline of Indonesia bordering directly with Malaysia, serves as a major route for drug smuggling from Tawau, Sabah, Malaysia. The island is divided between Indonesia and Malaysia, with a total area of approximately 114 km², and Kota Tawau, Sabah, is only approximately 8-9 km away from the Indonesian-owned part of Sebatik. This close proximity facilitates the transport of drugs into Indonesian territory through Sebatik.

Securing the border on Sebatik Island is challenging, primarily because of the numerous clandestine routes accessible by speedboats. This situation is exacerbated by the cross-border trade conducted by local residents to meet their daily needs. In Sebatik, residents often use docks for cross-border activities, which are essentially forbidden but accepted customs.

This research noted that North Kalimantan, particularly Tarakan, has become a major route in the circulation of drugs by international networks in Indonesia. This route often involves southern Philippine waters, heading to Tawau in Sabah, Malaysia, before entering North Kalimantan waters, and then being distributed to other areas. Border communities heavily depend on goods from Sabah, with about 70% of Sebatik's needs imported from Tawau. This factor facilitated drug smuggling from Sabah to Indonesia through North Kalimantan. The loading and unloading activities of ships carrying daily necessities from Malaysia usually occur at small ports rather than at immigration inspection posts. This also applies to the production results sent by Sebatik to Tawau. The awareness and dependence of border communities on cross-border products is reflected in their acknowledgment of this dependency as common knowledge between the two border communities.

The availability of efficient water transportation, such as speedboats and boats, facilitates the

movement of people and goods between Nunukan and Sebatik as well as to Kota Tawau. However, Indonesia's geographical disadvantage as an archipelagic country, with many remote locations and inadequate infrastructure, makes it easier for drug syndicates to smuggle illegal goods. Indonesia, with its numerous ports, has become a primary entry point for foreign goods, including narcotics, with approximately 80% of drug circulation occurring at sea.

On the other hand, many residents of North Kalimantan are involved in transnational crimes, such as drug smuggling from Malaysia through Sabah due to poor infrastructure and services in the border region of West Kalimantan. The conditions of infrastructure and services at the Indonesia-Malaysia border, especially in roads and transportation options, are concerning. According to the National Border Management Agency of Indonesia in, 2015 the border between Indonesia and Malaysia reaches approximately 2,004 kilometers, according on the island of Kalimantan.

The weak economy in border regions, especially in North Kalimantan, is a significant reason for locals engaging in transnational crimes, such as drug smuggling. North Kalimantan residents often act as drug couriers, with payments ranging from RM 8,000 to IDR 80 million per shipment from Sabah, Malaysia across the North Kalimantan border. This situation results in Indonesia not only being a transit point and market for narcotics, but also a location for the illegal production of narcotics and psychotropics.

Generational poverty is another factor that contributes to border communities' engagement in the global drug trade. Persistent poverty and low educational levels in border areas have a significant impact on their economies. There is a significant economic disparity between North Kalimantan and Sabah, Malaysia, with the Sabah population being more economically affluent. According to Thoumi (2014), factors such as poverty, income inequality, economic crises, and corruption contribute to the formation of criminal organizations and drug trafficking syndicates.

In addition to the internal issues outlined above, Indonesia also faces external challenges related to drugs. Indonesian police have identified various international drug syndicates involved in smuggling drugs in the country. These syndicates originate from various countries, including China, Iran, Nigeria, the Netherlands, and the Philippines, and operate routes to Malaysia and Hong Kong. Drug smuggling from these countries is not only diverse in type, but also increasing in quantity, indicating a shift in international security. The fact that these syndicates have continued to exist shows how they have been assimilated into the contemporary international political system.

Policy-makers and academics often overlook these countries' quantitative aspects and long-term resilience. This can be linked to sustained instability on the international stage. Drug-supplying countries operate within a framework that includes both internal and external dimensions. Their internal structures are frequently acknowledged by other nations and institutions. However, the interconnection between these internal and external dimensions often leads to distortions, extending the chaos in the existing international system (Kan, 2016).

Indonesia, with its vast territory and diverse entry points, is a prime target for international networks. In addition to official routes, illegal routes also facilitate drug smuggling. The lack of security personnel in border areas and Indonesia's large geographical size make the country vulnerable to cross-border criminal activities, such as drug smuggling, adding complexity to the issues faced by Indonesia in combating international drug trade.

From an international network perspective, it is clear that international syndicates smuggling drugs into Indonesia are closely related to major drug manufacturing centers worldwide. Areas such as the Golden Crescent, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkey, are known as major narcotic production regions. Similarly, the Golden Triangle region comprises Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar. Additionally, Latin America, especially Colombia, significantly contributes to cocaine production, providing approximately two-thirds of the total global production, which is then smuggled into the United States and Europe.

Meanwhile, in the context of efforts to combat drug smuggling on the border between North Kalimantan and Sabah, there are external constraints from the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM). Anti-drug cooperation between the Indonesian National Police (POLRI) and PDRM has not been running efficiently, as seen from the increasing number of drug cases uncovered and the amount of evidence seized. Although there are indications of cooperation and coordination between POLRI and PDRM, there is no concrete evidence of exposure to major drug networks. Moreover, although POLRI has submitted many "Wanted Lists" to PDRM regarding drug syndicates, the PDRM's response to this seems inadequate. The challenges in cross-border cooperation demonstrate the complexity and difficulties faced in efforts to combat the international drug networks operating in this border region.

All identified cases of methamphetamine (crystal meth) abuse have one commonality: they originate in Malaysia and enter Indonesia through the waters of Nunukan and Tarakan. The Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) seems inactive in addressing drug smuggling from Malaysia to Indonesia. The North Kalimantan maritime territory is very close to Tawau, Sabah, Malaysia; thus, Malaysian authorities should tighten their control over that maritime area. Indonesia and Malaysia reached an agreement in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of the General Border Committee of Indonesia–Malaysia between POLRI-PDRM at a meeting in Bali on May 19, 2005. This cooperation aimed to combat drug trafficking, especially methamphetamine, smuggled through the North Kalimantan and Sabah border areas, both by land and sea. However, drug smuggling in Tawau, Malaysia, continues without significant obstacles. The POLRI believes that if Malaysia demonstrates determination and hard work, Indonesia's efforts to combat drug trafficking will be more effective.

Various factors hinder the exchange of information regarding drug smuggling, including territorial disputes and conflicts, as well as anti-Malaysian sentiments among certain groups in Indonesia. To address this, in-depth understanding and intensive diplomacy are required. Moreover, the lack of technology exchange and joint training between the two countries in drug eradication efforts in border areas complicates the effectiveness of addressing this issue.

Cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia in combating drug smuggling through POLRI and PDRM is far from achieving the expected level of effectiveness that should provide security for communities on the border between North Kalimantan and Sabah. Various constraints and obstacles have resulted in suboptimal performance of this cooperation. Therefore, concerted effort and sustained commitment are required to enhance the effectiveness of this cooperation.

Researchers suggest that the North Kalimantan Regional Police should adopt the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for cooperation in handling drug crimes between POLRI and the Sabah Contingent of PDRM. Currently, a similar cooperative SOP is being executed by the East Kalimantan Regional Police with the Sabah Contingent of PDRM. This adaptation was intended to standardize drug crime-handling procedures in the border area between North Kalimantan and Sabah.

Cooperation in efforts to combat drug smuggling in the border region between North Kalimantan and Sabah by POLRI and PDRM can take examples from the bilateral cooperation between the United States and Mexico in the context of the Merida Initiative. The Merida Initiative cooperation involves foreign aid from the US Government to Mexico in efforts to combat international drug cartels in the border region. This model of cooperation can inspire POLRI and PDRM to strengthen their cooperation in combating drug smuggling on the Indonesia-Malaysia Border.

In addition to improving effective coordination and communication in anti-drug cooperation between North Kalimantan and Sabah by POLRI and PDRM, the Indonesian Government also needs to take concrete steps to manage its border regions. This includes aspects of security, economy, and social conditions.

The Indonesian Government should consider increasing the number of personnel assigned to border areas in order to strengthen surveillance and law enforcement. Furthermore, establishing large border posts at vulnerable drug smuggling sites is crucial. These posts can serve as effective operational bases for drug eradication.

Providing training and information technology equipment to POLRI personnel in border areas is necessary to enhance their ability to detect and combat illegal drug-related activities. The provision of facilities and infrastructure suitable for the geographical conditions of border areas is also essential for personnel to effectively perform their duties.

In addition, the Malaysian government's proactive role and sincere collaboration with the Sabah Contingent of PDRM in their coordinated efforts to uncover drug networks is crucial. Strong cross-border cooperation and close coordination between the two countries are crucial for addressing drug issues in the border regions of North Kalimantan and Sabah.

Conclusion

Collaboration between the Indonesian and Malaysian governments in efforts to combat drug smuggling in the border areas of North Kalimantan and Sabah has not yet reached the expected level of effectiveness for both nations. Numerous obstacles act as inhibiting factors in attempts to eradicate drug smuggling in these regions. These obstacles can be categorized into two main categories.

The first factor involved internal constraints that originated from Indonesia. This includes suboptimal management of land and sea borders, as well as a lack of adequate facilities and infrastructure in North Kalimantan Province. The limited involvement of the North Kalimantan community in drug eradication efforts is also a limiting factor. Furthermore, an insufficient number of law enforcement officers and supporting equipment has a negative impact on the effectiveness of anti-drug efforts.

The second factor encompasses external constraints related to the complexity of actors within the international drug network. Additionally, the lack of cooperative commitment from the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) to share information regarding efforts to combat drug smuggling from international drug networks is a significant obstacle.

Addressing these obstacles will require joint efforts from both countries, including enhanced coordination, investments in border management and infrastructure, and active community participation in supporting antidrug efforts. Moreover, stronger international cooperation and high commitment from all involved parties will be key to achieving the desired level of

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Darmansjah Djumala

Dissertation supervisor, providing suggestions or corrections to improve the manuscript.

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The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article [and/or] its supplementary materials.

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