

# The Role of the Indonesian Air Force in the Prevention of Drug Smuggling in Halim Perdanakusuma International Airport

## A Case Study

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### **Abstract**

The research is aimed to elaborate and to analyze the role of the Indonesian Air Force in preventing drug smuggling in Halim Perdanakusuma International Airport. Drug Smuggling which is classified as one of the trans-national crimes becomes a huge non-traditional threat for national security. This research employs a qualitative method. Two types of data were used in this study. Data and documents related to drug smuggling in Halim Perdanakusuma International Airport were used as secondary data, while an in-depth interview with related stakeholders and observation were used as primary data. The result of the analysis showed that the Indonesian Air Force specifically stationed at Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport plays an important role in securing the airport from such various threats as drug smuggling. The efforts for this purpose include placing the Indonesian Air Force personnel in the airport entry points, holding joint forces with the airport security, providing dog sniffers as well as training to improve the skills associated with the airport security and intelligence. Even though the Air Force has resources, personnel, and infrastructures for preventing drug smuggling threat that has now been transforming

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into a national security threat, it still needs to be supported by government policies implemented in the military operation other than war.

*Keywords: air force role, drug smuggling, airport*

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## **Introduction**

In general, national security means the basic need to protect and to secure the national sovereignty by endorsing the political power, economic power or military power to confront both internal and external threats<sup>1</sup>. The concept, then, emphasizes the government ability in protecting the country against territorial threats, which are defined as any efforts or events both coming from inside and outside and considered threatening the national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national security<sup>2</sup>. By nature, threats are classified into two major forms, i.e., military threats and non-military threats. Military threats can be defined as any organized form of threat using armed force that is potentially considered endangering the national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national security. Military threats might be in the form of aggression, territorial violation, armed rebellion; sabotage acts, espionage acts, terrorism, air, and sea security threats as well as communal conflict. On the other hand, non-military threats, also known as asymmetric threats, could be classified as threats using non-military tools and might endanger the national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national security. The threats might infiltrate the state ideology, politics, economics, social-culture, and technology<sup>3</sup>.

One of the non-military threats which currently becomes a quite major issue worldwide is drug threat. The spread of the drug abuse is significantly increasing and obviously becoming a serious threat for the nation. Although the law enforcement for the drug smugglers has been very strict, it does not correlate positively with the drug smuggling rate in Indonesia. This number can be seen from many drug smuggling cases that have been thwarted by the relevant authorities, whose perpetrators were either local people or expatriates.

The Indonesian Air Force as a part of the Indonesian Armed Forces is responsible for protecting the national security, including protection from the drug abuse threat. One of the roles that the Indonesian Air Force take in protecting the country from such threat is assisting with the airport security to prevent any types of smuggling via airports, utilized as commercial Airport called as Civil Enclave (Military

Airbase used for Commercial Flight). In accordance with the new function, airport defense and security are still taking into account. Halim Perdanakusuma Airport is stated to be a Commercial Airport as of January 10, 2014, to alleviate the delay and over-capacity problem of Soekarno Hatta International Airport<sup>3</sup>.

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Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport re-utilization brings about a side effect, one of which is drug smuggling possibilities with various methods and techniques. One of the revealed cases was the smuggling thwarted by the Indonesian Customs, National Narcotics Board and Indonesian Air Force authorities of 113 grams of Methamphetamine via UPS Cargo Service from Singapore bounded to Halim Perdanakusuma Airport. Another case was on 2016, when the Indonesian Customs along with National Narcotics Board, Indonesian Airforce and Indonesian Police successfully foiled the drug smuggling attempt by using Lego Kid toys. Over two days of investigations of the package, the toy filled with white powder was brought into the lab for further examination, and it was concluded that it was marijuana of 422 grams. During 2016 alone, 27 drug smuggling cases were revealed, 8 of which occurred in Halim Perdanakusuma Airport.

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Besides the mentioned drug smuggling discussed above, many other techniques are used for smuggling activities via Airport. Thus, the Indonesian Air Force authorities as a first contact guardian need to be more alert in running its role to prevent drug smuggling cases. Soekanto<sup>4</sup> explains that *role* is a dynamic indicator of a status owned by someone, while *status* itself is defined as a set of rights and obligations associated with a position. Therefore, based on the definitions, the Indonesian Air Force personnel should have an expanded role to prevent drug smuggling cases via the airport.

## **Literature Review**

### *National Security*

Soekanto<sup>4</sup> stated that a country could be classified as a safe country when it is not in a dangerous condition that may sacrifice its virtues to avoid war and, if necessary, utilize it to gain secure conditions. According to Soekanto<sup>4</sup>, security is related to environmental problems whereas life threats against certain collective unit issues are considered an existential threat. Based on the security issue criteria, Soekanto<sup>4</sup> divided security issues into five dimensions, i.e., political, military, economic, social and environment. Each of the criteria would hold

security unit, value and life sustainability characteristics, and various threats<sup>5,6,7</sup>.

Based on various sources of literature, Darmono et al.<sup>1</sup> defined national security as a basic need to protect and guard national interests by using political, economic and military power to encounter both internal and external threats. National interests, then, become the main factor of the concept of national security<sup>8,9</sup>. National interests are also further classified as the need to sustain and defend the existence of a country through economic and military power as well as diplomatic movements. The concept emphasizes the government's ability to protect its country's territorial integrity from both internal and external threats.

### *Security Threats*

Supriyatno<sup>10</sup> in the Defense White Book<sup>2</sup> explained that military and non-military threats would exist. Military threats are classified as the threats using armed forces that are quite well organized to put the integrity, sovereignty and national security of a country into danger. Military threats can be in the form of aggression, territorial violation, armed rebellion, sabotage, espionage, air and sea threats, and community conflicts. On the other hand, non-military threats are considered to endanger nation sovereignty, country integrity and also national security with its non-military factors<sup>11</sup>. These may range from ideological, political, and socio-cultural dimensions, information and technology to public safety.

### *Transnational Organized Crime*

Transnational crime (TNC) is also known as Cross-Border Crime. The concept was first introduced in the 90's during the United Nations Summit on Crime Prevention. In 1995, the UN identified 18 forms of transnational crime, namely money laundering, terrorism, theft of art and cultural object, theft of intellectual property, illicit arms trafficking, aircraft hijacking, sea piracy, insurance fraud, computer crime, trafficking in person, trade in human body parts, illicit drug trafficking, fraudulent bankruptcy, infiltration of legal business, corruption and bribery of public or party officials<sup>12,13,14</sup>.

The TNC often has de-stabilized the national security where it occurs. It is committed by individuals, groups and it either happens in local and global transactions. The Transnational crime is an act by organized groups of individuals with the purpose to earn an enormous amount of money both legally and illegally by trading items that would

give maximum profit with minimum risk, for example, weapon trading, violent crime, human trafficking, money laundry, blackmailing, pornography, prostitution, cybercrime. Transnational crime is not necessarily done by a group, but individuals instead. For example, cybercrimes are mostly committed by individuals and using minimum preparations, while the impact to the victim country is significant. Along the times, it has grown up into a transnational organized crime with more people and factors involved in it<sup>12</sup>.

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### **Research Methodology**

This research used a qualitative method. Moleong<sup>15</sup> explained that qualitative research aims to comprehend the phenomenon experienced by the research subjects, i.e., behaviour, perception, motivation, and action, all of which are holistically described using words and language in a certain context and using various natural methods.

The research used a case study approach. Creswell<sup>16</sup> explained that case study is found in many aspects, particularly in an evaluation in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a certain case. Most of the time it takes the form of programs, events, activities, and processes of one or more individuals. The case should have time boundaries, and the researcher collects complete information using various data collection procedures based on the bounded time.

One reason why the researcher used such a method is more on an intention to further analyze the Indonesian Air Force role in mitigating the drug smuggling by using various data resources and data collection techniques. The researcher also puts a lot of efforts to gain knowledge of drug smuggling conditions in Indonesia, especially those which occurred in Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport. The researcher also wants to find out the causes of the problem to comprehend the security system in Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport in mitigating the drug smuggling and to raise the level of the optimal role of the Indonesian Air Force to minimize the case for the airport and other airports in Indonesia.

The interviewees were chosen by using purposive sampling techniques in which the researcher selected the interviewees according to adjusted research considerations. Those are:

1. The Indonesian Air Force as a party which mostly understands and is also most responsible for mitigating drug smuggling activities of the Airport.

2. The Indonesian Air Force has the authorities in taking necessary actions related to the drug smuggling mitigations.
3. The Indonesian Air Force as a party which has a thorough understanding of the drug smuggling mitigation case.

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The data collection methodology used in the research were observations, in-depth interviews, literature reviews, and documentation reviews. Research data analysis was done using interactive data analysis which consists of three phases of collectively occurring events such as data reduction, data presentation, and verifications. In regards to data validation, the researcher used the triangulation of theories and resources.

### **Results and Discussion**

The drug is now becoming one of the deadly threats, and it has been a major concern for all the impacted parties, not to mention the Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport Authorities. Drug trafficking rate is greatly increasing, and the issue is considered as a major threat for all the people of Indonesia. Despite the strict law enforcement, it has not deterred the perpetrators, and they keep continuing to supply drugs to Indonesia. It is reflected on many drug smuggling cases revealed by Indonesian authorities, committed by the local people or the expatriates.

One access being utilized by the smugglers for their action is via the airport as recently mentioned by Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport Chief, First Marshall Pip Darmanto S.E during the interview with the researcher. Although a maximum security level has been applied in the airport, they still find ways to smuggle it. They even use a more sophisticated way to smooth out the business, for example, by swallowing and hiding it inside automotive spare parts and many more.

#### *Drug smuggling attempts via airport throughout Indonesia (2016–2018)*

During 2016–2018, there are 78 attempts (27 attempts in 2016; 40 attempts in 2017 and 11 attempts in 2018) by drug smugglers via airport throughout Indonesia with cocaine on the top list with more than 4 tonnes in one shot raid in Halim Perdana Kusuma Airport, followed by dried marijuana (88.525 kg) and methamphetamine (52 kg). Some cases like ecstasy have also been found although the number is not as high

as dried marijuana or methamphetamine. Interestingly, methamphetamine is always found during the operation even though the smugglers only carried it in small packages.

Of all airports in Indonesia, Hang Nadim International Airport of Batam and Sultan Iskandar Muda Airport of Banda Aceh are considered to have the highest rank for the drug smuggling attempts (18 cases for each), followed by Halim Perdana Kusuma (8 cases), Kuala Namu of Medan (5 cases) and Sultan Syarif Kasim of Pekanbaru (4 cases).

In mitigating the drug smuggling, Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport has deployed a sophisticated security system. It is also explained in the Regulation of Air Transport Directorate-General No. SKEP/2765/XII/2010 of the Standard Operating of Passenger, Aircraft Crew, Hand-Carried Luggage, Individual Security Checking.

Such a regulation describes that each passenger, aircraft personnel and individual entering the restricted area must hold the valid permit and security screening will be applied. The term Security Screening refers to a tool to detect weapons, explosive materials and dangerous items, and also other dangerous substances according to the law.

Security Screening is done by licensed security personnel of the aviation safety. Among that personnel are:

- a. Airport Security Personnel
- b. Air Transport Security Personnel
- c. Regulated Agent Security Personnel
- d. Flight Related Regulated Agent Security Personnel

Airport Security Personnel ensures that all passengers, aircraft crew, luggage and individuals that enter the restricted area and waiting area do not carry the prohibited items. Security Screening is applied in the Security Check Point (SCP) and divided into two areas (entry point to the check-in counter as the first Security Check Point and the entry point of boarding room as the second Security Check Point). The first Security Check Point is placed in the entry gate to the Counter Check-In area, and one screening lane must be available as the minimum requirement. The arrangement of the security equipment in the airport is as follows:

- a. The Walk-Through Metal Detector is placed next to recorded luggage x-ray instrument
- b. The minimum distance between the Walk Through Metal Detector and recorded luggage x-ray instrument is 50cm
- c. If there is more than one security lane available, then the minimum distance between two bars of WTMD is 60 cm

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- d. The minimum length of the Exit Belt including the roller is 250 cm. On the passenger side where they pass through, plexi-glass is installed.
- e. Plexiglas is installed as minimum as exit belt on length and as high as luggage x-ray tunnel instrument on height
- f. Next, to recorded luggage x-ray instrument, a desk is placed as a spot to examine the suspected material.
- g. The divider is given in between the bar of Walk-through Metal Detector and the cabin luggage x-ray instrument
- h. The divider is not a spot to place goods/luggage

Next discussion is the second Security Check Point in the entry gate of Boarding Room. The minimum requirements for this 2<sup>nd</sup> Security Check Point are Recorded Luggage X-ray instrument, Walk Through Metal Detector (WTMD), Hand Held Metal Detector (HHMD). The number of security lane might be adjusted to the number of pass-through passenger or goods, and other security equipment might be added as necessary.

The arrangement of the security equipment in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Security Check Point as followings:

- a. Walk Through Metal Detector is placed next to luggage x-ray instrument Minimum distance between the Walk Through Metal Detector and recorded luggage x-ray instrument is 50cm
- b. If there is more than one security lane available, then the minimum distance between two bars of WTMD is 60 cm
- c. The minimum length of the Exit Belt including the roller is 250 cm. On the passenger side where they pass through, plexi-glass is installed.
- d. Plexiglas installed as minimum as exit belt on length and as high as luggage x-ray tunnel instrument on height
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- g. The divider is given in between the bar of Walkthrough Metal Detector and the cabin luggage x-ray instrument
- h. The divider is not a spot to place goods/luggage

The Regulation of Air Transport Directorate-General No SKEP/2765/XII/2010 explains the airport security procedure in which the security crew who conducted the screening should be both male and female and their duties are as follows:



- a. To check the valid permit to the restricted area and the boarding room
- b. To manage, to check and to ensure that
  1. Luggage is placed on the right position on the conveyor belt of the x-ray instrument and ensures that there will be enough space between luggage.
  2. Coats, jackets, hats, belts, cell phones, watches, keys, and other metal-containing materials are checked through X-ray instrument.
  3. Laptops and other electronic devices with equal size are taken out from the luggage and must check through the X-ray.
  4. All liquids, aerosols, and gels are checked through the X-ray.
  5. All the passengers, aircraft crew, individual and luggage are checked through the Security Check Point (SCP).
- c. Queueing up the passenger, aircraft personnel and individual that about to screen

Airport Security Personnel who in charge as an X-ray Operator identifies the luggage preview on the monitor and categorize it as secured, suspicious or dangerous. The luggage is categorized as secured whenever no prohibited items are found. It is suspicious whenever the X-ray monitor shows a suspicious object; then the operator will inform the luggage examiner to gain more detail information of the suspicious object and conduct a manual search. It is categorized as dangerous whenever the monitor shows a bomb series/circuit, then the operator must immediately stop the conveyor and inform the supervisor coordinating with the Police.

The Airport Security personnel who are in charge of the luggage checking to conduct the checking for the suspicious material with the following steps:

- a. Ensure the belonging luggage ownership
- b. To order the luggage owner to open it while keeping an eye for their reactions.
- c. Ask for permission to conduct a search of the luggage while the luggage owner witnesses it.
- d. To conduct a thorough search inside out to find the suspected material informed by the X-ray Operator
- e. Whenever the search is done, the personnel will tidy up as before.
- f. Whenever the search would not be able to be conducted manually, then it would be checked separately using X-ray.

- g. Whenever the suspected material has been found, the luggage must go through x-ray re-checking.
- h. Whenever the monitor shows a black object, the object will be taken out from the conveyor, and manual examination conducted then after that will be re-checked using x-ray.

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Along with these regulations and operating procedures, the airport security is also provided by the Indonesian Air Force personnel based in Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport.

The Airport Chief, First Marshall Pip Darmanto, S.E during the interview said that the Indonesian Air Force plays a significant role in supporting the airport security crew, particularly in the drug smuggling mitigation. For this kind of purpose, the Indonesian Air Force places its member such as Intelligent Corps and Indonesian Air Force Military Police all the way from the Entry Gate up to inside the Airport.

The same thing also mentioned by Operational Chief of the Airport, Colonel (Aviator) Ali Gusman, S.T M.M, that in order to secure the airport, the Indonesian Air Force places its member in the entry gate of the airport. For the disclosed security, Indonesian Air Force places its Intelligence personnel with the AVSEC qualifications.

Whenever the drug smuggling case occurs, the Indonesian Air Force will be involved in the case handling. The Sniffer Dog corps also contributes to mitigating the case as this corps has the qualifications to detect harmful materials including the drugs. The sniffer dogs normally will be placed nearby the landed aircraft or the about to depart aircraft, and if necessary they will be brought during the airport patrol.

Aligned with the airport protection role of Halim Perdana Kusuma Airport, the Indonesian Air Force personnel also provide training for the airport security in increasing their level of ability particularly the intelligence capability of the Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport security crews.

The Marshall also emphasizes that the role in securing the airport area could be improved further, In addition, if it is possible, the Indonesian Air Force may secure the non-military airport in the near future so that the security level of all the airports will get improved.

Other than the airport authority, there is another institution which gains benefit from the role of the Indonesian Air Force in protecting airports, i.e., National Narcotics Board. During the interview, the Chief of National Narcotics Board revealed that the involvement of the Indonesian Air Force personnel in securing the airport including

the protection from the drug smuggling case could minimize the case. Therefore, he expects that this role should be expanded not only to the military airport but also to the non-military airport (Civil Airport).

Based on the above explanation, it is obvious that one access to drug smuggling is via Halim Perdana Kusuma International Airport. Specifically, in 2015 and 2016 a couple of attempts were foiled by the authorities, while in 2017 until now the occurrence is still zero. However, this cannot be considered as a good indicator of reduced drug smuggling due to the fact that the case may still exist but get undetected.

In securing the airport from the drug smuggling attempt, the internal security system has been applied by developing airport standardizations. These include the licensed personnel so when they are in charge, they would possess the ability to perform it optimally. Secondly, the sophisticated airport security instruments are updated by the airport authority to smoothen the process. Thirdly, it is fully supported by the regulation as it is stated in Regulation of Air Transport Directorate-General No SKEP/2765/XII/2010. Thus by obeying it, the airport security would have a seamless process to mitigate the drug smuggling attempt.

Halim International Airport is a co-joint Airport between commercial and military airports using the Indonesian Air Force facility. Therefore, it has a significant role in mitigating particularly cases related to drug smuggling and this kind of role is well acknowledged by the airport authority. The role of the Indonesian Air Force in mitigating the drug smuggling may vary in several ways, i.e., firstly, placing the personnel in the entry gate of the airport and intelligence personnel involvement along with the airport security crew; secondly, using sniffer dog service during the airport patrol; thirdly, providing the training particularly the intelligence and airport security training for the airport security.

Some institutions, for example, Halim Perdana Kusuma Airport Authority and National Narcotics Board expect that the Indonesian Air Force role in mitigating the drug smuggling threat can be expanded further. They hope that the Air Force has the authority to secure the civil airport so that the threat can be minimized.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the above explanations, we can draw the following conclusions. The Indonesian Air Force has a major role in securing Halim

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Perdana Kusuma International Airport from various threats particularly the threat related to drug smuggling. The role is carried out by placing its respected personnel on the very first entry gate of the airport, involving the intelligence personnel, employing sniffer dogs and providing intelligence and security-training for the airport security crew of Halim Perdana Kusuma Airport.

## Notes

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