

## Indonesia's Strategy to Strengthen National Security in the Sebatik Island Border Area

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze Indonesia's Strategy to Strengthen National Security in the Sebatik Island Border Area. The research method used is qualitative descriptive with a systematic literature review approach. The results of the study show that Sebatik Island faces security threats such as smuggling, economic dependence on Malaysia, and the fading of nationalism. Limited infrastructure and lack of synergy between institutions exacerbate the vulnerability of this region. Therefore, the strategy to strengthen national security must be multidimensional, involving military, social, economic, and diplomatic aspects. The synergy of the TNI, the National Police, local governments, and related agencies is very important so that security management runs effectively and integrated. The development of integrated infrastructure such as security posts and communication facilities must be accelerated.

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## INTRODUCTION

Sebatik Island, located on the direct border between Indonesia and Malaysia in the North Kalimantan region, is strategically positioned as well as vulnerable to various forms of security threats. This region is one of the most sensitive points in the context of Indonesia's national defense and sovereignty. Its location directly adjacent to the state of Sabah, Malaysia, creates complex geopolitical, social, and economic dynamics. Therefore, Indonesia's strategy in strengthening national security in the region must be designed comprehensively, not only through conventional military defense approaches, but also taking into account aspects of community welfare, local economic development, and social stability (Nugroho et al., 2024).



**Figure 1. Sebatik Island**

*Source : Sebatik News 2021*

Figure 1 shows the location of Sebatik Island, an island located on the border between Malaysia (the state of Sabah) and Indonesia (the province of North Kalimantan). The island is administratively divided into two, with the northern part being controlled by Malaysia and the southern part by Indonesia. Its strategic location and direct boundary line between the two countries makes Sebatik Island an area prone to various security challenges, including smuggling, border violations, and illegal cross-border activities. In the context of this study, the map emphasizes the importance of strengthening military presence, improving border infrastructure, and bilateral cooperation in territorial surveillance to ensure Indonesia's sovereignty and national security are maintained in the border area. In Law No. 34 of 2004 concerning the TNI, Article 7 states that the implementation of the TNI's main tasks can be carried out through Military Operations for War (OMP) and Non-War Military Operations (OMSP). In the OMSP, it is stated that the TNI's task is to secure the border area.

**Table 1. Number of Drug Cases and Goods**

Year	Number of Cases	Evidence (kg)
2023	7	15
Jan–Jun 2024	4	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>

Source : BNN, 2023

The data in the first table shows the number of cases and evidence related to illegal activities on Sebatik Island. Throughout 2023, there were 7 cases with a total of 15 kg of evidence, while in the period from January to June 2024 there have been 4 cases with 8 kg of evidence. If totaled, during this time span there were a total of 11 cases with a total of 23 kg of evidence. This figure shows that Sebatik Island is still a vulnerable route to smuggling or cross-border crime that can threaten Indonesia's national security, especially in border areas.

**Table 2. Access to Public Services on Sebatik Island (2022)**

Service Type	Coverage (%)
24-hour electricity	62%
Access to clean water	54%
Healthcare facilities	47%
Paved roads	60%

Source : BPS Nunukan (2022)

Table 2 illustrates the limited access to public services on Sebatik Island in 2022. Only 62% of the population has access to 24-hour electricity, 54% have access to clean water, 47% have adequate health facilities, and 60% enjoy paved roads. This condition reflects the weakness of basic infrastructure which should be an important foundation in strengthening the country's presence in border areas. The data indicates that Sebatik Island still faces serious challenges in terms of security and welfare, which are closely intertwined. The high number of smuggling cases shows the need to strengthen surveillance and security forces in border areas. On the other hand, the low coverage of public services such as electricity, clean water, health facilities, and road infrastructure reflects the weak presence of the state in ensuring the welfare of border communities. Therefore, in the context of Indonesia's Strategy to Strengthen National Security in the Sebatik Island Border Area, an integrated approach is needed that not only emphasizes military and law enforcement aspects, but also infrastructure and public service development as a tangible form of the country's presence, in order to build national resilience from the grassroots level.

Factually (*das sein*), Sebatik Island faces various challenges. First, the high activity of smuggling narcotics and illegal goods is a serious threat. Based on TNI Navy data from 2023 to mid-2024, there were 11 cases of drug smuggling with a total of 23 kg of methamphetamine. In addition, there were 12 cases of smuggling of other illegal goods such as used clothes, cosmetics, liquor, and basic necessities through rat routes along the border. Second, the increase in illegal immigration and unrecorded border crossings is a troubling problem. The Nunukan Immigration Office recorded a 30% increase in illegal crossers in 2022 compared

to the previous year, which not only had legal implications, but also created pressure on the social and economic facilities of local communities. Third, the Sebatik people, especially in the north, show a high dependence on Malaysia in terms of trade, health services, and education. The study of Fabeil et al. (2020) stated that 65% of the basic needs of Sebatik residents are met from the Tawau market, Malaysia, showing the weak local economic independence which ultimately has an impact on the national identity and economic resilience of border communities.

Fourth, territorial conflicts and shifting boundary markers are still sensitive issues. The 2023 report of the Directorate of Topography of the Indonesian Army recorded that there were several boundary markers that were shifted or damaged. In August 2023, the governments of Indonesia and Malaysia conducted a joint survey to improve and verify the condition, but a continuous monitoring system is still needed. Fifth, as an area that is included in the 3T category (Disadvantaged, Frontier, and Outermost), Sebatik Island experiences limitations in basic services and infrastructure. BPS Nunukan data (2022) shows that only 47% of villages have access to proper health services, access to electricity covers 62% of the area, and clean water 54%. This limitation worsens the socio-economic condition of the community and weakens national resilience in terms of people's welfare (Sulaiman, 2023).

Based on existing conditions, *the das sollen* or ideal conditions that should be achieved are the formation of a holistic and integrative national strategy in the management of border areas. This strategy needs to combine the strength of the TNI, Polri, BIN, the National Border Management Agency (BNPP), as well as local governments and other technical ministries. Border surveillance systems should be strengthened with the use of technologies such as drones, sensors, and intelligence database integration. In addition, local economic development must be part of the security strategy with the empowerment of MSMEs, facilitation of legal trade, and the development of community-based agriculture and fisheries as concrete steps to break dependence on Malaysia. On the other hand, accelerating the development of basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, clean water, and health services is absolutely necessary so that border communities do not feel marginalized. Strengthening education and nationality campaigns is also important to foster identity and loyalty to the state.

From the exposure between *das sein* and *das sollen*, it can be seen that there is a fairly wide gap. First, the lack of cross-sectoral and institutional coordination between the central, regional, and inter-agency governments causes border policies to run sectorally and fragmented. Second, the security approach applied still tends to be conventional, without touching the root of the community's social and economic problems. Third, there is no early detection system and quick response to the dynamics of threats that arise in border areas, both traditional and non-traditional. Fourth, the limited budget, infrastructure, and human resources in the 3T region cause the security strengthening strategy to be carried out optimally and sustainably. This gap or gap is an important basis for developing a new strategy that is more adaptive and responsive in strengthening

national security on Sebatik Island (Siregar, C. N., Rahmansyah, S., & Saepudin, E. 2019).

By paying attention to these conditions, it becomes clear that strengthening national security on Sebatik Island is not solely about increasing military power, but also requires the presence of the state in all aspects of people's lives. A comprehensive approach through economic development, public services, strengthening national identity, and technological integration will make the region not only safe, but also prosperous and resilient. This strategy is crucial to be implemented to make Sebatik Island a symbol of the country's real presence at the forefront of Indonesia's northern border.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In the context of strengthening national security in border areas such as Sebatik Island, Indonesia's defense strategy is not only militaristic, but also includes a defense diplomacy approach oriented towards regional cooperation and institutional strengthening. As explained by Cottey and Forster (2009), defense diplomacy is a strategic instrument that uses military and defense resources to support foreign policy and national security through activities such as joint training, information exchange, and military dialogue. Although this concept is more often discussed in the context of disputed areas such as the North Natuna Sea, its principles remain highly relevant to be applied in other land and sea border areas, including Sebatik, which also borders directly with Malaysia and faces transnational security threats.

Sarjito and Perwita (2024) emphasized that modern defense diplomacy includes three main elements, namely confidence building, capacity building, and defense industry development. In the Sebatik context, trust-building through bilateral cooperation with Malaysia in coordinated patrols and surveillance of border areas is an important key in preventing the escalation of minor conflicts such as shifting of boundary markers or violations of maritime areas. Meanwhile, strengthening the capacity of the TNI, Bakamla, and other border agencies such as Immigration and Customs can be done through joint training and technology transfer in monitoring smuggling-prone areas.

Furthermore, Syawfi (2009) stated that defense diplomacy aims to pursue national interests, strengthen foreign relations, and reduce uncertainty through strategic communication. In the Sebatik context, tensions due to cross-border illegal activities and economic dependence on Malaysia can be minimized with a balanced diplomatic and military approach. For example, Indonesia can initiate cross-border dialogues at the local level, joint-border commissions, and the development of jointly managed border special economic zones as part of confidence building.

Thus, Indonesia's strategy in strengthening national security on Sebatik Island must include an integrated approach between strengthening hard power through limited militarization and a soft power approach through defense diplomacy. Practices such as those carried out by Indonesia in the North Natuna Sea can be a reference in implementing defense diplomacy as a strategic tool to maintain sovereignty while fostering good relations with neighboring countries, while still emphasizing the principles of non-confrontation and mutually

beneficial cooperation. This approach is in line with the overarching goals of Indonesia's border management: maintaining territorial integrity, maintaining regional stability, and improving the welfare of border communities in a sustainable manner.

### ***Comprehensive Security Theory***

This theory emphasizes that security is not only concerned with military aspects, but also includes political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions (Buzan, B., Waever, O., & de Wilde, J. 1998). Comprehensive security requires the state to protect its citizens comprehensively, including in vulnerable border areas (Acharya, 2001). Relevance to Title: Sebatik Island faces not only military or territorial threats (e.g., smuggling and illegal border crossings), but also economic backwardness, dependence on Malaysia, and weak basic social infrastructure. Therefore, Sebatik's national security strategy must be comprehensive combining hard security and soft security approaches, such as economic development and social capacity building.

### ***Critical Geopolitics Theory***

This theory sees that state policies towards border areas and international conflicts are strongly influenced by the socio-political construction and power narratives that develop Ó Tuathail, G. (1996). The state forms the perception of a particular region (such as borders) as a "homeland of the country", a "vulnerable area", or a "buffer zone", which then determines how policies are implemented (Agnew, J. 2003). Relevance to the Title: In the case of Sebatik Island, the perception that this area is the "vanguard of the Republic of Indonesia" also shapes the security strategy carried out by the state. Critical geopolitical approaches help explain why countries allocate resources or develop certain strategies, as well as how Sebatik's geographical position affects bilateral relations with Malaysia and Indonesia's bargaining position in the region.

Based on the causal relationship between dependent variables and independent variable, the researcher has provided a framework generated for this research below:

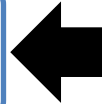
## INPUT

The urgency of strengthening the security of Sebatik Island is high because it is directly adjacent to Malaysia, prone to border violations, smuggling, and illegal activities. Weak surveillance opens a loophole for terrorists and cross-border criminals who threaten sovereignty. Development inequality triggers social dissatisfaction and the potential for separatism.



## PROCESS

Engaging in bilateral and multilateral defence dialogues.



1. Comprehensive Security Theory
2. Strategy



## OUTPUT

Strengthening regional coordination to address illegal incursions.



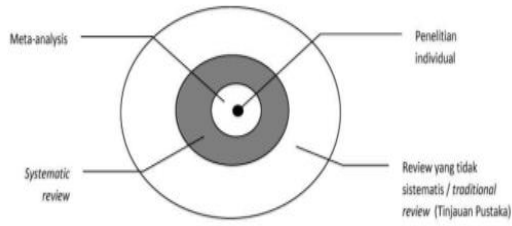
## OUTCOMES

1. increased surveillance of border areas as well as decreased illegal activities and cross-border threats.
2. National stability is maintained and the trust of border communities in the state is getting stronger.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to identify, evaluate, and synthesise previous scholarly works related to national security strategies and border management, particularly in the context of Indonesia's efforts in Pulau Sebatik. The SLR process follows a structured approach: defining research questions, developing a review protocol, conducting systematic searches of academic databases, selecting relevant studies, extracting key data, and integrating the findings. Through this method, the study aims to build a comprehensive understanding of how Indonesia has implemented strategic measures such as military deployment, infrastructure development, cross-sectoral coordination, and community empowerment—to strengthen national security and sovereignty in vulnerable border regions like Pulau Sebatik.



Gambar 3. Kedudukan Metodologi Systematic Review dalam Metodologi yang Lain

**Figure 2. SLR Systematic**

*Journal Source : (Siswanto, 2010)*

The SLR process identifies, evaluates, and synthesises all relevant prior research concerning national security strategies and border management efforts, particularly in strengthening Indonesia’s presence and control in Pulau Sebatik. This includes collecting and analysing data from scholarly sources such as Google Scholar, Mendeley, and ResearchGate, ensuring that the reviewed studies are both nationally and internationally indexed. The core steps in this review consist of formulating research questions, conducting structured literature searches, selecting relevant academic articles, analysing qualitative insights, applying quality control measures, and compiling the final report. The SLR method proves valuable in synthesising theoretical and practical perspectives on border security, offering a balanced foundation for understanding how strategic, military, and socio-political instruments are employed to safeguard Indonesia’s sovereignty and stability in border regions like Pulau Sebatik (Siswanto, 2010).

# Systematic Literature Review

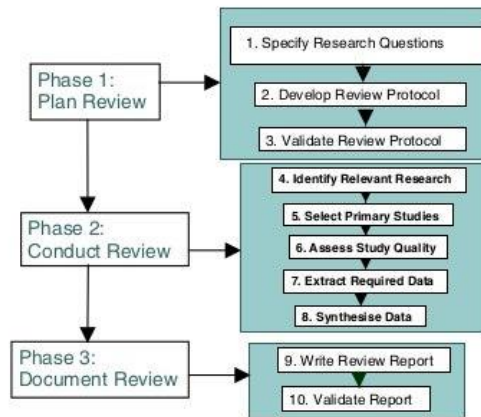


Fig. 1. Systematic literature review process.

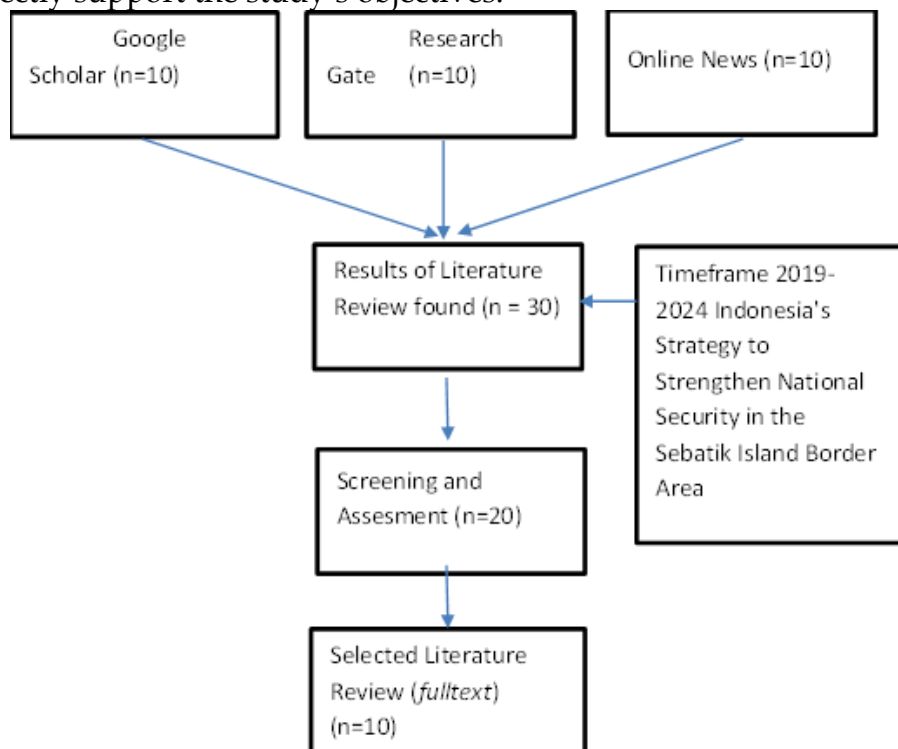
**Figure 3. SLR Process**

*Journal Source : (Siswanto, 2010)*

### Stages of Data Collection in SLR

This research is designed to answer strategic questions related to Indonesia's efforts in strengthening national security through integrated border management and defence strategies in Pulau Sebatik. Systematic literature searches were conducted through credible sources such as Google Scholar and ResearchGate using keywords including "border security," "Pulau Sebatik," "national defence strategy," and "perbatasan Indonesia-Malaysia." To ensure data quality, the study prioritised journal articles indexed nationally and internationally. Literature selection and screening were based on relevance to the research questions and the methodological robustness of each publication.

In the final stages, data analysis and synthesis were conducted to identify key themes such as Indonesia's security posture in border regions, inter-agency coordination, the role of military presence, and local development as a security enhancer. These findings were summarised to develop strategic insights into how Indonesia addresses border vulnerabilities, reinforces sovereignty, and fosters stability in Pulau Sebatik. The journal selection process followed systematic steps to ensure the inclusion of high-quality, peer-reviewed sources that directly support the study's objectives.



**Figure 4. Steps of Literature Review**

*Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2024*

Based on the diagram presented, the literature review process focuses on analysing Indonesia's strategic efforts to strengthen national security in the border area of Pulau Sebatik. The review incorporated sources from Google Scholar (n=10), ResearchGate (n=10), and online news portals (n=10), resulting in 30 relevant studies identified within the timeframe of 2019–2024. These studies were further screened and assessed for quality and relevance, narrowing the selection to 20 items, with 10 full-text sources selected for in-depth analysis.

This process highlights the rigorous approach undertaken to ensure the literature directly supports the research aim evaluating the effectiveness and limitations of Indonesia’s security strategies in addressing cross-border threats, enhancing territorial integrity, and improving coordination among stakeholders in Pulau Sebatik. The selected sources provided comprehensive insight into military presence, inter-agency collaboration, infrastructure development, and socio-political approaches used to maintain stability in the border region.

## RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the results of the analysis and search of journals and online news, the researcher conducted mapping to facilitate the literature review process presented in the following table:

**Table 3. Previous Research**

No.	Researcher & Year (APA)	Heading	Methodology	Key Findings
1	Siregar, C. N., Rahmansyah, S., & Saepudin, E. (2019)	National Security Threats in Indonesia's Border Areas: A Case Study of Sebatik and Tawau Islands	Qualitative; documentation studies, FGD, interviews with the TNI/Polri	Identify national security threats at the Sebatik Island border, including narcotics smuggling, economic dependence on Malaysia, and the potential fading nationalism of border communities.
2	Rani, F. (2012)	The Indonesian Government's Strategy to Improve the Security of Border Areas According to the Perspective of Social Development	Qualitative; Analysis of policies and social approaches to development	Emphasizing the importance of a social approach in border security strategies, including community empowerment and social infrastructure development.
3	Beatrix, B. (2020)	Prosperity Approach as a Strategy to Strengthen Security in Border Areas: A	Qualitative; Case Study	Proposing a prosperity approach as a strategy to strengthen border security, focusing on meeting the basic

		Case Study of Sebatik Island		needs of border communities.
4	Rani, F. (2012)	The Indonesian Government's Strategy to Improve the Security of Border Areas According to the Perspective of Social Development Security of Border Areas According to the Perspective of Social Development	Qualitative; Analysis of policies and social approaches to development	Emphasizing the importance of a social approach in border security strategies, including community empowerment and social infrastructure development.
5	Pugu, M. R., Yani, Y. M., & Wardhana, W. (2019)	Infrastructure Development at the Papua Border: Efforts to Ensure Human Security and Counter Illegal Cross-Border Trade	Qualitative; Case Study	Highlighting the importance of infrastructure development in border areas as an effort to ensure human security and counter illegal cross-border trafficking.
6	Rani, F. (2012)	The Indonesian Government's Strategy to Improve the Security of Border Areas According to the Perspective of Social Development	Qualitative; Analysis of policies and social approaches to development	Emphasizing the importance of a social approach in border security strategies, including community empowerment and social infrastructure development.
7	Beatrix, B. (2020)	Prosperity Approach as a Strategy to Strengthen Security in Border Areas: A Case Study of Sebatik Island	Qualitative; Case Study	Proposing a prosperity approach as a strategy to strengthen border security, focusing on meeting the basic needs of border communities.

8	Rani, F. (2012)	The Indonesian Government's Strategy to Improve the Security of Border Areas According to the Perspective of Social Development	Qualitative; Analysis of policies and social approaches to development	Emphasizing the importance of a social approach in border security strategies, including community empowerment and social infrastructure development.
9	Beatrix, B. (2020)	Prosperity Approach as a Strategy to Strengthen Security in Border Areas: A Case Study of Sebatik Island	Qualitative; Case Study	Proposing a prosperity approach as a strategy to strengthen border security, focusing on meeting the basic needs of border communities.
10	Rani, F. (2012)	The Indonesian Government's Strategy to Improve the Security of Border Areas According to the Perspective of Social Development	Qualitative; Analysis of policies and social approaches to development	Emphasizing the importance of a social approach in border security strategies, including community empowerment and social infrastructure development.

Source : Data Processed from Various Sources, 2024

**Table 4. Research Grouping**

Yes	Results of Analysis	Correlated	Not Correlated
1	potential border security threats on the island Sebatik	7 Research	3 Research
2	Indonesia's Strategy to Strengthen National Security in the Sebatik Island Border Area	4 Research	6 Research

Source : Data Processed By Researchers from Various Sources, 2024

### ***Potential Border Security Threats on Sebatik Island***

Sebatik Island is one of Indonesia's border areas that has a high level of vulnerability to various forms of security threats. Its strategic location, directly adjacent to the Sabah region, Malaysia, makes this island an important point in the context of geopolitics and national security. This condition is reinforced by weak supervision, limited infrastructure, and development inequality between the Indonesian and Malaysian sides, which opens up loopholes for various illegal cross-border activities.

#### ***Smuggling and Illegal Trade***

One of the most obvious threats on Sebatik Island is the practice of smuggling goods and narcotics. Research by Siregar, Rahmansyah, and Saepudin (2019) revealed that unofficial routes spread along the border are used by criminals to smuggle narcotics, basic necessities, and other illegal goods. The absence of adequate border fences and weak security patrols are the main factors causing the rise of this activity. These activities not only threaten legal and public health aspects, but also have the potential to damage the local economic order because they cause price distortions and unfair competition.

#### ***Economic Dependence on Malaysia***

The socio-economic conditions of the people in the Sebatik area are greatly influenced by economic activities with neighboring countries. Many residents of Indonesia's Sebatik Island work or trade cross-border to Malaysia, especially in Tawau. This dependence increases the risk of the fading of the spirit of nationalism and national identity. In the context of security, such economic dependence can create fragile conditions against foreign influences, both directly and indirectly (Siregar et al., 2019).

#### ***The Potential for the Fading of Community Nationalism***

The high socio-economic interaction with Malaysia, followed by the lack of penetration of nationalism programs and the development of national character, causes people on Sebatik Island to potentially experience a national identity crisis. Beatrix (2020) emphasized that strengthening the sense of belonging to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) is very important to prevent border communities from feeling closer to neighboring countries. This is part of a non-military threat that has the potential to undermine national cohesion and become an entry point for the infiltration of foreign cultures.

#### ***Limitations of Basic Infrastructure and Services***

The limited infrastructure on Sebatik Island, especially in the education, health, and transportation sectors, exacerbates the condition of vulnerability. In their research, Pugu, Yani, and Wardhana (2019) emphasized that the development of border infrastructure is very important to ensure *human security*. The imbalance in development between Indonesia and Malaysia makes the Indonesian Sebatik community feel marginalized, which in the long run can trigger social discontent and increased vulnerability to ideologies or external influences that are detrimental to the country.

### ***Lack of Strength and Security Synergy***

From the defense and security aspects, the limited number of TNI/Polri personnel, the lack of the main weapon system equipment (alutsista), and the lack of synergy between security agencies weaken the detection and response system to threats in this region. Rani (2012) highlights the importance of a social approach in the strategy of strengthening border security, including empowering communities to participate in guarding their territory. However, this approach has not been fully implemented optimally on Sebatik Island.

### ***Welfare Approach as a Prevention Strategy***

In line with the findings of Beatrix (2020), *the prosperity approach* is a strategic alternative that can be used by the government in reducing threats in border areas. This strategy emphasizes that fulfilling basic needs of the community such as education, health, and employment will create a sense of security and loyalty to the state. Thus, security is not only seen from the militaristic aspect, but also from sustainable social development.

### ***Government Efforts in Countering Threats***

The Government of Indonesia through various programs such as the construction of Cross-Border Posts (PLBN), border village programs, and strengthening the role of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) seeks to increase the country's presence in this region. However, these efforts are often hampered by budget constraints, weak inter-agency coordination, and lack of local community participation. Rani (2012) emphasized that a comprehensive social development approach should be the main cornerstone of the border security strategy. This means that strengthening security cannot only rely on the TNI/Polri, but must also involve the community as a subject of development.

Potential border security threats on Sebatik Island include economic, social, and military dimensions. Smuggling, cross-border economic dependence, and national identity crises are real threats that require multi-sectoral address. The government needs to strengthen non-traditional security approaches, with a focus on building community welfare and empowering local communities. Thus, the security strategy on Sebatik Island is not only repressive, but also preventive and participatory.

### ***Indonesia's Strategy to Strengthen National Security in the Sebatik Island Border Area***

The border area of Sebatik Island is one of the areas that has a high level of vulnerability to various forms of national security threats. This region is directly adjacent to Malaysia so it has the potential for conflicts that must be managed properly by the Indonesian government. To strengthen national security in the region, the government has developed various strategies involving multidimensional approaches that include military, social, economic, and diplomatic aspects. These strategies are designed to not only physically secure territory, but also strengthen national sovereignty and sovereignty through strengthening state existence and empowering local communities.

First, in terms of defense and security, Indonesia is intensifying the presence of security forces in border areas through increasing the number and quality of TNI and Polri personnel. Siregar, Rahmansyah, and Saepudin (2019) stated that increasing routine patrols and joint security operations is a real step to suppress illegal activities such as smuggling of narcotics and illegal goods. In addition, the construction of security posts and military infrastructure along the border line on Sebatik Island has become a priority. This not only strengthens the early detection and rapid response capabilities, but also demonstrates the country's strong presence in the region. The readiness of security forces in anticipating non-military threats is also strengthened through training and improvement of the ability to detect social threats such as radicalism and infiltration of foreign cultures.

In addition to conventional security approaches, social and economic development strategies are important pillars in strengthening national security on Sebatik Island. Rani (2012) emphasized that the social approach to development is the key in creating stability in the border area. The government encourages the empowerment of local communities through various infrastructure development programs such as education, health, and sustainable transportation facilities. Improving people's welfare is expected to be able to reduce economic dependence on neighboring countries, especially Malaysia, thereby strengthening people's loyalty and nationalism. Beatrix (2020) added that the prosperity approach not only helps meet the basic needs of the community, but also encourages the creation of a sense of belonging and responsibility for border areas. This is the basis for preventing social threats that can weaken regional sovereignty.

Furthermore, the development of facilities and infrastructure in border areas also received special attention from the government. Pugu, Yani, and Wardhana (2019) stated that infrastructure development such as roads, bridges, communication facilities, and PLBN (State Cross Border Post) has a positive impact in supporting economic activities and community mobility while increasing the state's presence. This increased accessibility not only facilitates security surveillance, but also opens up opportunities for local economic development that has an impact on improving the welfare of border residents. The government also strengthens regulations and supervision of cross-border activities to prevent illegal trade and tighten controls on incoming goods that can endanger national stability.

In addition, defense diplomacy and cross-border cooperation are integral parts of Indonesia's strategy to maintain security on Sebatik Island. Indonesia is actively conducting bilateral dialogue and multilateralism with Malaysia to build understanding and cooperation in the management of border areas. According to Siregar et al. (2019), the coordination and exchange of intelligence information between the two countries has minimized the potential for conflict and increased the effectiveness of handling common problems such as smuggling and territorial boundary violations. This cooperation also fosters trust between the security forces of the two countries, which can ultimately strengthen the stability

of the border area. This diplomacy strategy complements hard defense efforts with a soft approach that ensures the creation of sustainable security conditions.

Furthermore, the empowerment of local communities is a key aspect that is strengthened through community involvement in maintaining the security of their area. This participatory approach not only increases social awareness and responsibility, but also strengthens the community security network that spearheads surveillance in border areas. Rani (2012) highlights the importance of community empowerment in border security strategies through training, socialization, and economic empowerment programs. This encourages the creation of an independent and resilient community to threats that may arise from within and outside the region. The government also promotes cultural and civic education programs to instill the values of nationalism and patriotism in the young generation of the border, thus becoming the first bulwark against destructive foreign influences.

In the implementation of this strategy, there are various challenges that must be faced by the government, including budget limitations, coordination between institutions that are still not optimal, and social resistance from some people who have long depended on the cross-border economy. Geographical constraints and difficult terrain conditions also complicate development and monitoring efforts. However, with comprehensive and integrative policies and the support of modern technologies such as the use of drones, electronic surveillance systems, and satellite communications, the effectiveness of securing border areas can continue to be improved (Pugu et al., 2019).

To face these challenges, there needs to be synergy between the central government, the regions, the security forces, and the local community. Strategies oriented towards sustainable security development must accommodate socio-cultural and economic aspects as the foundation for strengthening regional sovereignty. The government also needs to strengthen affirmative policies to improve the welfare of the community and foster a strong sense of nationalism in the border area of Sebatik Island. Thus, the resulting national security is not only physical and militaristic, but also holistic and inclusive.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Potential security threats on Sebatik Island include smuggling, economic dependence on Malaysia, and the fading of community nationalism. Limited infrastructure and lack of security synergy exacerbate the vulnerability of this region. Therefore, the government needs to prioritize the welfare and community empowerment approach as a comprehensive and participatory prevention strategy to strengthen border security holistically.

Indonesia's strategy in strengthening national security in the border area of Sebatik Island prioritizes a multidimensional approach involving military, social, economic, and diplomatic aspects. Synergy between strengthening the security forces, infrastructure development, community empowerment, and bilateral cooperation with Malaysia is the main key to maintaining regional sovereignty. Despite facing various challenges, the implementation of comprehensive and participatory policies is able to create sustainable security and strengthen national integrity as a whole.

The following are policy recommendations that can be taken by the Indonesian government to strengthen national security in the border area of Sebatik Island. First, the government needs to strengthen synergy between related institutions, such as the TNI, the National Police, local governments, and other agencies so that security management in border areas can run effectively and integrated. Furthermore, accelerating the development of integrated infrastructure is important, including the construction of security posts, transportation facilities, and communication facilities that support mobility and surveillance of border areas.

In addition, the empowerment of local communities must be a priority through social and economic programs that can reduce people's dependence on neighboring countries while fostering a sense of nationalism and active participation of the community in maintaining security. The government is also encouraged to optimize the use of modern surveillance technology, such as drones, electronic surveillance systems, and satellite communications, so that detection and response to various threats can be carried out quickly and precisely.

Last but not least, defense diplomacy and regional cooperation with Malaysia must continue to be strengthened through regular dialogue and intelligence exchanges to suppress potential conflicts and enhance mutual security in the border area. Finally, the government needs to provide affirmative policies and sustainable funding by allocating special budgets to support various security efforts while promoting sustainable social and economic development. By implementing these policies comprehensively, it is hoped that national sovereignty on Sebatik Island will be stronger and sustainable stability and prosperity will be created for the border communities.

#### **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Further research on national security strategies in the Sebatik Island border area needs to expand the analysis by integrating multidimensional approaches, including the social, economic, and cultural aspects of border communities. The next study must examine in depth the role of synergy between government agencies, the TNI, the National Police, and local communities in creating an effective and sustainable security system. In addition, it is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of infrastructure development programs and community welfare in reducing vulnerability to threats such as smuggling, social conflicts, and the fading spirit of nationalism. The research should also consider the dynamics of cross-border relations with Malaysia and its impact on regional security and sovereignty. Information technology-based approaches and strengthening local intelligence are also worth focusing on so that security responses are faster and more accurate. Thus, the results of the research can be the basis for the government to formulate a comprehensive strategic policy in strengthening national security and sovereignty on the border of Sebatik Island.

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