

Strategic Imperatives of National Defense System: The Ideal Indonesian Defence Posture Development Program in the Natuna Islands

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Abstract

This article aims to explore the imperative of developing an ideal defence posture for the Natuna Islands, a strategically significant region for Indonesia's sovereignty and geopolitical interests. The proposed defence posture program involves a comprehensive strategy encompassing strengths, capabilities, and titles across both military and non-military dimensions. In terms of strength, a robust naval presence, technological advancements, and international collaborations are pivotal components. Modernizing naval assets, employing cutting-edge surveillance technologies, and engaging in joint exercises with global partners enhance Indonesia's maritime strength. Capability aspects extend beyond military prowess to encompass economic resilience, diplomatic finesse, and environmental stewardship. Investments in naval and air defence capabilities are complemented by economic development projects, sustainable resource management, and diplomatic initiatives, collectively fortifying the Natuna Islands' overall capabilities. The title aspects involve legal recognition and psychological alignment. Diplomatic efforts focus on securing international acknowledgment of Indonesia's sovereignty over the Natuna Islands, adhering to international laws and fostering positive relationships with neighbouring nations. Domestically, creating a sense of national identity and ownership contributes to the psychological title, aligning public sentiment with strategic imperatives. In the military domain, a holistic defence posture involves modernizing air and ground forces, establishing robust cyber defences, and ensuring the overall readiness of Indonesia's armed forces. Non-military aspects of the defence posture development program emphasize economic growth, diplomatic collaboration, and environmental sustainability. Leveraging the strategic location of the Natuna Islands for economic development, engaging in diplomatic dialogues with neighbouring nations, and implementing sustainable practices contribute to a comprehensive defence strategy.

Keywords: Defence Posture, Natuna Islands, Sovereignty, Geopolitical Interests, Strength Aspect, Capability Aspects, Title Aspect, Diplomatic Initiatives



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INTRODUCTION

Current geo-political scenario, it is imperative for the Indonesian government to assess the potential costs and risks that may arise in the future, especially with regard to China's increasing aggression in the South China Sea (SCS) and the emergence of AUKUS. This assessment should take into account several factors, such as potential threats, scenario planning, required military capabilities, defence posture development program plan, and anticipation of changes that may occur. The North Natuna Sea is a body of water located north of the Natuna Islands, which are part of Riau Islands province. The area is rich in natural resources, including oil, gas, and fishery resources. In recent years, the North Natuna Sea has been at the centre of a territorial dispute between Indonesia and China, which claims a large

portion of the South China Sea, including the North Natuna Sea, based on its so-called "Nine-Dash Line" claim. According to defence white paper in anticipating the development of the maritime security situation of our territory, particularly in Natuna islands and Merauke territories, the increase of the development of defence force in these areas is necessary as part of the development of the defence posture as a whole based on the National Long-Term Development Planning.



Figure 1. Map showing China's nine-dash line and Indonesia's territorial waters around the Natuna Islands

Source: <https://international.sindonews.com/berita/1489726/40/mengenal-nine-dash-line-alasan-china-mengklaim-natuna>

Indonesia, which is not a claimant state in the South China Sea disputes, has also objected to China's Nine-Dash Line claim, as it overlaps with Indonesia's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the North Natuna Sea as shown in above figure. (Supriyanto, 2016) Indonesia asserts that its sovereignty over the Natuna Islands and their surrounding waters is based on historical evidence, as well as international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). (Luerdi & Wahyudi, 2021). China's aggressive actions, such as building military infrastructure facilities on Fiery Cross Reef Island, have raised tensions in the region and could potentially escalate into a conflict. Therefore, the Indonesian government needs to assess the potential risks and costs associated with these actions and develop a strategy to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, a qualitative research methodology was adopted, Further, focusing on the quality of exploring phenomena that result from the interpretation of previously published material through literary studies. In order to create a journal report, the author uses Indonesian total defence system as a significant tool.

RESULT RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

Indonesia National Defence System

Indonesia National defence formulated within a total defence system. A defence that is established involving all citizens, regions, all the resources and national infrastructure, which early prepared and held in total, integrated, directed and continued by the Government. Our system integrates military defence and non-military defence, through efforts to build strength and national defence capability that is strong and respected and has a high deterrent power.

Early preparation means the defence system is built sustainably and continuously to deal with various types of threats which cumulatively can be grouped in the form of a factual and non-factual threat as shown in figure 2. (Ministry of defence of the republic of Indonesia, 2015)

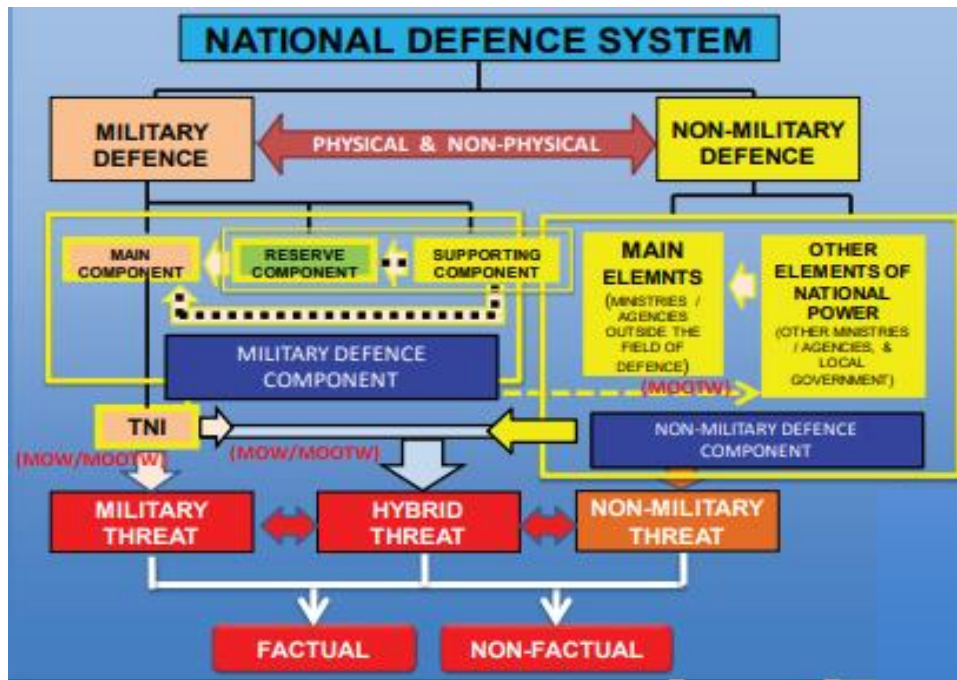


Figure 2: The total defence system integrates military and non-military defence, through efforts to build national defence strength and capability
Source: Indonesian Defence White Paper

Proposed Defence Posture Development Program in the Natuna Islands in Terms of Strength, Capability and Title Aspects, both Military and Non-Military

The development of military defence posture, both the Main Component, Reserve Component and Supporting Component, is directed at realizing the integration of the three dimensions through the development of NCW. Proposed Defence Posture Development Program for the Natuna Islands, focusing on the military component (Main, Reserve and Supporting) and Non-military component (Main element and Other national element of power) considering strength, capability, and title aspects are as follows.

Main Military Component

Strength Aspect:

- a. Force Structure Optimization: Assess the current force structure and optimize it based on the specific defence needs of the Natuna Islands. It is need to expand Navy coast guard and Air force component considering mostly engaging maritime domain. This may involve determining the appropriate size and composition of land, sea, and air forces to ensure an effective and efficient defence posture. This ensures that the IDF personnel in the Natuna Islands are appropriately sized and aligned with the specific defense requirements of the region. Proportional growth should also be considered to accommodate the evolving security landscape and operational demands.
- b. Personnel Recruitment and Retention: Adopt measures to draw and keep qualified individuals for the Natuna Islands' military component. This involves providing military troops and their families with quality-of-life improvements, competitive wage packages, and chances for professional advancement.

- c. Force Projection and Mobility: Investing in the appropriate naval ships, aircraft, and land-based vehicles will increase the capabilities for force projection and mobility. Purchasing new equipment from local defence industries that can react quickly to possible threats and keep a continual presence in the region is part of this.

Capability Aspect:

- a. Maritime Surveillance Intelligence: Strengthening surveillance and intelligence capabilities is crucial for maintaining situational awareness in the Natuna Island region. This involves enhancing the military's capabilities in gathering and analysing information, conducting reconnaissance missions, and monitoring activities in the area. Strengthen maritime surveillance capabilities through the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), modern radar systems, and patrol boats. This enhances situational awareness and allows for thorough marine domain surveillance due major threat coming from the sea.
- b. Maritime and Air Defence Systems: Given the strategic location of Natuna Island in the South China Sea, it is essential to develop robust maritime and air defence capabilities. This includes the deployment of naval vessels, aircraft, and coastal defence systems to deter potential threats and ensure the security of the region. In order to defend against prospective aerial attacks, create and implement contemporary air defence systems in the Natuna Islands. This might include air defence artillery, radar networks, and surface-to-air missile systems.
- c. Diplomatic Engagement: Supporting defence capabilities in the Natuna Island region also involves diplomatic efforts to assert Indonesia's sovereignty and interests. Engaging in diplomatic dialogues, international forums, and asserting legal claims can reinforce Indonesia's position and garner support from the international community.
- d. Specialized Training and Skill Development: Offer military soldiers stationed in the Natuna Islands tailored training programs. To help them properly carry out their tasks, this involves training in disciplines including maritime operations, air defence, surveillance, intelligence, and special operations.

Title Aspect:

- a. Recognition and Promotion: To encourage military troops in the Natuna Islands, put in place a merit-based recognition and advancement system. Recognize and honour exceptional leadership, performance, and defence related achievements.
- b. Joint Operations and Interagency Cooperation: Encourage cooperation and communication among the (TNI) Army, Navy, and Air Force as well as other pertinent agencies engaged in Natuna Islands defence activities. To guarantee perfect cooperation throughout operations, conduct collaborative training programs, simulations, and exercises.
- c. Defence Diplomacy: Strengthen defence diplomacy efforts to enhance partnerships and collaborations with regional and international allies. This includes participating in joint military exercises, exchanging knowledge and expertise, and coordinating defence strategies to address common security challenges.

Military Reserve Component

Strength Aspect:

- a. Reserve Force Recruitment and Training: Develop a comprehensive recruitment and training program to attract and train individuals for the military reserve component in the Natuna Islands. This includes targeted recruitment campaigns, specialized training programs, and incentives to encourage participation.

- b. Reserve Force Structure: Determine the optimal structure and size of the reserve force based on the specific defence needs of the Natuna Islands. This may involve organizing reserve units by specialization, such as land, sea, and air, to enhance their effectiveness and versatility.
- c. Reserve Force Integration: Establish mechanisms for integrating the reserve force with the regular military components. This includes joint training exercises, drills, and coordination mechanisms to ensure seamless collaboration and interoperability during defence operations.

Capability Aspect:

- a. Reserve Force Equipment and Resources: Provide the necessary equipment, resources, and infrastructure to support the capabilities of the reserve force. This may include access to training facilities, communication systems, and essential supplies needed for reserve operations.
- b. Skill Development and Readiness: Conduct regular training and skill development programs for the reserve force to enhance their readiness and effectiveness. This includes maintaining proficiency in key military tasks, such as marksmanship, tactical manoeuvres, and operational procedures.
- c. Reserve Force Specializations: Identify specific areas of specialization within the reserve force, such as medical support, engineering, or logistics. Develop specialized training programs and establish partnerships with relevant civilian organizations to leverage their expertise and resources.

Title Aspect

- a. Reserve Force Recognition and Benefits: Provide recognition and benefits for members of the reserve force to acknowledge their contribution and commitment. This includes opportunities for career advancement, access to healthcare services, and support for their families.
- b. Reserve Force Integration in defence Planning: Include the reserve force in defence planning processes to ensure their perspectives and capabilities are considered. This involves active participation in scenario planning, resource allocation, and decision-making related to the defence posture in the Natuna Islands.
- c. Reserve Force Leadership and Command Structure: Establish a clear leadership and command structure for the reserve force, including the appointment of reserve force officers who can provide guidance, mentorship, and coordination within the reserve component.

Military Supporting Component

Strength Aspect

- a. Support Personnel Recruitment: Develop a comprehensive recruitment program to attract qualified individuals for various support roles in the military component in the Natuna Islands. This includes positions in administration, logistics, maintenance, intelligence, and communications.
- b. Training and Skill Development: Provide specialized training programs to enhance the skills and capabilities of support personnel. This includes technical training, proficiency in relevant software and systems, and knowledge of military support operations especially maritime support operation.
- c. Support Infrastructure Development: Invest in the development of support infrastructure, such as maintenance facilities, supply depots, communication networks, and administrative

buildings. This ensures efficient support operations and enhances the overall readiness of the military component.

Capability Aspect

- a. **Logistics and Supply Chain Management:** Establish robust logistics and supply chain management systems to ensure the timely and efficient delivery of resources, equipment, and supplies to the military component in the Natuna Islands. This includes inventory management, transportation networks, and maintenance capabilities.
- b. **Communication and Information Systems:** Enhance communication and information systems to facilitate seamless coordination and information sharing between different military units and supporting components. This includes secure and reliable networks, encrypted communication systems, and information management tools.
- c. **Technical Support and Maintenance:** Develop technical support capabilities to ensure the proper functioning and maintenance of military equipment and systems. This includes trained technicians, repair and maintenance facilities, and access to spare parts and technical documentation.

Title Aspect

- a. **Recognition and Career Development:** Implement recognition programs and career development opportunities for support personnel. This includes performance-based rewards, professional development courses, and opportunities for advancement within the support component.
- b. **Collaborative Planning and Coordination:** Foster collaboration and coordination between the military support component and other military units. This involves regular meetings, joint planning exercises, and effective communication channels to ensure seamless integration and support.
- c. **Standard Operating Procedures:** Develop standardized operating procedures for various support functions to ensure consistency, efficiency, and interoperability within the military component. This includes protocols for administrative tasks, logistics management, and maintenance operations.

Non-Military Main Element Component

Strength Aspect

- a. **Inter-Ministerial Collaboration:** Foster inter-ministerial collaboration and coordination between relevant government agencies, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Transportation, and Ministry of Communication and Informatics. This ensures a cohesive and integrated approach to non-military defence efforts in the Natuna Islands.
- b. **Resource Allocation:** Allocate sufficient resources to the respective ministries and agencies to enhance their capacity to support non-military defence initiatives. This includes funding for research and development, infrastructure development, training programs, and specialized personnel.
- c. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage with relevant stakeholders, including local communities, academic institutions, NGOs, and industry representatives, to leverage their expertise, knowledge, and resources in supporting non-military defence efforts.

Capability Aspect

- a. **Policy Development:** Develop comprehensive policies and guidelines to guide the involvement of non-military ministries and agencies in defence related activities in the

Natuna Islands. This includes defining roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms, as well as establishing clear objectives and targets.

- b. **Research and Development:** Invest in research and development initiatives to enhance the technical capabilities and knowledge base of the non-military main element component. This includes conducting studies, fostering innovation, and exploring emerging technologies that contribute to non-military defence efforts.
- c. **Infrastructure and Resource Management:** Develop and maintain critical infrastructure and resources necessary for non-military defence initiatives. This may include the development of port facilities, maritime surveillance systems, environmental monitoring capabilities, and telecommunications infrastructure.

Title Aspect

- a. **Capacity Building:** Provide training and capacity-building programs for personnel within the non-military ministries and agencies to enhance their understanding of non-military defence concepts, policies, and procedures. This includes specialized training on topics such as maritime security, environmental protection, resource management, and crisis response.
- b. **Collaboration Frameworks:** Establish collaboration frameworks and mechanisms, such as inter-agency working groups, task forces, and joint exercises, to facilitate coordination and cooperation among the non-military main element component. This promotes effective communication, information sharing, and joint planning.
- c. **Leadership and Coordination Structures:** Designate key officials within each ministry or agency to oversee and coordinate non-military defence initiatives. This includes providing them with the necessary authority, resources, and support to effectively carry out their roles.

Non-Military Other Elements of National Power Component

Strength Aspect

- a. **Inter-Agency Collaboration:** Foster collaboration and coordination between relevant ministries, agencies, and local government entities, such as the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Ministry of Culture and Education, and local administrations.
- b. **Resource Allocation:** Allocate sufficient resources, funding, and personnel to the respective ministries, agencies, and local government entities involved in non-military defence initiatives.
- c. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage with local communities, civil society organizations, academia, private sector, and other relevant stakeholders to promote their active participation and collaboration in non-military defence efforts.

Capability Aspect

- a. **Economic Development and Resilience:** Support economic development programs that enhance the resilience and sustainability of the Natuna Islands. This includes promoting diversified industries, sustainable tourism, fisheries management, renewable energy, and promoting local livelihoods to reduce dependency on external factors and contribute to the overall defence posture.
- b. **Environmental Protection and Resource Management:** Develop and enforce policies and programs that prioritize the protection of the environment, natural resources, and ecological balance in the Natuna Islands. This includes implementing measures to combat illegal fishing, preserving marine biodiversity, sustainable resource management, and climate change adaptation initiatives.

- c. Education and Awareness: Strengthen education and awareness programs to promote a sense of national security, resilience, and preparedness among the local population. This includes integrating defence and security education into the curriculum, conducting awareness campaigns on emergency response, disaster management, and promoting a culture of security consciousness.

Title Aspect

- a. Local Government Leadership and Coordination: Strengthen the role of local government in overseeing and coordinating non-military defence efforts in the Natuna Islands. This includes appointing dedicated officials responsible for defence-related activities, establishing coordination mechanisms, and fostering cooperation between local government and relevant ministries and agencies.
- b. Cross-Sector Collaboration: Facilitate collaboration and information sharing between different sectors, including government, academia, private sector, and civil society organizations. This promotes a holistic and inclusive approach to non-military defence initiatives, ensuring the effective utilization of resources and expertise.
- c. Public-Private Partnerships: Encourage public-private partnerships to support non-military defence initiatives in the Natuna Islands. This includes leveraging the resources, expertise, and capabilities of the private sector to enhance infrastructure development, technology utilization, and community resilience programs.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the development of an ideal defence posture for the Natuna Islands demands a multifaceted approach that recognizes the complexities of contemporary security challenges. The proposal addressing strengths, capabilities, and titles across military and non-military domains, underscores the intricate interplay between security, economic resilience, and diplomatic finesse. The Natuna Islands, strategically positioned, serve not only as a stronghold of national security but also as a beacon of sustainable development and strategic diplomacy in the region. By fortifying naval assets, modernizing defence capabilities, and engaging in international collaborations, Indonesia can ensure a robust defence posture that deters potential threats. Moreover, the recognition of titles, both legal and psychological, is pivotal for asserting Indonesia's sovereignty over the Natuna Islands. Diplomatic efforts aimed at securing international acknowledgment and fostering a sense of national identity domestically create a cohesive narrative that strengthens the nation's strategic imperatives. In the military domain, the holistic defence posture outlined involves not only modernizing armed forces but also establishing resilience in the face of emerging threats. The non-military dimensions, encompassing economic growth, diplomatic collaboration, and environmental sustainability, align with Indonesia's commitment to a comprehensive and balanced approach to security. As Indonesia navigates the complex geopolitical landscape, the proposed defence posture provides a roadmap for not only safeguarding territorial integrity but also for fostering regional stability and prosperity. It is a testament to the nation's commitment to evolving security paradigms, sustainable development, and strategic diplomacy in the ever-changing dynamics of the 21st century. Ultimately, the Natuna Islands stand as a symbol of Indonesia's resilience, strategic vision, and proactive engagement in shaping its own destiny on the global stage.

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