

"Mama Tikus" A Case Study of Illegal Trade And Smuggling at The Napan Border Nusa Tenggara Timur-Indonesia and Oekusi Enclave-Timor Leste

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Abstract

This article aims to provide an overview of the dynamics of women in Napan Village, North Central Timor Regency, in engaging in illegal trade and smuggling activities through informal routes with traders from the Oekusi Enclave, RDTL, hence earning the nickname "Mama Tikus" (Rat Mama). The trade conducted through these informal routes involves various commodities, including non-subsidized manufactured goods and local agricultural and plantation products. In response to pressure from "Mama Tikus" and other members of the community, the local government has implemented a responsibility policy with mechanisms agreed upon by these traders, allowing them to conduct their transactions smoothly. Furthermore, the perspective of Caroline Lesser & Evdokia Moise-Leema categorizes the illegal trade and smuggling of commodities in the Napan area into three categories: Category A: Informal/unregistered traders or firms operating entirely outside the formal economy, including individuals like "Mama Tikus," who engage in economic activities without formal registration as traders but conduct trade and transactions with parties from Oekusi-RDTL. Commodities traded include a thread for traditional weaving, tamarind, porang, and cowhide, as well as local agricultural and livestock products. Category B: Formal/registered firms fully evading trade-related regulations and duties, such as avoiding official border crossing posts. This category pertains to non-subsidized manufactured goods traded by merchants without going through customs or via informal routes. Examples include soap, toothpaste, instant noodles, cooking oil, electronics, flour, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, and other commodities.

I. Introduction

Globalization has spurred openness, turning border areas between countries, previously mere backdoors, into attractive regions for international trade and promoting inter-country commerce ¹. The flow of various commodities has led to rapid shifts of goods from one region to another. The bustling legal trading activities passing through customs have also caused the clandestine movement of goods across borders, evading customs control, posing significant threats to the economy, and fueling smuggling developments (Andriichenko et al., 2020). Additionally, the increased threat of disease transmission in the livestock sector and animal trade has emerged (Beltran-Alcrudo et al., 2019). Illegal Cross Border Trade (ICBT) and smuggling encompass a variety of commodities, including drugs, narcotics, timber, animals, and other goods ².

The Indonesia-East Timor Democratic Republic (RDTL) border has been constructed along the "Red Belt" Eastern border, stretching from Motaain in Belu Regency to Motamasin in Malaka Regency, with 2 International Border Crossing Points (PLBN) at Motaain and Motamasin, as well as the "Red Belt" Western border, extending from Wini in North Central Timor (TTU) Regency to Oepoli in Kupang Regency, also with 2 National Border Crossing Points (PLBN) at Wini and Napan, while the maritime border lies with Alor Regency.

Napan Village is located on the border between Indonesia and the Oekusi Enclave. With the establishment of Timor-Leste as a separate political entity, Oekusi, which was previously part of Ambeno District in East Timor Province, automatically separated from Indonesia. The border between Napan Village and the Oecusse Enclave spans only 500 meters, and a modern and integrated National Border Crossing Point (PLBN) has been built there. In addition to population movement between regions, there are various issues related to meeting basic needs, locally referred to as "belly issues" (demand for basic needs and food), economic problems, humanitarian issues, trade, needs, scarcity of basic necessities, and efforts to gain profits. There are also pleas from families in the Enclave who are in need. As part of the separate RDTL, the Oekusi Enclave is far from the mainland, and the RDTL government officials must pass through the Motaain border, enter Indonesian territory, reach Atapupu, then enter the North Central Timor (TTU) region and pass through the Wini National Border Crossing

¹ Mohd Ajis et al., "Smuggling of Migrants in Malaysia: The Case Study of Illegal Immigrants in the Northern Region 71 Smuggling of Migrants in Malaysia: The Case Study of Illegal Immigrants in the Northern Region," *Tamkang Journal of International Affairs* 23 (February 28, 2021): 71–118, [https://doi.org/10.6185/TJIA.V.201907_23\(1\).0002](https://doi.org/10.6185/TJIA.V.201907_23(1).0002).

² Emmanuel Akyeampong, "Diaspora and Drug Trafficking in West Africa: A Case Study of Ghana," *African Affairs* 104, no. 416 (July 1, 2005): 429–47, <https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adi015>.

Point to reach Oecusse. Therefore, the distribution of goods from the mainland of RDTL to the Oecusse Enclave requires a long journey ³. The Oecusse Enclave is not yet able to produce basic manufactured goods on a daily basis, but it can produce agricultural, plantation, and livestock products, such as rice and other organic agricultural commodities, meaning they are free from artificial fertilizers. Therefore, a significant portion of agricultural commodities can be fulfilled, but for daily necessities such as soap, toothpaste, food, thread, cigarettes, and other daily necessities, they are highly dependent on Indonesia, especially border areas like Napan in North Central Timor Regency (TTU), East Nusa Tenggara (NTT).

The presence of these conditions has led to cross-border trade through illegal channels (ICBT) and smuggling between the residents of Napan and the inhabitants of the Oekusi Enclave ⁴. Furthermore, the situation is exacerbated by the high intensity of blood relations, brotherhood, and kinship ties, which are so close that mutual assistance is provided in exchange for either US dollars or through bartering with agreed-upon equal values by both parties. This assistance is also driven by humanitarian motives to fulfill the needs of their relatives in the Oekusi Enclave.

This study aims to explore and analyze the dynamics of illegal trade (ICBT) and smuggling at the border of Oekusi Enclave between the communities of Napan, TTU, Indonesia, conducted by women or mothers known as "Mama Tikus", as well as the people of Oekusi Enclave, RDTL. Several questions addressed in this research include: how is illegal trade and smuggling conducted at the border?; what commodities are traded illegally and smuggled?; what activities characterize them as "Mama Tikus"?; and what is the policy implemented by the local government? The objectives of this study include understanding the activities of illegal trade and smuggling, the commodities involved, the payment system and currencies used, the term "Mama Tikus", and the form of the implemented policy

2. Research Method

The research method employed in this study is qualitative research with a case study approach, where the case examined and investigated is the illegal trading and smuggling in the Napan Region, TTU, by women who are part of the western red belt area bordering Oekusi Enclave, RDTL.

³ Peter Reuter and Davin O'Regan, "Smuggling Wildlife in the Americas: Scale, Methods, and Links to Other Organised Crimes," *Global Crime* 18, no. 2 (April 3, 2017): 77–99, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17440572.2016.1179633>.

⁴ O Shafey et al., "Case Studies in International Tobacco Surveillance: Cigarette Smuggling in Brazil," *Tobacco Control* 11, no. 3 (September 2002): 215–19, <https://doi.org/10.1136/tc.11.3.215>.

The key informant or primary source of information is Mrs. Merry, who is a native resident of the Napan area and is one of the main perpetrators of illegal trading and smuggling. Data collection is conducted through in-depth interviews conducted at her home in the Napan Village, TTU Regency.

2. Results and Discussion

Trading and Smuggling Activities in Napan

The field findings reveal that illegal trading (ICBT) and smuggling activities along the border are driven by opportunities or chances to earn income, the motive of profit, and a sense of humanity arising from kinship relationships⁵. It was revealed and expressed that "because of our hunger, we dare to do illegal things, why illegal? Well, if it's illegal, don't look at it as illegal" (Interviewee: interview conducted in Napan on December 2, 2021). Furthermore, it was openly stated, "don't look at the negative side, but please take a little bit of the positive side, why do women also dare to do illegal activities? At that time, we dared to do illegal things because of the opportunity, what opportunity? My relative's farm is next door and then I work on the farm here, they also work on the farm here, out of humanity, they asked for food and I cannot refuse" (Interview with Interviewee: Napan, December 2021). The interviewee then emphasized that "oh, so they shouted from there 'can you bring food? I have a little value, even if I don't have any value, we can barter, my labor⁶.' So their labor comes to work in my farm and then I don't pay them because I have to earn dollars so we barter, so there is an illegal side to it but there is also a positive side of mutual assistance." With the ongoing developments, there is a need for economic value and kinship ties that cannot be ignored, such as "they ask Mama Merry to bring cooking oil, soap, here we have one ton of tamarind that we can barter," of course, it cannot be refused or ignored. Furthermore, my relatives need it, they want to buy it, and they need money to fulfill their needs, so even though it's illegal from a state perspective, we prioritize the positive side of humanity. Most of them need basic necessities from us and because they are our blood relatives, when they ask, we cannot refuse from a humanitarian perspective, it's impossible, it's impossible, so whatever the country does to restrict it, we still find a way because they are our relatives.

Furthermore, the informant stated, "Yes, but we never intentionally intended to violate borders, never, never, but because the situation demands it and there is an opportunity, then no one would refuse the dollar," she said. The garden they

⁵ Shafey et al.

⁶ Ian Peck, "Removing the Venom from the Snakehead: Japan's Newest Attempt to Control Chinese Human Smuggling," n.d.

cultivate has been divided into two sides, one side is located in Indonesia's territory and the other side is in the territory of Oekusi Enclave (RDTL). Additionally, they are close relatives, both biological siblings and first cousins, with very close kinship ties. The informant, her family, and relatives communicate via mobile phones with Timor Leste (Telemor) or "Simpati" numbers and then agree to meet at their respective adjacent gardens. This leads to trade where the party in Timor Leste orders various commodities needed, while the Indonesian side provides the products. If the Timor Leste side does not have money, then their labor is used as payment for the desired commodities or products. Another way is through cooperation in making a woven product, where the informant brings yarn and the family members in RDTL weave, and the results are distributed based on pre-determined agreements ⁷.

The Commodities Traded at the Border of Napan-Oekusi

The products or commodities traded between the residents of Indonesia and Oekusi Enclave (RDTL) can be categorized as follows: Non-subsidized Factory Commodities, consisting of everyday necessities such as various brands of kretek and non-kretek cigarettes, instant noodles, cooking oil, flour, soap, toothpaste, milk, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, and other daily necessities. Subsidized Factory Commodities from Indonesia include petroleum products (e.g., kerosene, diesel, gasoline) and government-subsidized rice and sugar. Local Commodities include tamarind, rice, traditional woven thread, candlenut, cattle, and transportation services for education, where they send their children to school. Yes, they still come to school here and study in Kefamananu, so there are students from Timor-Leste, where education is also one of their basic needs that they cannot obtain in Oekusi. Due to this consideration, they prefer Indonesia, and when they come, they use the transportation services we provide, which is considered one of the service commodities that generate income.

Trade Activities Along "Rat Street"

The year 1999 was marked by a referendum won by the pro-independence people of East Timor to gain independence, subsequently leading to the separation of East Timor Province into the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (RDTL), which resulted in a wave of population movements from the former East Timor province and from Indonesia to East Timor. This migration was accompanied by the abandonment of acquired properties such as houses, crops, and other valuable belongings that could not be taken along, as well as the separation from relatives, including in-laws, siblings, cousins, and close relatives, to start a new

⁷ Brad Williams, "The Criminalisation of Russo-Japanese Border Trade: Causes and Consequences," *Europe-Asia Studies* 55, no. 5 (July 2003): 711-28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966813032000086846>.

life. Rice fields, once the main source of income, could no longer be accessed due to being separated in the neighboring country, and the same applied to livestock and plantation lands. This unwanted situation led to the loss of livelihoods and the receipt of social assistance from the Indonesian government and international donor agencies. Due to the interactions and relationships between the women in Napan and their relatives in the Oekusi Enclave, there was an exchange and provision of products/commodities needed by both parties. During transactions, these women were apprehended by the North Central Timor Police Resort (Polres) and detained, prompting protests from them as expressed, "I was taken there, sir, and I challenge the police chief to pay for my child's school fees. Please ensure full supervision there so that the outcomes can be beneficial. Please, Mr. Police Chief, and the MUSPIDA should mediate with Timor-Leste so that these outcomes can be enjoyed by the community. Don't just talk in the city about other matters, and lastly, corruption⁸. It's better to come and open roads in the villages because all the assets are here. For example, someone brings a ton of tamarind commodities and then requests a barter, and if we refuse, it's impossible. That's where it happens. That's why the informant said, 'Illegal is fine, you can view it through illegal lenses, but the positive side is that it provides a livelihood for us.' So when we were called 'mouse moms,' we were happy, but we're not sewer rats. We are dignified rats⁹. Everyone, including officials who come to speak, says, 'Mothers at the border are walking the backdoor, mouse moms,' because we use backdoor routes, even though it's a path from the past to the present, a garden path. So, when we meet, we are called 'mouse moms.' 'Yes, congratulations, the mouse mothers have arrived,' but we are proud. It's okay; we accept it because that's how it is. That's how the perpetrators continue to make money. I'm called a mouse, and I'm happy because I get money to feed my children and parents. I'm a mouse, but I'm not corrupt. I'm a mouse, but I don't harm the country. I just take a shortcut because it passes through my garden."

Free Trade Covered by Local Government

Due to pressure from the women who were detained in Napan, they were taken to the capital of North Central Timor Regency (TTU), Kefamananu. As a result, discussions were initiated to meet with MUSPIDA-TTU. Eventually, a face-to-face meeting took place, as Mama Merry stated: "Finally, the situation forced us, the women, to meet with MUSPIDA TTU, thank God we were accepted, and the Napan border market was opened."

⁸ M Wooldridge et al., "Quantitative Risk Assessment Case Study: Smuggled Meats as Disease Vectors," *Revue Scientifique et Technique (International Office of Epizootics)* 25 (May 1, 2006): 105-17, <https://doi.org/10.20506/rst.25.1.1651>.

⁹ Irma Sari et al., "Handling People Smuggling Crimes in Border Areas: Batam City Case Study," ed. G. Jameson et al., *BIO Web of Conferences* 70 (2023): 04003, <https://doi.org/10.1051/bioconf/20237004003>.

Although the local government does not have the authority to open a free market, due to the insistence of the women who regularly cross the border for trading, a request for the opening of the Napan border market was granted, with jointly agreed-upon mechanisms.

The implemented mechanism was as follows: officers stationed at the Indonesian border and officers at the Timor Leste border were on standby. At exactly eight o'clock in the morning, everyone was allowed to enter by presenting their documents. Consequently, trading commenced within the neutral zone between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. In this market, most of the participants were women and men from Kefa, who brought household items and fabrics, and they were also referred to as "dark-skinned people" or outside traders, specifically referring to the mothers. Mama Merry and her friends were part of this group. Their belongings were either loaded onto cars or carts, and they spread them out. By nine o'clock, the officers began announcing that the market had started.

Those coming from Timor Leste, Oekusi, come to shop, and then we from here also shop. Now, whoever has or deals with three currencies does it relaxedly. Using three currencies plus bartering, the law of bartering still applies until now. Why is there bartering? Because the three circulating currencies are already set: the dollar is global, then the rupiah, and then the sentafo. Sentafo is specifically for Timor Leste, so it is only valid at the border. It doesn't work in Kefa or Kupang; it's only in the border area and back. Because of the difficulty in obtaining dollars and sentafo, we use the barter system, and surprisingly, the barter system is more advantageous.

Then, all these activities, thank God, started to go well after they finished, right at one o'clock. During the trading activities, everything was sold, including food, and packed rice. So, whoever was hungry could eat. Moreover, one of the prerequisites we proposed for opening this market was as a gathering place. So, some people just come to meet and greet; they bring souvenirs. So, with their families, they find shade, sit, and eat, so that place becomes truly multifunctional as a market, as a bartering place, as a place for money changers for dollars. All of this is done three in one inside the traditional market, and thankfully, during these activities until 2021, when COVID-19 hit and the Napan border market was closed, it was safe and under control. So, from there, the government, which happened to pass through Indonesia and Timor Leste, saw that things were going well, so the inception of the Integrated Border Post (PLBN) came about. The condition of the border market in Napan has been able to contribute to the community, where it is said that, "with this situation, slowly the lives of the border communities are starting to become better than before." This clearly has made a significant economic contribution to the border community in the Napan area.

Discussion

Categories of Traded Commodities

Utilizing the insights and perspectives provided by Caroline Lesser & Evdokia Moise-Leeman (Lesser and Moise-Leeman, 2009), the illegal trade and smuggling of commodities in the Napan area can be categorized into three categories as follows:

Category A: Unregistered traders or firms operating entirely outside the formal economy, as exemplified by individuals including "Mama Tikus," who engage in economic activities without official registration as traders but conduct trade and transactions with parties from Oekusi-RDTL. The commodities traded include materials for ikat weaving, tamarind, porang, and cowhide, as well as local agricultural and livestock products.

Category B: Registered (formal) firms fully evading trade-related regulations and duties (e.g., avoiding official border crossing posts), which pertains to commodities manufactured without subsidies. These include soap, toothpaste, instant noodles, cooking oil, electronic goods, flour, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes, and other commodities traded by merchants bypassing customs or using illegal routes.

Category C: Registered (formal) firms partially evade trade-related regulations and duties by resorting to illegal practices (e.g., under-invoicing), which involve subsidized manufactured commodities such as fuel produced by Pertamina. Traders from Indonesia engage in illegal transactions without going through customs, and the subsidized fuel is sold at prices determined by the government, leading to substantial profits for traders due to the price disparity, as the cost of these commodities is covered by the government and does not follow international market.

Illegal Trading and Smuggling Activities

The activities of illegal trading and smuggling that have occurred in border areas between countries worldwide can be observed through the informal cross-border trade (ICBT) that has flourished along nearly all international borders in Africa, including Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Southern Africa-South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, Uganda, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Senegal, Burkina Faso, and Ghana. Furthermore, research findings on ICBT at the Senegal-The Gambia and Nigeria-Benin-Togo borders in West Africa indicate that informal

trade is significantly larger than formal intra-country trade.¹⁰

Similarly, research conducted by Angelina S. Bwana on the impact of ICBT on the economy, a case study in Tanzania, where the Common Market Protocol (CMP) and One Stop Border Post (OSBP) were established to facilitate cross-border trade between countries (Angelina S. Bwana, 2018). In the U4 Expert Answer Journal, it is mentioned that there is an illegal flow of funds, goods, and services across the borders of South Asia (Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh) (Centre and International, 2011). Furthermore, at the Sardasht-Kurdistan-Iran border, there is also a phenomenon of smuggling based on specific ecological-geographical positions, cultural orientation, irregular economic structures, inefficient institutional controls, and conventional legitimization of smuggling¹¹. Smuggling activities in Sardhasht have economic, social, cultural, and political implications (Bahramian and Abbaspour, 2015). Illegal trading activities also occur between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The main reasons for exploiting such trade are the low prices of smuggled goods and corruption. This illegal trade threatens Pakistan's established trade policies and

has significant adverse effects on the country's economy (Shah, 2018). Similarly, research in Iran on smuggling indicates that all crime index variables such as divorce, corruption, and alcohol consumption correlate positively with smuggling, while macroeconomic variables such as tariffs, misery index, illiteracy, exchange rate differential, economic openness index, and government-led increase in smuggling correlate positively with smuggling.¹²

Further research on informal or illegal trade along the China-North Korea border reveals that it serves as a trading strategy to avoid risks and barriers in trade¹³. This understanding is based on interviews conducted with both formal and informal Chinese traders operating along the North Korean border by Hastin Dan Wang (Hastings and Wang, 2018). Aung Set, in his research, suggests that Myanmar shares borders with China, Thailand, and India, and trade occurring at border points includes both formal and informal transactions (Aung Set, 2009). Additionally, Oswel indicates that the border between Thailand and Myanmar witnessed significant illegal trade in big cats from 2001 to 2010, with a total of 493 individuals, including tigers, leopards, clouded leopards, and other species (Asia

¹⁰ Stephen Golub, "Informal Cross Border Trade and Smuggling in Africa," 2015, 179–209, <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781781005316.00016>.

¹¹ John Salt, "Trafficking and Human Smuggling: A European Perspective," *International Migration* 38, no. 3 (January 2000): 31–56, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2435.00114>.

¹² Nigel South and Tanya Wyatt, "Comparing Illicit Trades in Wildlife and Drugs: An Exploratory Study," *Deviant Behavior* 32, no. 6 (July 2011): 538–61, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2010.483162>.

¹³ Michele Ford and Lenore Lyons, "Smuggling Cultures in the Indonesia-Singapore Borderlands," n.d.

and Oswell, 2010). Moreover, the Myanmar-Thailand border faces various trade-related issues, including illegal trade or smuggling, which plays a significant role in the economies of both countries (Wantana sombut, 2018). Wyatt's research also highlights corruption, smuggling, and illegal wildlife trade, with three case studies conducted in Asia¹⁴. Illegal trading (ICBT) and smuggling are rampant in border areas, particularly in developing countries, and can serve as accelerators and contributors to economic livelihoods for impoverished border communities, as observed in West Africa and Nigeria (Ismail Shola and Kazeem Olanrewaju, 2020). Furthermore, the long border between Gambia and Casamance in South Senegal facilitates the growth of informal cross-border trade, with agricultural and forest products flowing mainly from Casamance to Gambia and processed food products and other manufactured goods moving from Gambia to Casamance¹⁵. Additionally, informal cross-border trade (ICBT) is a crucial part of intra-Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) trade. This economic activity plays a significant role in achieving sustainable development goals by providing employment opportunities in poor communities and contributing significantly to household incomes. Therefore, any disruption to ICBT in SSA poses a serious threat, affecting the most vulnerable groups in society and has implications for the social and economic aspects of border communities¹⁶. Moreover, informal (illegal/ICBT) trade and smuggling at the India-Bangladesh border continue to have serious implications for economic, political, and security aspects. Hence, the importance of border economic development to enhance the economic status of border communities, thereby addressing illegal trade and smuggling, which could provide income and economic opportunities for impoverished border families¹⁷

Border areas hold significant economic potential and sources of income, as evidenced by the informal (illegal/ICBT) trade of "Pelagic fish" by women in West Africa crossing the borders of Ghana, Togo, and Benin. This trade constitutes the largest fish market, reaching 6000 metric tons with an approximate value of US \$14 million. Similarly, the border area of Napan has considerable trading potential, given that the Oekusi enclave relies on imports from Napan, North Central Timor, for everyday consumer goods since it has yet to establish its own production. Additionally, the Oekusi enclave produces high-quality agricultural commodities such as tamarind, cattle, and porang, organic rice, and various other agricultural products.

¹⁴ Tanya Wyatt et al., "Corruption and Wildlife Trafficking: Three Case Studies Involving Asia," *Asian Journal of Criminology* 13, no. 1 (March 2018): 35–55, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11417-017-9255-8>.

¹⁵ Max Gallien, "Informal Institutions and the Regulation of Smuggling in North Africa," *Perspectives on Politics* 18, no. 2 (June 2020): 492–508, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592719001026>.

¹⁶ Luk Joossens and Martin Raw, "From Cigarette Smuggling to Illicit Tobacco Trade," *Tobacco Control*, n.d.

¹⁷ J Junger-Tas et al., "European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research," n.d.

4. Conclusion

The exposition presented above comprises several fundamental elements that can serve as a basis for formulating policies for the communities of Napan, Indonesia as a whole, and the Oekusi enclave, including:

Firstly, the existence of familial and kinship ties, as well as similarities in ethnicity, language, and religion, are profoundly close between the residents of the Oekusi Enclave and the village of Napan. This is evidenced by the presence of siblings, with older siblings residing in Oekusi and younger ones in Napan, or vice versa. Similarly, instances where parents are separated from their children or siblings by national borders underscore the formal separation imposed by state boundaries, yet underscore the unbreakable bond of kinship based on blood and emotional ties. Secondly, the closely adjacent cultivation lands, delineated by mere fences, allow direct communication between the residents of Napan and the Oekusi Enclave when working on their farms. This proximity facilitates the exchange of agricultural and livestock goods, which can be conducted through barter or monetary transactions.

Thirdly, cooperative endeavors such as the provision of yarn by the residents of Napan to those of the Oekusi Enclave for weaving, with the resultant woven products being sold and the profits shared, demonstrate a collaborative effort. Additionally, the provision of delivery and escort services for advanced education, both within and outside Kupang, reflects further cooperation.

Fourthly, both subsidized and non-subsidized manufactured goods are highly demanded, to the extent that it is not an exaggeration to say that almost 75% of both daily necessities and non-daily necessities originate from Indonesia. This implies that the residents of the Oekusi Enclave are heavily reliant on manufactured goods originating from Indonesia.

Fifthly, the use of the rupiah as a payment instrument alongside the dollar is still prevalent and constitutes a legitimate means of payment.

Lastly, the utilization of clandestine routes for illegal trading and smuggling has given rise to a term for the women engaged in such activities, referred to as "Mama Tikus," signifying mothers involved in illegal activities and smuggling via clandestine routes or footpaths, which serve as meeting points between women from Napan and traders from Oekusi.

Based on these elements, policies can be proposed to benefit the residents of Napan, Indonesia, and Oekusi, including:

Firstly, the establishment of free trade policies, especially for non-subsidized manufactured goods, considering Oekusi's high demand for these commodities. This would flood the Oekusi market with these commodities, making it unlikely for other countries to participate in meeting these commodity needs.

Secondly, Oekusi could serve as a showcase for Indonesian manufactured goods,

potentially allowing for the re-exportation of Indonesian commodities through Oekusi.

Thirdly, by implementing free trade, especially for non-subsidized manufactured goods and agricultural products, border areas will experience open trading dynamics, contributing to the border communities.

It is hoped that the responsibility of local government can be expanded and then better organized so that the flow of goods, especially non-subsidized manufactured goods and agricultural products, can flow smoothly. This will ensure that Indonesian products can meet the needs of the Oekusi-RDTL community, and ultimately, Oekusi can become a showcase for Indonesian products, which will undoubtedly hinder the entry of products from other countries.

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