



Challenges in the Handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers by the Nunukan District Police in the Border Area of Nunukan Regency

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Abstract

Nunukan Regency is an Indonesian border region directly adjacent to Malaysia and serves as an important gateway for Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI). High population mobility in the border area has contributed to the continued presence of non-procedural PMI who are vulnerable to human trafficking, exploitation, and other legal violations. This study aims to analyze the handling of PMI by the Nunukan Resort Police (Polres Nunukan), the challenges encountered, and the efforts undertaken to overcome them. This research employs an empirical legal research method using statutory and sociological approaches. Data were collected through interviews with investigators from the Criminal Investigation Unit of the Nunukan Resort Police and a Labor Analyst from the North Kalimantan Agency for the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (BP3MI), supported by relevant legislation, books, journals, and documents. The data were analyzed qualitatively using Soerjono Soekanto's law enforcement theory. The findings show that PMI handling is conducted through preventive measures, including public awareness campaigns, supervision, and inter-agency coordination, as well as repressive measures through investigation and criminal enforcement against offenses involving non-procedural PMI. However, implementation faces challenges, including limited personnel, budget, facilities, and infrastructure; the vast border area; numerous unofficial routes; difficulties in uncovering recruitment networks; and challenges in obtaining sufficient evidence. Low public awareness of legal migrant worker placement procedures and limited inter-agency coordination also affect law enforcement effectiveness. To address these challenges, Polres Nunukan has strengthened preventive and repressive measures and coordination with BP3MI, Immigration, the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI), and local government agencies. The study concludes that PMI handling is consistent with the legal authority of Polres Nunukan but remains suboptimal. Strengthening institutional resources, personnel capacity, supporting facilities, and inter-agency coordination is therefore necessary.

Introduction

The increasing number of Indonesian Migrant Workers working abroad reflects the persistent influence of economic, social, and employment-related factors in Indonesia. Limited employment opportunities, poverty, income disparities, and relatively low levels of education encourage some Indonesians to seek employment overseas. For many communities, working abroad is perceived as an alternative strategy for improving household income and economic welfare. However, the decision to migrate through irregular or non-procedural channels exposes workers to significant legal and social vulnerabilities, including exploitation, human trafficking, forced labor, document confiscation, and other forms of abuse.

The legal framework governing Indonesian migrant workers has undergone an important transformation following the enactment of Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers. The law defines Indonesian Migrant Workers as Indonesian citizens who will, are, or have worked abroad while receiving wages. More importantly, the regulation shifts the policy orientation from merely facilitating the placement of migrant workers toward providing comprehensive protection before, during, and after employment abroad. Nevertheless, the existence of a comprehensive legal framework does not automatically guarantee effective protection in practice. The implementation of protection policies remains influenced by institutional capacity, public awareness, inter-agency coordination, and the effectiveness of law enforcement mechanisms.

These challenges are particularly evident in Nunukan Regency, North Kalimantan, which is strategically located along Indonesia's border with Malaysia. Its geographical position makes Nunukan one of the major transit areas for Indonesian migrant workers travelling to Malaysia, particularly to Sabah and Tawau. The relatively close geographical distance, extensive maritime and land connections, cultural similarities, and high population mobility have contributed to the development of Nunukan as an important gateway for migrant mobility. At the same time, these conditions create opportunities for the movement of PMI through non-procedural routes. The existence of unofficial routes, commonly referred to as “rat routes,” combined with the extensive border area, creates considerable difficulties for authorities in monitoring migrant movements and preventing illegal departures.

The problem becomes more complex because non-procedural migration is not merely an administrative violation but may be closely connected to organized criminal activities. Recruitment networks may exploit individuals who are economically vulnerable and have limited knowledge of formal migration procedures. Prospective migrant workers may be promised employment and higher wages without being adequately informed about the legal and personal risks involved. Previous studies have highlighted that illegal recruitment and placement can increase migrant workers' vulnerability to exploitation and human trafficking. In border areas such as Nunukan, therefore, the protection of PMI requires not only administrative measures but also effective prevention, investigation, and law enforcement.

The strategic position of Nunukan also places considerable responsibility on the Nunukan Resort Police (Polres Nunukan). Under Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police, the police are responsible for maintaining public security and order, enforcing the law, and providing protection, guidance, and services to the community. Within the context of migrant worker protection, these responsibilities include preventing criminal activities associated with non-procedural migration, conducting investigations, collecting evidence, identifying recruitment networks, and taking legal action against perpetrators. Consequently, Polres Nunukan has an important role in addressing illegal migrant worker placement and crimes associated with PMI in the border region.

However, the implementation of these responsibilities is not without obstacles. The geographical characteristics of Nunukan present substantial challenges for police operations. The large border area, numerous unofficial crossing routes, difficult terrain, and high mobility of residents make continuous monitoring difficult. In addition, information concerning illegal recruitment activities is often limited because recruitment networks operate covertly and may rely on informal communication channels. These circumstances can complicate early detection, evidence collection, investigation, and prosecution. The effectiveness of police action therefore depends not only on the legal authority available to law enforcement agencies but also on personnel capacity, operational resources, intelligence gathering, surveillance, and coordination with other institutions.

The magnitude of the problem can be illustrated by data from the Balai Pelayanan Pelindungan Pekerja Migran Indonesia (BP3MI) Nunukan. During 2022–2025, thousands of PMI were handled through different categories of services, including deportation, repatriation, return to their areas of origin, PMI with specific obstacles, medical cases, deceased workers, and the results of sweeping or prevention activities. In 2022, BP3MI Nunukan recorded 4,226 PMI handled, followed by 2,583 in 2023, 4,727 in 2024, and 4,463 in 2025. The substantial number of workers handled by BP3MI demonstrates the continuing intensity of migrant mobility and the persistence of migration-related problems in the Nunukan border area. These figures should not be interpreted solely as criminal cases; rather, they demonstrate the scale of migrant-related services and interventions undertaken by the government.

The persistence of non-procedural migration is further demonstrated by law enforcement cases involving human trafficking. In May 2025, a task force led by the Criminal Investigation Agency of the Indonesian National Police (Bareskrim Polri) uncovered nine alleged human trafficking cases in North Kalimantan and rescued 82 prospective migrant workers who were being sent illegally to Malaysia. The recruitment and transportation were reportedly conducted through unofficial routes from Sebatik Island to Tawau, Malaysia. The case illustrates that non-procedural migrant placement may involve organized recruitment networks and financial transactions, making the issue significantly more complex than a simple violation of migration procedures. Such cases reinforce the need for effective policing strategies that integrate prevention, surveillance, investigation, and inter-agency cooperation.

In this context, cooperation between Polres Nunukan and BP3MI Nunukan is particularly important. Protection of PMI cannot be achieved by a single institution because migrant worker governance involves multiple stages and institutional responsibilities. Police institutions are primarily concerned with prevention and law enforcement, while BP3MI has responsibilities related to migrant worker protection and services. Cooperation with immigration authorities, local government, the military, and other relevant institutions is also essential, particularly in monitoring border crossings and responding to cases involving trafficking and migrant smuggling.

The continuing occurrence of non-procedural migrant placement indicates a potential gap between the legal framework governing PMI protection and its implementation in the field. Although Indonesia has established regulations and institutional mechanisms for protecting migrant workers, practical challenges remain in border regions such as Nunukan. This gap raises important questions regarding the effectiveness of law enforcement, institutional coordination, preventive strategies, resource availability, and the capacity of Polres Nunukan to respond to the dynamic nature of migrant-related problems.

Therefore, this study focuses specifically on the problems encountered by Polres Nunukan in handling Indonesian Migrant Workers in the border area of Nunukan Regency. The study does not examine all dimensions of PMI protection administered by government institutions. Instead, it focuses on the law enforcement dimension, particularly the prevention and handling of non-procedural PMI departures and criminal offenses associated with Indonesian migrant workers. By examining these issues, the research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the institutional and operational challenges faced by Polres Nunukan and to identify strategies for strengthening law enforcement and inter-agency cooperation in protecting PMI in Indonesia's border areas.

Method

Research Design

This study employed an empirical legal research design to examine how legal norms and regulations concerning Indonesian Migrant Workers (Pekerja Migran Indonesia/PMI) are implemented in practice by law enforcement institutions. Empirical legal research is appropriate for this study because it focuses not only on the normative provisions governing PMI protection and law enforcement but also on how those provisions operate within the social and institutional context of a border region. The study specifically examined the implementation of law enforcement by the Nunukan Resort Police (Polres Nunukan) in handling PMI-related issues in the border area of Nunukan Regency.

The research was conducted through direct field research at relevant institutions, particularly Polres Nunukan and the Balai Pelayanan Pelindungan Pekerja Migran Indonesia (BP3MI) Nunukan. The empirical dimension of the study focused on the actual implementation of police duties, the mechanisms used to prevent and handle non-procedural PMI placement, the obstacles encountered by law enforcement officers, and the efforts undertaken to strengthen PMI protection. The study also compared the applicable legal framework with its implementation in the field to identify potential gaps between legal norms and law enforcement practices.

Research Approaches

This study employed two complementary approaches: the statutory approach and the sociological approach. The statutory approach was used to examine the legal framework governing the protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, the duties and authority of the Indonesian National Police, and law enforcement in border areas. Relevant legislation was examined to determine the legal basis for police action in preventing, investigating, and handling violations associated with PMI, including non-procedural placement and human trafficking.

The sociological approach was used to examine the implementation of these legal provisions in the field. This approach focused on the actual role of Polres Nunukan, the institutional and operational obstacles encountered in handling PMI, the social characteristics of the border community, and the interaction between law enforcement institutions and other agencies involved in PMI protection. The combination of these approaches enabled the study to assess not only what the law requires but also how the law functions within the social and institutional realities of the Nunukan border area.

Research Location and Informants

The research was conducted in Nunukan Regency, North Kalimantan, with particular attention to Polres Nunukan and BP3MI Nunukan. Nunukan was selected as the research location because of its strategic position as a border region directly connected to Malaysia and its significant role in the movement and handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers.

Informants were selected purposively based on their knowledge, experience, and institutional authority concerning PMI management and law enforcement. The primary informants consisted of the Head of the Criminal Investigation Unit (Kasat Reskrim) of Polres Nunukan, investigators from the General Crime Unit of Satreskrim Polres Nunukan, and the Head of BP3MI Nunukan. These informants were considered relevant because they possess direct knowledge of the procedures for handling PMI, the investigation of PMI-related offenses, the problems encountered in the field, and the institutional measures undertaken to address those problems.

Data Sources

The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from the research field through semi-structured interviews with selected informants. The primary data provided information regarding the implementation of law enforcement, the handling of non-procedural PMI, institutional coordination, operational challenges, and strategies adopted by Polres Nunukan and BP3MI Nunukan.

Secondary data were obtained through a literature and document review. These data included primary legal materials, secondary legal materials, and supporting tertiary materials. Primary legal materials consisted of relevant legislation and official regulations concerning the Indonesian National Police, Indonesian Migrant Workers, human trafficking, and border-area law enforcement. Secondary legal materials included scholarly books, academic journal articles, previous research findings, and other academic publications. Tertiary materials were used where necessary to clarify legal concepts, terminology, and relevant information.

In addition, official institutional documents were examined to strengthen the empirical findings. These included official reports, PMI handling records, relevant police case data, police archives, BP3MI Nunukan records, and documentation of activities related to PMI protection and law enforcement. The use of documentary data enabled the researcher to compare information obtained through interviews with available institutional records.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, literature review, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted through direct interaction between the researcher and selected informants. An interview guide was prepared in advance based on the research objectives, while additional questions were developed during the interview process to explore relevant issues in greater depth. The interviews focused on the implementation of PMI handling procedures, the role of Polres Nunukan, patterns of non-procedural PMI placement, obstacles encountered by investigators, inter-agency coordination, and measures undertaken to prevent and address PMI-related offenses.

The literature review was conducted to establish the conceptual and legal foundation of the research. Relevant legislation, academic literature, journal articles, previous studies, and official publications were examined to identify the applicable legal principles and theoretical perspectives. This process also enabled the researcher to compare empirical findings with existing legal and scholarly discussions concerning migrant worker protection and border-area law enforcement.

Documentation was used to obtain supporting empirical evidence. The researcher collected and examined official reports, PMI handling statistics, police records, BP3MI data, relevant case documentation, and other institutional materials related to PMI management in Nunukan. Documentary evidence was used to complement interview findings and improve the credibility of the empirical analysis.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive analysis approach. The analysis was conducted systematically through three interconnected stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, information obtained from interviews, documents, and literature was selected, categorized, and organized according to the main research questions. Data that were considered relevant to the role of Polres Nunukan, legal implementation, institutional obstacles, and law enforcement strategies were retained for further analysis.

The second stage involved data presentation. The reduced data were organized into systematic descriptive narratives to identify patterns, relationships, and differences between legal requirements and actual practices. Interview findings were compared with documentary evidence and relevant legal provisions to strengthen the interpretation of the empirical data.

The final stage involved drawing conclusions and verifying the findings. Conclusions were developed by interpreting the empirical evidence in relation to the applicable legislation, legal concepts, and relevant theoretical perspectives. The analysis therefore sought to identify the actual implementation of PMI handling by Polres Nunukan, the principal problems affecting law enforcement in the border area, and the strategies employed to overcome these challenges.

Through this analytical process, the study was designed to provide an integrated understanding of the legal and practical dimensions of PMI handling by Polres Nunukan, particularly in relation to non-procedural migrant placement and PMI-related criminal offenses. The methodology also enabled the study to identify the extent to which existing legal provisions are implemented in practice and the institutional factors that influence the effectiveness of law enforcement in the Nunukan border region.

Result and Discussion

Conditions and Characteristics of Indonesian Migrant Workers in the Nunukan Regency Border Area

Nunukan Regency is a regency in North Kalimantan Province that holds a strategic position due to its direct border with Malaysia, specifically the state of Sabah. This geographical location makes Nunukan Regency a primary gateway for the movement of people and goods between Indonesia and Malaysia. In addition to official routes, the area features numerous traditional or unofficial paths frequently used by the local population for cross-border activities. These conditions result in high levels of population mobility across the border, necessitating optimal supervision by the relevant authorities.

As a border region, Nunukan Regency possesses characteristics distinct from other areas in Indonesia. Long-standing social, economic, and cultural ties exist between the Indonesian population and the people of Sabah. Geographical proximity and kinship ties between residents of both regions drive significant cross-border activity whether for trade, family visits, or employment. A dominant activity is the movement of Indonesian workers to Malaysia to serve as Indonesian Migrant Workers.

The majority of Indonesian Migrant Workers passing through Nunukan Regency are employed in sectors such as oil palm plantations, construction, fisheries, services, and domestic work. Malaysia is the primary destination due to its proximity, relatively high demand for labor, and wage levels perceived as superior to those in the workers' regions of origin in Indonesia. Consequently, Nunukan serves as a crucial transit point in the departure and return processes for Indonesian Migrant Workers.

Although the government has established procedural mechanisms for the placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers codified in Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers in practice, some individuals still choose to work abroad via non-procedural channels. Such non-procedural departures generally occur without meeting prescribed administrative requirements; for instance, workers may lack valid travel documents, bypass licensed placement agencies, or utilize unofficial entry routes.

The occurrence of non-procedural departures is influenced by various factors. Economic factors are still the main cause, namely limited job opportunities in the area of origin and the desire to earn a higher income abroad. Apart from that, low levels of education and a lack of

public understanding regarding correct placement procedures also encourage some prospective migrant workers to choose the faster route even though it carries high legal risks. This condition is often exploited by individuals or networks of illegal recruiters who offer a departure process with lower costs and simpler requirements.

The characteristics of the Nunukan Regency border area also provide its own challenges in monitoring human traffic. The vastness of the border area, the large number of traditional ports, and the existence of unofficial routes mean that monitoring cannot be carried out thoroughly at all times. This situation provides an opportunity for criminals to carry out illegal departure of prospective migrant workers without going through an inspection from the authorized agency. The problems faced by Indonesian Migrant Workers in border areas are not only related to immigration administration violations, but also have the potential to give rise to more complex criminal acts.

Several forms of criminal acts that are often found include human trafficking (TPPO), human smuggling, falsification of travel documents, labor exploitation, fraud by illegal recruitment agents, and violations of the basic rights of migrant workers. This condition shows that the problem of Indonesian Migrant Workers cannot be viewed solely as a labor issue, but also as a legal issue that requires integrated handling.

Based on data from the Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Services Center (BP3MI) Nunukan, every year there are thousands of Indonesian Migrant Workers who receive services in various categories, such as deportation, return to their areas of origin, student repatriation, handling of constrained PMI, services for sick PMI, repatriation of corpses, as well as the results of prevention activities for non-procedural PMI candidates. This data shows that Nunukan Regency has a very important role in the Indonesian Migrant Worker protection system, especially for migrant workers returning from Malaysia and those experiencing various problems during the migration process.

The large number of Indonesian Migrant Workers leaving and entering through Nunukan Regency demands an active role for law enforcement officials, especially the Nunukan Police, in carrying out the functions of prevention, supervision, law enforcement, and coordination with various related agencies. Handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers not only aims to provide protection to migrant workers, but also prevents the development of transnational crimes that use border routes as a means of carrying out illegal activities.

Thus, the geographical conditions of Nunukan Regency as a border area, the high mobility of the population, and the complexity of the problems faced by Indonesian Migrant Workers make this area have different characteristics compared to other regions in Indonesia. This condition is also an important basis for the Nunukan Police to carry out its authority in maintaining border area security, enforcing the law, and providing protection to Indonesian Migrant Workers in accordance with the provisions of applicable laws and regulations.

Nunukan Police's Authority in Handling Migrant Workers Indonesia

The National Police of the Republic of Indonesia (Polri) has the authority to maintain security and public order, enforce the law, and provide protection, guidance and service to the community. Therefore, the Nunukan Police as a regional unit of the National Police have a strategic role in handling various problems related to Indonesian Migrant Workers in border areas. The duties and authority of the National Police as regulated in Law Number 2 of 2002, it can be said that the main function of the police or its authority is: All efforts and activities in the field of preventive policing to maintain security and maintain public order, including providing protection and assistance, especially preventing crimes and violations of the law. In carrying out this task, assistance and professional personnel and special techniques are needed,

such as patrolling, guarding and security. Repressive Duties In the repressive field, the National Police carries out repressive functions which include judicial repressive actions and non-judicial repressive actions. Judicial repressive measures are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code (KUHP) and other laws and regulations that regulate the investigation and investigation of criminal acts. In addition, Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia gives the National Police the authority to take action based on police discretion as regulated in Article 18 paragraph (1), as long as it meets the applicable legal provisions.

In practice, the Nunukan Police have the authority to carry out law enforcement against various criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers, including criminal acts of human trafficking, human smuggling, falsification of travel documents, use of fake documents, non-procedural placement of PMI by individuals or companies who do not have permits, as well as other criminal acts regulated in statutory provisions. Handling of these criminal acts is carried out through investigation and investigation stages in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Code (KUHP) and other statutory provisions. These provisions become the legal basis for the Nunukan Police in carrying out law enforcement against criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers.

Handling Indonesian Migrant Workers involves various aspects so that the Nunukan Police cannot work alone. Therefore, the implementation of the authority of the Nunukan Police is carried out through coordination and cooperation with various agencies, such as the Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Service Center (BP3MI), the Immigration Office, the District Attorney's Office, the Indonesian National Army (TNI), the Manpower Service, the Nunukan Regency Government, and other agencies that have authority in accordance with their respective areas of duty. This coordination is necessary so that the implementation of prevention, protection and law enforcement against Indonesian Migrant Workers can run effectively, in an integrated manner and in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations.

Based on this description, it can be understood that the authority of the Nunukan Police in handling Indonesian Migrant Workers is not only limited to taking action against perpetrators of criminal acts, but also includes efforts to maintain security and public order, prevent law violations, protect the community, and coordinate with various authorized agencies. The implementation of this authority is a form of implementing the function of the Indonesian National Police in providing legal certainty and protection to Indonesian Migrant Workers, especially in the border areas of Nunukan Regency.

Forms of Prevention against PMI Departure

Preventing the non-procedural departure of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) is one of the efforts made by the Nunukan Police to reduce the occurrence of legal violations and provide protection to the community. As an area that borders directly with Malaysia, Nunukan Regency has a high level of population mobility so it has the potential to be exploited by parties who carry out illegal recruitment and departure of PMI. Therefore, the Nunukan Police carry out various preventive actions as part of the implementation of the police's duties in maintaining security and public order and preventing criminal acts.

The legal basis for implementing these preventive efforts is contained in Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, in particular Article 13 and Article 14 which regulate the duties of the National Police in maintaining public security and order, providing protection, guidance and service to the community, as well as taking preventive measures against the emergence of security and public order disturbances. In terms

of protecting Indonesian Migrant Workers, this function is realized through various preventive activities so that people do not become victims of non-procedural departures or criminal acts of human trafficking.

One form of prevention carried out by the Nunukan Police is legal education and outreach to the community. This activity aims to provide an understanding of the official procedures for working abroad, the administrative requirements that must be fulfilled, the rights and obligations of Indonesian Migrant Workers, as well as the legal risks that can arise if they leave via non-procedural routes. Counseling is carried out to the community, prospective migrant workers, community leaders, village officials, students, and community groups in areas that have a fairly high rate of migrant worker departure. Through this activity, it is hoped that the community will have legal awareness so that they are not easily influenced by the persuasion of parties who recruit illegally.

Apart from legal education, the Nunukan Police also carry out patrols and surveillance in areas deemed vulnerable to being used as non-procedural departure routes for PMI. Supervision is carried out at official ports, traditional ports, as well as border routes which are often used as access for illegal entry and exit. Patrol activities aim to detect early any activity that is suspected to be related to the departure of prospective migrant workers without complete documents or without going through the mechanisms established by the government.

The next preventive effort is carried out through police intelligence activities. The intelligence function plays a role in collecting information regarding the activities of illegal recruiting networks, locations suspected of being shelters for non-procedural PMI candidates, as well as patterns used by perpetrators to send migrant workers abroad. This information is the basis for the Nunukan Police in determining preventive and law enforcement steps if suspected criminal acts related to the non-procedural departure of PMI are found.

In carrying out its duties, the Nunukan Police also carry out police operations, both routine operations and operations carried out in an integrated manner with other agencies. This operation aims to check travel documents, identity and requirements for prospective migrant workers who will cross the border area. If a PMI candidate is found who does not meet the requirements in accordance with statutory regulations, officers will take preventive action and coordinate with the authorized agency for further handling.

Prevention of non-procedural PMI departures is also carried out through cross-sectoral coordination and cooperation. Nunukan Police collaborates with the Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Services Center (BP3MI), Immigration Office, Employment Service, Indonesian National Army (TNI), local government, port authorities, and other related agencies. This form of cooperation includes exchanging information, carrying out joint operations, examining documents, non-procedural identification of PMI candidates, as well as handling people who are suspected of being victims of illegal recruitment. Synergy between agencies is needed considering that migrant worker problems involve aspects of employment, immigration, security and law enforcement.

Under certain conditions, the Nunukan Police also take direct preventive action against prospective PMIs who are known to be leaving non-procedurally. This action is carried out by stopping the departure process, providing an explanation regarding the correct placement procedures, and handing over prospective PMIs to agencies that have the authority for guidance or mentoring. If during this process there are allegations of criminal acts, such as human trafficking, falsification of documents, or illegal recruitment, the Nunukan Police will follow up on this through an inquiry and investigation process.

Based on this description, it can be understood that prevention of non-procedural departures of Indonesian Migrant Workers is not only carried out through supervision in the field, but also through educational approaches, early detection, cross-sectoral coordination, and measurable police actions. The implementation of these various preventive efforts shows that the Nunukan Police not only plays a role as a law enforcement officer, but also as an institution that seeks to provide protection to the community to avoid the practice of non-procedural departure of PMI and various criminal acts that accompany it in accordance with the legal provisions that apply to criminal acts.

Based on the results of interviews with APTU Ali Murtaji, S.H. as Head of the General Crimes Unit (Pidum) of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, it is known that in mid-May 2025 the Nunukan Police together with related agencies succeeded in thwarting the departure of 82 prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) who were suspected of being sent to Malaysia via non-procedural routes. This success shows that the practice of non-procedural departure of PMIs still occurs in the Nunukan Regency area and requires ongoing monitoring and prevention efforts.

According to APTU Ali Murtaji, S.H., one of the main obstacles in preventing the non-procedural departure of PMI is the geographical condition of Nunukan Regency which borders directly with Malaysia. The border area has many alternative routes, both through traditional ports and sea routes which are difficult for officers to reach. This condition is often exploited by perpetrators to dispatch PMI candidates without going through the procedures set by the government. As stated by APTU Ali Murtaji, S.H.: "with the condition of the Nunukan region which borders directly with Malaysia, supervision is not only carried out at official ports, but must also cover small ports which are often used as illegal departure routes."

This information shows that prevention efforts cannot be carried out only through monitoring official exit points, but also require monitoring unofficial routes that have the potential to be used as access for non-procedural departures for PMI. Therefore, the Nunukan Police routinely carry out patrols, monitor border areas, collect information through intelligence functions, as well as joint operations with BP3MI, the Immigration Office, TNI and other related agencies.

Based on the results of these interviews, it can be concluded that the high vulnerability of non-procedural PMI departure practices in Nunukan Regency is influenced by the geographical conditions of the border area and the existence of a network of illegal recruiters who exploit the vulnerability of prospective migrant workers. Therefore, synergy is needed between the Nunukan Police, BP3MI, Immigration Office, local government and the community in carrying out prevention, supervision and law enforcement efforts so that the departure of Indonesian Migrant Workers can be carried out in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and provide optimal legal protection for prospective migrant workers.

Take action against criminal acts related to PMI

Taking action against criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) is part of the implementation of the law enforcement function which is the authority of the Indonesian National Police. As an area that directly borders Malaysia, Nunukan Regency has a high level of population mobility so it has the potential to become a route for various criminal acts related to non-procedural placement of PMIs. Therefore, the Nunukan Police have an important role in carrying out inquiries, investigations and law enforcement against every criminal act related to PMI in accordance with the provisions of statutory regulations and providing optimal legal protection for prospective migrant workers. The Nunukan Police's authority to carry out enforcement action is based on Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, Law Number 8 of 1981 concerning the Criminal Procedure Code

(KUHAP), Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, and Law Number 21 of 2007 concerning the Eradication of the Crime of Human Trafficking.

Based on these provisions, the National Police has the authority to carry out inquiries and investigations into every act that is suspected of being a criminal act. In practice, criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers in the Nunukan Regency area include, among other things, non-procedural departure of PMI by individuals or companies who do not have permits, criminal acts of human trafficking (TPPO), human smuggling, falsification of travel documents, use of fake documents, and other criminal acts related to the exploitation of migrant workers.

Every alleged criminal act is handled through an inquiry and inquiry mechanism in accordance with applicable legal provisions. The enforcement process begins with the receipt of public reports, information from the results of intelligence activities, or the discovery of suspected criminal acts in police operations or joint operations with related agencies. After receiving this information, investigators conducted an investigation to obtain sufficient initial evidence. If elements of a criminal act are found, the process is then escalated to the investigation stage by examining witnesses, victims and suspects, collecting evidence, confiscating evidence if necessary, and filing the case for subsequent submission to the public prosecutor in accordance with the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Based on the results of interviews with AIPTU Ali Murtaji, S.H. as Head of the General Crimes Unit (Pidum) of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, action against criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) is focused on disclosing and taking action against parties who recruit, harbor and depart PMI in a non-procedural manner. According to him, in mid-May 2025 the Nunukan Police together with related agencies succeeded in thwarting an attempt to depart 82 PMI candidates who were suspected of being sent to Malaysia via unofficial channels.

He also explained that law enforcement is carried out through investigations and investigations of perpetrators in accordance with statutory provisions, and is supported by coordination with BP3MI, the Immigration Office, TNI, and other related agencies. This effort aims to break the network of non-procedural PMI departures while providing protection to prospective migrant workers.

Based on this description, it can be concluded that action against criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers in Nunukan Regency is carried out through an inquiry and investigative process that is guided by the applicable legal provisions. Law enforcement carried out by the Nunukan Police is not only aimed at taking action against perpetrators of criminal acts, but also breaking up the PMI departure network in a non-procedural manner, providing legal certainty, and increasing protection for Indonesian Migrant Workers in border areas.

Coordination of the Nunukan Police with related agencies

Handling Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in the Nunukan Regency border area cannot be carried out only by the Nunukan Police. The complexity of problems involving aspects of employment, immigration, security and legal protection requires coordination and cooperation with various agencies that have authority in accordance with their duties and functions. This coordination aims to ensure that prevention, handling and law enforcement efforts against PMI can be carried out effectively and in an integrated manner.

In carrying out its duties, the Nunukan Police coordinates with the Nunukan Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Services Center (BP3MI) in the non-procedural identification process of prospective PMI, exchanging data and information, as well as handling PMI who require protection. BP3MI plays a role in providing services, assistance and facilitation to PMI,

while the Nunukan Police carry out law enforcement if suspected criminal acts are found. Coordination is also carried out with the Immigration Office in examining travel documents, monitoring the traffic of people leaving and entering Indonesian territory, as well as exchanging information regarding suspected immigration violations related to Indonesian Migrant Workers. This cooperation is important to prevent the use of unauthorized documents and non-procedural attempts to depart PMI.

Apart from that, the Nunukan Police are collaborating with the Indonesian National Army (TNI), especially in securing border areas and carrying out joint patrols in areas that are prone to being used as routes for illegal entry and exit. This synergy aims to strengthen supervision of border areas which have many alternative routes. Coordination is also carried out with the Nunukan Regency Government through the Employment Service, sub-district apparatus, and village government in outreach activities regarding correct PMI placement procedures, conveying information to the community, and preventing illegal recruitment practices. Through this collaboration, it is hoped that the public will gain an understanding of the procedures for working abroad in accordance with statutory provisions.

Based on the results of interviews with APTU Ali Murtaji, S.H. as Head of the General Crimes Unit (Kanit Pidum) of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, coordination in handling Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) is carried out in accordance with the duties and authority of each agency. In handling cases, the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit coordinates with the Nunukan Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Services Center (BP3MI) to identify the status of prospective PMIs, obtain information regarding migrant worker placement procedures, and ensure that requirements are fulfilled in accordance with statutory provisions.

Coordination with the Immigration Office is carried out through checking and verifying travel documents if allegations of unauthorized use of documents or immigration violations are found. The results of the examination become one of the supporting materials in the inquiry and investigation process if elements of a criminal act are found. In monitoring border areas, the Nunukan Police also coordinates with the Indonesian National Army (TNI) through patrols and security in areas that are prone to being used as non-procedural departure routes for PMI. Apart from that, coordination with the Nunukan Regency Government, especially the Employment Service, was carried out in outreach activities to the community and exchange of information regarding the protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers.

According to APTU Ali Murtaji, S.H., coordination between agencies is carried out through exchanging information, communication in handling cases, as well as implementing joint activities according to needs in the field. Each agency carries out its respective duties and authorities so that the process of handling Indonesian Migrant Workers can run in an integrated manner and there is no overlap in authority.

Based on the research results, the author believes that inter-agency coordination is an important factor in supporting the effectiveness of handling Indonesian Migrant Workers in Nunukan Regency. Each agency has different authorities, so the success of handling PMI really depends on synergy, exchanging information and carrying out tasks in an integrated manner. With good coordination, the process of prevention, supervision and law enforcement regarding non-procedural PMI departure practices can be implemented more effectively.

Analysis of the Implementation of PMI Handling by the Nunukan Police

The handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) by the Nunukan Police has basically been carried out in accordance with the functions and authority of the Indonesian National Police as regulated in Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police. In carrying out its duties, the Nunukan Police not only acts as a law enforcement officer, but also carries out the functions of prevention, protection, guidance and service to the community, especially to prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers who have the potential to become victims of non-procedural departures.

Based on the research results, the handling of PMI by the Nunukan Police is carried out through several forms of activities, namely legal education to the community, patrols and surveillance in border areas, intelligence activities, police operations, inquiries and investigations into criminal acts related to PMI, as well as coordination with BP3MI, Immigration Office, TNI, Manpower Service and other related agencies. The implementation of these various efforts shows that PMI's handling is not only oriented towards taking action against perpetrators, but also prioritizing preventive measures so that people do not become victims of illegal recruitment.

Results of interviews with Aipda Eko Daryanto, S.H. as an Investigator with the General Crimes Unit (Pidum) of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, indicated that the handling of PMI in border areas was carried out through inter-agency coordination as well as law enforcement against parties who carried out non-procedural recruitment and departure of PMI. The Nunukan Police also routinely exchange information and carry out joint operations as an effort to prevent criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers.

When viewed from the perspective of Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, the implementation of handling carried out by the Nunukan Police has supported the aim of protecting PMI, especially in preventing non-procedural departures and providing protection for the community from the practice of human trafficking and other forms of exploitation. However, the protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers is not entirely within the authority of the Nunukan Police, but is a joint responsibility between the police, BP3MI, regional government, Immigration Office and related agencies in accordance with their respective authorities.

Based on the results of this analysis, it can be concluded that the handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers by the Nunukan Police has been carried out in accordance with the duties and authority granted by statutory regulations. Prevention, law enforcement and cross-sectoral coordination efforts are a form of implementation of the police function in providing legal protection to Indonesian Migrant Workers in the border areas of Nunukan Regency. However, the effectiveness of implementing this treatment still requires ongoing support and synergy from all relevant agencies as well as active community participation so that the practice of non-procedural departures for PMIs can be minimized.

Geographical problems and the number of unofficial routes

Nunukan Regency is one of the border areas of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia which has a strategic position because it borders directly on the State of Malaysia, especially the State of Sabah. This geographical location makes Nunukan Regency one of the main exit and entry points for community mobility, including Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI). The high flow of population movement between countries causes this region to have a fairly high level of vulnerability to various forms of legal violations, such as the non-procedural departure of Indonesian Migrant Workers, people smuggling, the Crime of Trafficking in Persons (TPPO), falsification of travel documents, and other cross-border crimes.

These geographical conditions cause the implementation of supervision by the Nunukan Police to face various limitations. Not all crossing routes can be monitored continuously due to the vastness of the border area and the many access points that can be used as departure routes. As a result, there is still an opportunity for illegal recruiting networks to bring prospective migrant workers to Malaysia without fulfilling the requirements specified in statutory regulations. Based on the results of interviews with AIPTU Ali Murtaji, S.H. as Head of the General Crimes Unit (Kanit Pidum) of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, the geographical condition of Nunukan Regency is one of the main obstacles in implementing supervision of the departure activities of Indonesian Migrant Workers. According to him, supervision is not only carried out at official ports, but must also cover traditional ports and sea routes which are often used as non-procedural departure access.

As stated by AIPTU Ali Murtaji, S.H "with the condition of the Nunukan region which borders directly with Malaysia, supervision is not only carried out at official ports, but must also cover small ports which are often used as illegal departure routes". The results of the interview show that the geographical characteristics of Nunukan Regency provide challenges for the Nunukan Police in carrying out optimal supervision. Even though patrols and police operations are carried out regularly, the existence of unofficial routes is still used by perpetrators to avoid supervision by law enforcement officials.

Based on the results of an interview with the Head of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, AIPTU Ali Murtaji, S.H., it is known that in the process of sending Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) non-procedurally, the perpetrators used several small docks in the Nunukan Regency area as a departure route to Malaysia. These docks are used because they have direct access to Malaysian waters and do not undergo inspections like official ports.

Several locations that are often used as transit routes and non-procedural PMI departures include Sei Pancang Pier, Aji Kuning Village Pier, Bambang Pier, and Lalo Salo/Binalawan Pier. These locations are in the Sebatik Island area which geographically has direct proximity to the Tawau area, Sabah, Malaysia.

Sei Pancang Pier is one of the locations that is often used because it is located directly opposite the Malaysian territory. These geographical conditions make it easier for perpetrators to transport prospective migrant workers using small boats to Tawau via unofficial sea routes.

The Aji Kuning Village Pier is also one of the points used for non-procedural PMI delivery activities. The proximity of the Aji Kuning Village area to the Malaysian border means that this location has easy access to sea routes used by networks sending illegal migrant workers.

Bambang Pier is one of the coastal areas that has quite active access to sea transportation. This condition is exploited by certain parties to transport prospective migrant workers secretly via alternative routes that are not recorded in the official departure system.

Meanwhile, Lalo Salo/Binalawan Pier is also an area that has the potential to be used as a non-procedural PMI departure route because it has a sea route that can connect the Sebatik Island area with Tawau, Malaysia. The perpetrators used this route to avoid supervision and inspection of departure documents.

In its implementation, prospective migrant workers who have been recruited from areas of origin such as South Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara and East Java will be directed to Nunukan Regency. After arriving at the transit area, prospective migrant workers are then placed temporarily before departing via these unofficial docks for Tawau, Malaysia. The use of these small docks shows that the geographical conditions of Nunukan Regency are one of the factors that make this area vulnerable to illegal PMI shipping practices. The many alternative sea

accesses and proximity to Malaysia provide opportunities for human trafficking networks to carry out non-procedural activities of sending migrant workers.

Based on the results of interviews with Any Syukri, S.E. as a Functional Labor Analyst Officer at the Nunukan Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Services Center (BP3MI), one of the main obstacles in protecting Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in Nunukan Regency is the geographical condition of the border area which has many crossing routes to Malaysia. According to him, the large number of routes makes it difficult to carry out supervision because when security is focused on one location, the perpetrators can take advantage of other routes that are not monitored. As stated by Any Syukri, S.E.: "The difficulty we experienced in handling PMI was the condition of the Nunukan Regency area which directly borders Malaysia. There are many crossing routes, so that when surveillance is carried out at one point, the perpetrators can use other routes." (Interview, June 12, 2026).

He also explained that even though security posts had been placed in several border areas, the practice of non-procedural departures of PMIs was still found. This shows that the geographical characteristics of Nunukan Regency are still a challenge in efforts to protect Indonesian Migrant Workers and require stronger synergy between BP3MI, Nunukan Police, TNI, Immigration Office and other related agencies.

According to the author's analysis, geographical conditions are not a factor that can be eliminated, but are challenges that must be anticipated through more effective handling strategies. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen supervision in border areas through increasing patrols in vulnerable areas, utilizing technology to support surveillance, as well as increasing coordination between the Nunukan Police, BP3MI, Immigration Office, TNI, Regional Government and the community. This synergy is expected to narrow the space for illegal recruiting networks and reduce the practice of non-procedural departure of Indonesian Migrant Workers in the border areas of Nunukan Regency.

Human Resources Problems

Apart from geographical conditions, limited human resources (HR) are also one of the problems faced by the Nunukan Police in handling Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in border areas. Handling PMI cases requires personnel who have skills in the fields of investigations, investigations, intelligence, as well as an understanding of the provisions of laws and regulations governing the protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, criminal acts of human trafficking, and immigration. The complexity of these problems requires the availability of adequate personnel both in terms of numbers and competence.

Nunukan Regency has a large working area with border characteristics consisting of coastal areas, small islands, and sea routes which provide access for people in and out of Malaysia. This condition requires the Nunukan Police to divide personnel to carry out various police duties, such as maintaining security and public order, carrying out patrols, carrying out inquiries and investigations, as well as monitoring areas that are prone to being used as non-procedural departure routes for PMI. As a result, the need for personnel to handle PMI problems often has to be adjusted to the implementation of other police duties.

Based on the results of interviews with Aipda Eko Daryanto, S.H. as an Investigator with the General Crimes Unit (Pidum) of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, the limited number of personnel is one of the challenges in handling cases related to Indonesian Migrant Workers. According to him, the large area of surveillance and high mobility of people in border areas means that police personnel have to carry out various tasks simultaneously. Therefore, the implementation of supervision and handling of PMI cases requires cooperation with other police functions as well as support from related agencies.

The results of these interviews show that limited human resources are not only related to the number of personnel, but are also related to the need to increase the capacity and competence of the authorities in handling criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers. Handling PMI cases often involves aspects of employment, immigration, and criminal acts of human trafficking, so a comprehensive understanding of the law is needed so that the inquiry and investigation process can be carried out effectively.

According to the author's analysis, limited human resources are one of the factors that influence the effectiveness of handling PMI in the border areas of Nunukan Regency. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen personnel capacity through continuous education and training, increase the number of personnel in units that handle general crimes, as well as optimize coordination between agencies.

Problems with Facilities, Infrastructure and Budget

The implementation of handling Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in the border areas of Nunukan Regency is not only influenced by geographical conditions and human resources, but also by the availability of facilities, infrastructure and budget. These three aspects have an important role in supporting the effectiveness of the implementation of police duties, both in prevention, supervision, investigation and investigation of criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers.

As a region that borders directly with Malaysia, Nunukan Regency has geographical characteristics that require adequate support from facilities and infrastructure. Monitoring border areas requires operational vehicles, sea transportation facilities, communication devices and other supporting equipment so that police officers can reach areas that have the potential to become departure routes for Indonesian Migrant Workers in a non-procedural manner. If the available facilities and infrastructure are inadequate, the implementation of supervision and law enforcement will be less than optimal.

Apart from facilities and infrastructure, budget availability is also a factor that influences the implementation of the Nunukan Police's duties. The budget is needed to support patrol activities, police operations, investigations, investigations, coordination with related agencies, as well as outreach activities to the public regarding procedures for placing Indonesian Migrant Workers in accordance with statutory provisions. Budget limitations can cause the implementation of these activities to be adjusted according to the priority scale so that not all vulnerable areas can be monitored optimally.

Based on the results of interviews with Aipda Eko Daryanto, S.H. as an Investigator with the General Crimes Unit (Pidum) of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, facilities, infrastructure and budget support are factors that influence the effectiveness of handling cases of Indonesian Migrant Workers in border areas. According to him, the large area of supervision and the many routes that must be monitored require the support of operational facilities and an adequate budget so that supervision, inquiry and inquiry activities can be carried out optimally.

The results of these interviews show that the success of handling Indonesian Migrant Workers is not only determined by the ability of law enforcement officers, but also by the availability of adequate facilities and financing support. Limited facilities, infrastructure and budget have the potential to influence the intensity of supervision and the speed of handling suspected criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers.

According to the author's analysis, improving the quality of facilities and infrastructure as well as adequate budget support are important requirements in supporting the implementation of the duties of the Nunukan Police in the border area. This support will increase the effectiveness of patrols, strengthen supervision on vulnerable routes, and optimize the investigation and

investigation process for criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers. In this way, it is hoped that the implementation of handling PMI in Nunukan Regency can take place more effectively, efficiently and be able to provide optimal legal protection to the community.

Problems of Network Disclosure and Evidence

One of the problems faced by the Nunukan Police in handling non-procedural Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) is the disclosure of recruiter networks and evidence in the investigation process. Based on the research results, case disclosure does not only focus on perpetrators who have been arrested, but is also directed at identifying other parties involved in the non-procedural recruitment, transportation and departure of PMI. However, these efforts often face various obstacles because perpetrators generally work in organized networks and use various methods to avoid law enforcement processes. The following is data on the handling of TIP cases and Indonesian Migrant Protection Crimes handled by the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit starting from 2022-2025.

Results of interviews with AIPTU Ali Murtaji, S.H. as the Head of Criminal Investigation Unit of the Nunukan Police, pointed out that uncovering the non-procedural Indonesian Migrant Worker (PMI) departure network was not enough to arrest perpetrators found in the field. Investigators must develop cases to identify the parties who played a role in the recruitment, transportation and departure of prospective migrant workers to the destination country. In its implementation, this effort faced various obstacles because the perpetrators worked in organized networks, used different identities, moved from location to location, and used unofficial routes in border areas, making the tracing process difficult.

These findings are strengthened by data on the handling of cases from the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit as presented in Table 3.1. During the period 2022 to 2025, 28 reports of Crimes of Trafficking in Persons (TPPO) were recorded, with 18 cases successfully resolved, while 10 cases still required further development. In the same period there were also 28 crime reports related to Indonesian Migrant Workers, of which 16 cases have been resolved and 12 cases are still in the process of being resolved. This data illustrates that although the rate of case resolution continues to increase, there are still a number of cases that require in-depth investigation due to difficulties in obtaining evidence, witness statements, or identifying the main perpetrators who control the non-procedural PMI departure network.

The handling of this case refers to Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers as the basis for protecting PMI, Law Number 21 of 2007 concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Human Trafficking if elements of human trafficking are found, as well as Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia which is the basis for the police's authority in carrying out inquiries and investigations.

If reviewed based on developments each year, the number of TIP reports reached 2 cases in 2022, increased to 15 cases in 2023, then decreased to 8 cases in 2024, and 3 cases in 2025. From the total of these reports, case resolution shows a fairly good trend, namely 12 cases were completed in 2023, 4 cases in 2024, and 2 cases in 2024. 2025. Meanwhile, crimes related to PMI were recorded in 4 cases in 2022, 6 cases in 2023, and 9 cases each in 2024 and 2025. This condition shows that Nunukan Regency is still an area that has a high level of vulnerability to crimes related to non-procedural PMI departures so that it requires continuous law enforcement efforts.

Statement by AIPTU Ali Murtaji, S.H. also revealed that the evidentiary process is often hampered by limited evidence and the lack of information that can be provided by victims and witnesses. In a number of cases, the victim only knows the intermediary and therefore does not

know the identity of the main perpetrator. Apart from that, the perpetrators who act as network controllers are generally outside the jurisdiction of the Nunukan Police, even abroad, so investigators have to coordinate with various agencies to develop the case more thoroughly.

Problems of Inter-agency Coordination

The implementation of handling Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in the border areas of Nunukan Regency is not only influenced by geographical conditions and human resources, but also by the availability of facilities, infrastructure and budget. These three aspects have an important role in supporting the effectiveness of the implementation of police duties, both in prevention, supervision, investigation and investigation of criminal acts related to Indonesian Migrant Workers.

Public legal awareness is one of the factors that influences the effectiveness of handling Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in the border areas of Nunukan Regency. Even though the government has established various provisions regarding procedures for the placement and protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers through Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, in practice there are still people who choose to work abroad through non-procedural channels. This condition shows that people's understanding and compliance with legal provisions still needs to be improved.

Another factor is the lack of public understanding regarding the official mechanism for placing PMI. Some prospective migrant workers do not know the importance of valid departure documents and procedures, so they easily accept offers from brokers or sponsors who promise ease in the departure process.

Low levels of education and limited information also influence people's decisions to work non-procedurally. A lack of understanding of the rights, obligations and risks of working without legal protection means that some PMI candidates do not consider the impacts that could occur.

Based on the results of interviews with Aipda Eko Daryanto, S.H. as an Investigator with the General Crimes Unit (Pidum) of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, there are still prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers who choose to use the non-procedural route because they do not understand the applicable legal provisions and prioritize the ease of the departure process. According to him, this condition is often exploited by illegal recruiters who offer jobs with a fast process without fulfilling the requirements as regulated in statutory regulations.

The results of these interviews show that the community's low level of legal awareness is one of the challenges in efforts to prevent and enforce the law against the practice of non-procedural departure of PMIs. Even though law enforcement officials have carried out supervision and action, these efforts will be more effective if they are supported by public understanding of the importance of following official procedures when working abroad.

According to the author's analysis, increasing public legal awareness must be part of the strategy for handling Indonesian Migrant Workers in border areas. These efforts can be carried out through legal education, outreach regarding correct PMI placement procedures, education regarding the dangers of non-procedural departures, as well as involving local governments, BP3MI, law enforcement officials, community leaders and educational institutions. By increasing public legal awareness, it is hoped that the practice of non-procedural departure of Indonesian Migrant Workers can be minimized so that the aim of protecting Indonesian Migrant Workers as mandated in Law Number 18 of 2017 can be realized optimally.

Efforts by the Nunukan Police to Overcome These Problems

Handling Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) in the Nunukan Regency border area is not only the responsibility of the Nunukan Police, but also involves various agencies, such as the

Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Service Center (BP3MI), Directorate General of Immigration, Indonesian National Army (TNI), Regional Government, Prosecutor's Office, and other related agencies. Each agency has different duties and authorities in accordance with statutory provisions, so that good coordination is an important factor in realizing effective handling of PMI.

Based on the research results, inter-agency coordination has been carried out through various forms of activities, such as exchanging information, carrying out joint operations, coordination meetings, as well as joint handling of cases related to non-procedural Indonesian Migrant Workers. Results of interviews with Mrs. Any Syukri, S.E. as BP3MI North Kalimantan Labor Analyst on Friday, June 12 2026, indicated that non-procedural handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) can only be carried out effectively through inter-agency synergy. In its implementation, BP3MI collaborates with the Nunukan Police, Immigration Office, TNI, local government, and other related agencies through exchanging information regarding non-procedural PMI candidates, handling victims, carrying out outreach, and monitoring routes that have the potential to be used as access for illegal departures. According to him, this collaboration is an important factor in speeding up case handling while strengthening prevention efforts. However, its implementation still faces several obstacles, such as limited human resources, the size of the border area, and differences in the duties and authority of each agency. This condition means that non-procedural handling of PMI cannot run optimally and still requires strengthening cross-sector cooperation mechanisms. Apart from interview results, research findings are also supported by documents or research data which show that coordination in handling PMI requires the same perception, fast exchange of information, and a clear division of tasks between the agencies involved. In some conditions, differences in authority, limited resources, and lack of optimal exchange of information can cause the non-procedural PMI handling process to not run optimally.

Juridically, coordination between agencies in handling Indonesian Migrant Workers is based on Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, which mandates the involvement of various ministries, institutions and regional governments in providing protection to PMI. In addition, the implementation of law enforcement by the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia refers to Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, while the handling of criminal acts related to human trafficking refers to Law Number 21 of 2007 concerning the Eradication of Criminal Acts of Human Trafficking.

When analyzed using law enforcement theory according to Soerjono Soekanto, the problems of inter-agency coordination are influenced by several factors. From the law enforcement aspect, coordination requires effective communication and cooperation between institutions so that case handling can proceed in an integrated manner. From the aspect of facilities and infrastructure, the availability of an information exchange system and operational facility support also determines the success of coordination. Meanwhile, from a legal aspect, clarity in the division of authority between each agency is an important factor so that there is no overlap in the implementation of tasks. Thus, the effectiveness of coordination does not only depend on the commitment of each agency, but also on the support of regulations, resources and coordination mechanisms that run continuously.

According to the author's analysis, inter-agency coordination is an important element in handling Indonesian Migrant Workers in the border area of Nunukan Regency. Considering the characteristics of border areas and the complexity of non-procedural PMI problems, more effective coordination is needed through rapid exchange of information, implementation of integrated operations, and strengthening synergy between agencies in accordance with their

respective duties and authorities. In this way, the handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers can be carried out more optimally and provide more effective legal protection for migrant workers.

Analysis of the Effectiveness of Efforts undertaken

The effectiveness of handling Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) by the Nunukan Police can be analyzed based on the implementation of the police's duties in preventing, enforcing the law and coordinating with related agencies. These efforts have basically demonstrated the commitment of the Nunukan Police in carrying out its authority as regulated in Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia and Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers.

Based on the research results, various steps taken by the Nunukan Police, such as patrols in border areas, police operations, inquiries and inquiries into perpetrators, legal education to the community, as well as coordination with BP3MI, the Immigration Office, TNI, and other related agencies, have contributed to preventing and cracking down on the practice of non-procedural departures of PMIs. One indicator of this effectiveness can be seen from the success of the Nunukan Police together with related agencies in thwarting the departure of 82 prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers through unofficial channels in 2025. This success shows that coordination and law enforcement have provided real results in preventing the practice of non-procedural departure of PMI.

However, the research results also show that the practice of non-procedural departure of PMI is still found in the Nunukan Regency area. This condition indicates that the efforts made have not been completely able to eliminate this practice. Geographical factors in border areas, the number of unofficial routes, limited human resources, support for facilities and infrastructure, and low public legal awareness are still obstacles that influence the effectiveness of handling.

Based on the results of an interview with Brigadier Eka Kumalasari as Assistant Investigator of the Nunukan Police Criminal Investigation Unit, the effectiveness of handling PMI was greatly influenced by inter-agency cooperation and community participation in providing information regarding the alleged non-procedural departure of PMI. According to him, successful handling does not only depend on police actions, but also requires support from BP3MI, the Immigration Office, local government and the community so that prevention and law enforcement efforts can run optimally.

When analyzed using Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness, the effectiveness of law enforcement is influenced by five factors, namely legal factors, law enforcement officers, facilities and infrastructure, society and culture. In this research, legal factors have provided a clear basis for the Nunukan Police in carrying out handling of PMI. However, the effectiveness of its implementation is still influenced by limited human resources, geographical conditions of border areas, support for facilities and infrastructure, and the level of legal awareness of the community. Therefore, the success of handling PMI does not only depend on the existence of statutory regulations, but is also influenced by the readiness of law enforcement officials, facility support, and community participation.

Based on this analysis, the author believes that the efforts made by the Nunukan Police have been quite effective, but this effectiveness is not yet optimal. This can be seen from the success in thwarting the departure of PMI non-procedurally and carrying out law enforcement against the perpetrators, but on the other hand, various obstacles are still found that cause this practice to continue to occur. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the quality of coordination between agencies, strengthen human resource capacity, provide adequate facilities and infrastructure, and increase public legal awareness so that the handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers in the border areas of Nunukan Regency can be carried out more effectively and sustainably.

Conclusion

The handling of Indonesian Migrant Workers by the Nunukan Police in the border area of Nunukan Regency has been carried out in accordance with the authority of the Indonesian National Police as regulated in Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia and Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers. This handling is carried out through prevention efforts, law enforcement and coordination with related agencies. The results of the research show that the implementation of this handling has been carried out in accordance with the mechanisms and division of authority of each agency. However, the effectiveness of the handling is not fully optimal because it is still influenced by the characteristics of border areas, the high mobility of Indonesian Migrant Workers, as well as various obstacles in implementing law enforcement. The problems faced by the Nunukan Police in handling Indonesian Migrant Workers include the geographical conditions of Nunukan Regency which directly borders Malaysia and has many unofficial routes, limited human resources, limited facilities, infrastructure and budget, as well as low public legal awareness regarding official PMI placement procedures. These factors influence the effectiveness of supervision and law enforcement regarding non-procedural departures of PMIs. Based on the research results, the Nunukan Police have made various efforts, including increasing patrols and supervision of border areas, strengthening coordination with related agencies, optimizing inquiries and inquiries, as well as carrying out legal education to the community. Although these efforts have contributed to suppressing the practice of non-procedural departures of PMIs, their effectiveness is not yet fully optimal because they are still influenced by limited resources and the characteristics of border areas.

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