

## Indonesia-Timor Leste to conduct joint survey on border dispute



The border post of the Republic of Indonesia and Timor Leste. (ANTARA)

Kupang (ANTARA News) - The governments of Indonesia and Timor Leste will conduct a joint survey of some border areas in East Nusa Tenggara Province, which are still considered as disputed territory by the two countries.

The results of the joint research would serve as groundwork for conducting a joint discussion to determine the disputed boundaries between the two countries, Head of the Border Management Agency of East Nusa Tenggara Paul Manehat stated.

"The joint research would be conducted in the near future, involving delegations from both Indonesia and Timor Leste," he noted here on Monday.

The initiative to conduct a joint research is proposed by Indonesias Ministry of Foreign Affairs as in the latest meeting with the government of Timor Leste in Dili, last year, the two countries had not reached an agreement on how to deal with the border dispute.

Paul remarked that the research would focus on some disputed areas such as the Citrana-Noelbes area in Kupang regency and Oecuse and Manusasi in Central North Timor regency.

The research would also involve the traditional and community leaders who have been living in coexistence in each territory in the border areas since their views are necessary to obtain the actual data related to the history of the areas located on the existing boundary points.

"Such concept has been based on the agreement between the two countries. It is aimed at gaining the best result to solve the border issue, which has been a cause of rising tensions between Indonesia and Timor Leste," Paul stated.

Commander of Udayana IX Military District Major General M. Setyo Sularso claimed that there are at least six disputed border areas in East Nusa Tenggara between Indonesia and Timor Leste.

Sularso affirmed that the disputes between the countries are categorized into two types of border problems.

The first one is an unresolved segment, an issue related to the state border between Indonesia and Timor Leste in which the borderline has not been agreed upon or decided by the two countries.

The second one is an unsurveyed segment, an issue concerning the borderline, which has been decided by the two countries, but the people of Indonesia and Timor Leste are unaware of it.

There are two disputes that are considered as an unsurveyed segment. The first is related to an area in a river or delta along the Noelbesi-Citrana area, North Netamnanu village, East Amfoang sub-district, Kupang regency.

The river is 4.5 kilometers in length.

"Indonesia wants its boundary line to be located on the western side of the river," Sularso state.

However, Timor Leste has a different point of view.

Without regard to the sterile area status, which means there must be no activity in the disputed area, Timor Leste has, in fact, already built permanent agricultural offices, meeting hall, logistics warehouse, rice mill, irrigation canals, and paved roads.

Source: <http://www.antaranews.com/en/news/102880/indonesia-timor-leste-to-conduct-joint-survey-on-border-dispute>