



Organized Crime Expands its Network in Timor-Leste

Mahein's Voice No. 129, 31 January 2018



Photo Timor-Leste Security Authority, 2018

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Introduction

On 23 January 2018 the Maritime Police Unit (UPM) of the National Police of Timor-Leste (PNTL) carried out a successful operation. The police confiscated 9 containers imported by the company Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd.

The containers entered the Dili Port at various times stretching from August to November 2017. Of the nine containers, seven arrived directly from Singapore and two others passed through Surabaya, Indonesia, before arriving in Timor-Leste.¹

When the nine containers arrived at the Dili Port, they were inspected by Customs, the Ministry of Health, and other relevant authorities. Ostensibly, the nine containers were carrying raw materials for producing medicine in Timor-Leste. Once it had imported the containers into Timor-Leste, Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd. promptly filed a request with Customs to export the materials to Indonesia, on the basis that Timor-Leste does not have a factory to produce medicine.

When the materials from the nine containers were about to leave the Dili Port for re-exportation, they were confiscated by the UPM-PNTL. Two Indonesian citizens who had come to the Dili Port to receive the contents of the nine containers were also arrested. The materials in the containers are suspected of being ingredients for producing the drug PCC (Paracetamol, Caffeine, Carisoprodol) and other narcotics.²

Many questions have arisen regarding these containers. Why was it necessary to bring them to Timor-Leste if the goal was to export them to Indonesia? Is it impossible for Indonesian businesses to import directly, forcing them to stop in Timor-Leste beforehand? Or are these raw materials prohibited in Indonesia, meaning that Timor-Leste was used as a transit point? Who are the two Indonesian citizens who came to receive these materials in Timor-Leste?

Methodology

This report's analysis is based on monitoring by Fundasaun Mahein (FM) of the incident involving the nine containers confiscated by the UPM-PNTL on 23 January 2018. FM's analysis considered other relevant documents and publications by national media about this case. The report was concluded via FM's method of Security Sector Discussion (SSD), which involves researchers from FM analysing the subject matter related to this report and producing recommendations.

Context

¹ Timor Post, 29 January 2018. p23

² *ibid.* p23

The materials in the nine containers imported by Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd. and confiscated by the Maritime Policy Unit (UPM) on 23 January 2018 are listed in the table below.

Table 01: Materials contained in the nine containers

No.	Descriptions	Net Weight	Gross Weight
1.	PARACETAMOL 217 SACKS	5425.00 KGS	5767.00 KGS
2.	ALLUPURINOL 200 DRUMS	5000.00 KGS	5500.00 KGS
3.	PIROXICAM 80 DRUMS	2000.00 KGS	2138 KGS
Total	497 PACKAGES	12425.00 KGS	13405.00 KGS

Source: Security Authority, 24 January 2018

Figure 01: Packing List that Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd. submitted to Customs

MILLENIA IMPEX PTE., LTD.
1557 KEPPEL ROAD #02-16 INCHCAPE MARKETING BUILDING
SINGAPORE 089066

Packing List **ORIGINAL**

Ship To : NAROMAN FURAK UNIPESSOAL LDA.
DELTA FOMENTO III COMORO
DILI-TIMOR LESTE
PHONE:+ 670 7758555
ATTN: JOSE ANTONIO DO C.BRITES

Invoice No: MI17-
Date : 29/08/2018

MARKS	DESCRIPTIONS	NET WEIGHT	GROSS WEIGHT	MEASUREMENT
N/M	PARACETAMOL 217 SACKS	5425.00 KGS	5767.00 KGS	2.00
	ALLUPURINOL 200 DRUMS	5000.00 KGS	5500.00 KGS	
	PIROXICAM 80 DRUMS	2000.00 KGS	2138.00 KGS	
	497 PACKAGES	12425.00 KGS	13405.00 KGS	28.00

Source: Security Authority, 24 January 2018

UPM-PNTL Commander Police Superintendent Lino Saldanha stated to local media that these nine containers all came from Singapore, seven from Singapore directly and two from Singapore via Surabaya, Indonesia. However the true destination of all nine containers was Indonesia. Furthermore, these containers did not enter the Dili

Port simultaneously, some arriving in August and September 2017 and some arriving October and November 2017.³

“We wonder, if these containers were intended for Indonesia, why did they come to Timor instead of just going directly from Singapore to Indonesia?”

After these nine containers arrived at the Dili Port, Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd. filed a request with Customs to export their cargo to Indonesia. Customs General Director José Abilio stated that:⁴

“These containers arrived at the Dili Port in August and September 2017. Their owners filed the correct documents, including paying taxes, but afterwards they desired to export them and filed another request. So they could not unload the containers outside of Customs. Consequently, it is clear that Customs authorized these containers to go to Jakarta, Indonesia, based on their documents.”

When these nine containers arrived at the Dili Port, they were inspected and tested by Customs. The results indicated they were not drugs.⁵

Figure 02: Customs inspects the materials brought in the nine containers



Photo: Timor-Leste Security Authority, 24 January 2018

Customs General Director José Abilio also stated that the importer had a license and had completed the legal requirements and procedures required by Customs. The raw materials in the containers were marked as “import” not as “transit.” According to the documents submitted to Customs, the materials were marked as “import” because

³ *ibid.* p23

⁴ *ibid.* p23

⁵ *ibid.* p23

the firm filed its importation documents with Timor-Leste before submitting their request to export the materials.⁶

Figure 03: Raw materials unloaded from the containers were put onto a small boat



Source: Timor-Leste Security Authority, 24 January 2018

On 23 January 2018, Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd. unloaded the materials from the containers at the Dili Port and began loading them onto a small boat bound for Indonesia. As they did this, the security authorities led by UPM-PNTL apprehended them on the basis of suspicion that the containers' contents were ingredients for narcotics production. The UPM-PNTL also arrested two Indonesians who came to receive the nine containers' materials, as well as the crew of the boat that was about to transport the materials to Indonesia.

Questions About the Nine Containers

1. The containers imported from Singapore by Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd. arrived in Dili at various times between August and November 2017. Why did they not enter all at once?
2. Of the nine containers, seven arrived from Singapore directly while two others passed through Surabaya, Indonesia before arriving in Timor-Leste. Why did these containers travel separately?

⁶ ibid.p23



3. Why did these nine containers arrive at the Dili Port at all when they were intended to be exported to Indonesia?
4. The nine containers were transported from Singapore in Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd.'s own boat. Why were the containers' contents unloaded and transferred to a different, smaller boat bound for Indonesia?
5. Who are the two people who arrived at the Dili Port to receive the containers' contents?
6. These nine containers were inspected by Customs, the Ministry of Health, and other relevant institutions. Why did these institutions not discover that the containers held ingredients for PCC and other narcotics?

Analysis

The preliminary report from the security authority stated that the containers' contents had been identified as ingredients for producing the drug PCC (Paracetamol, Caffeine, Carisoprodol) and other narcotics. Indonesia rigorously controls PCC, which can harm those who consume it. Consequently, it is very difficult to bring these materials into Indonesia directly.

The materials in these nine containers were therefore brought to Dili because Timor-Leste is a possible gateway into Indonesia. Given the illicit nature of its operations, Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd. did not intend to bring these containers to Indonesia on its own ship. Instead, the traffickers planned to unload all the material from these nine containers and transfer the contraband to a small boat in order to smuggle it into Indonesia.

Organized crime groups commonly employ such means when they perceive an available route allowing access to their intended destination. Timor-Leste has in the past been frequently accused of acting as a useful route for organized crime groups seeking to enter Indonesia. In this case, the nine containers containing the PCC ingredients came to Timor-Leste before being exported to Indonesia. This is a typical technique used by organized crime groups.

The aforementioned incident also involves the two Indonesian citizens that came to receive the contents of the nine containers at the Dili Port. The security authority's preliminary report stated these two Indonesian citizens were fugitives listed by Indonesia's National Anti-Narcotics Agency (BNN) due to repeated involvement in drug trafficking in Indonesia.

In addition to being a transit point that organized crime groups use to enter Indonesia, Timor-Leste is also home to a network operating within the country itself. These organized crime operations involve personnel from various state institutions. UPM-PNTL Commander Police Superintendent Liand Saldanha stated that there appeared to be irregularities and participation in organized crime by high-ranking



officials in Customs, APORTIL, Quarantine, and the Ministry of Health, as well as in Naroman Furak Unipessoal Ltd. itself.⁷

Recommendations

1. The Public Prosecutor should open an investigation into Customs officials and personnel from other relevant institutions suspected of involvement in organized crime activities. The investigation should include the business that tried to use Timor-Leste as a drug trafficking transit point.
2. The Government must improve services and controls at the Port and at Customs, especially regarding the import and export of materials by ship.
3. The Government must rigorously monitor and assess the services in the Port and at Customs to prevent the involvement of state personnel in organized crime activities.

⁷ See also Timor Post, 29 January 2018. p23



Bibliography

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