

## **Geopolitical Policy Of Cross-Border Post As An Effort To Improve Society Welfare On Border Of Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

Since 2008, the political geography policy of the Sintang Regency Government has been given through a proposal to the Central Government to improve the status of the road from Sintang Regency to Sungai Kelik to support the national strategic project for developing the National Cross Border Post. This article aims to analyze the geopolitical policy of the Cross Border Post to improve the interest of the people in the Sintang Regency. The method is used by information and data collected through various literature and other references that are carried out in-depth. From the results of this study, it was found that there is potential in border areas, including rubber and oil palm plantations, and no less important is the yield of pepper plantations that can be produced in abundance. The construction of a Cross-Border Post on Sungai Kelik accompanied by well-managed road access from Sintang to the border will potentially improve people's welfare.

**Keywords** Border; Cross-Border Post; Geopolitical Policy; Society Welfare

### **Introduction**

The goal of this study is to examine the geopolitical strategy used in the construction of Border Crossing Posts to improve the well-being of the inhabitants of Sintang District, which shares a direct border with Malaysia. To see the potential and obstacles that will be experienced

in the development of the Cross-Border Post on the Kelik River in Sintang Regency in terms of politics, economy, and society, a geopolitical strategy is required.

Currently, all countries in the world are facing changes in the industrial era towards the industrial era 4.0, including in the border areas of Indonesia (Elyta, Martoyo & Herlan, 2021). Indonesia is one of the largest archipelagic countries in the world characterized by an archipelago, where territories have boundaries and rights determined by law. Indonesia has international land borders with three neighboring countries: Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, and Timor Leste. While at sea, Indonesian are bordered by ten neighboring countries, namely India, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Palau, Australia, Timor Leste, and Papua New Guinea.

The impact of informal trade networks is highlighted by the anthropological and geographic governance models (Walther, 2015) that emerge from cross-border trade (Titeca & Flynn, 2014). Development in border areas is carried out to enforce state defense and security. Therefore, the development of Cross Border Post does not only aim to build cross-border postal facilities but can become a new center of economic growth that encourages the increase of Indonesia's economy in border areas. Thus, the presence of Cross Border Post will improve the welfare of the people in the border area. The border area's size promotes prosperity through resource exploitation and equitable development. Because of its strategic geographic location, the border provides the potential for natural resources and business opportunities (Sunarya & Sudaryono, 2016).

As a result, the development concept has shifted from focusing solely on economic growth and structural improvements to concentrating on human development and long-term sustainability (Anuar & Azhar, 2019). Border regions have a high potential to be a center for regional development. Two critical factors least contribute to the economy of the border regions, accessibility to trade and rapid growth of the business (Evans, 2000). The National Border Management Agency of the Republic of Indonesia's Vision and Mission for 2020-2024 shows that achieving Indonesia as a developed country is sovereign and autonomous. It has a personality based on cooperation in border areas. The mission is to improve the quality of human resources, productive, independent, competitive economic structure, equitable and fair development, and protection and security for the entire nation.

The development of the Cross-Border Post is necessary to support the border (Pardo, Gil-Garcia, & Luna-Reyes, 2008). Cross-Border Post in Sungai Kelik Village (Kelik River) is proof that Indonesia, as a country with a natural border area with Malaysia, wants to increase economic growth in the border area. In the development process of Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post, security must be optimized because this Cross-Border Post has the primary function of customs, immigration, and quarantine posts. The main thing that must be considered is the access road to get there because this development will be very influential in pushing the wheels of the economy at the border. Creating cross-agency interoperability necessitates the support of higher levels of government, especially when creating interoperable systems that span government levels or national.

It also discussed political policy actions for border areas, including Sintang Regency, West Kalimantan Province. The Sintang District Government has given a proposal to the central government since 2008 regarding the improvement of the road status from Sintang District to Sungai Kelik.

The suggestion to improve the situation of this road is in the form of a district road to a national highway with a length of 215 kilometers, which will later become an access road to the Indonesia-Malaysia border area. The land prepared for the construction of Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post is 25 hectares. Sudyanto, Deputy Regent of Sintang, said that The Cross-Border Post is ready for 25 hectares of land. There is no problem with the land permit; it is just a matter of land clearing again this year. The land clearance for Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post is part of the public interest land acquisition procedure. It is planned that Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post, which will be built in Bukit Kelingking, in Sungai Kelik Village, will rise to the top because it adapts to the geographical location of the area, which is in the highlands.

Several previous studies were conducted by analyzing the effect of cross-border relations on the economy of border areas in the Sanggau Regency. The study results did not find a single development of cross-border relationships in a region. In addition, the results of this study have classified areas in Sanggau Regency into two groups, namely border districts including inland and non-border districts (Fariastuti, 2005). Meanwhile, the novelty of this research is that it focuses on political policy, which is geopolitical policy as an effort to improve social welfare in Sintang Regency. Previous research further analyzed the effects of transboundary areas in China related to border policy-making in transboundary ethnic regions. This study indicates that the transboundary site has a unique geographical position that has a clear impact on economic, socio-political, and cultural aspects (Bie, Zhou, & Cansong, 2013).

The novelty of this research lies in geopolitical policy to support the development of cross-border posts in the Sintang Regency. Access to the sea and distance from key markets, for example, have been demonstrated to have significant effects on shipping costs, which, in turn, have a substantial impact on manufactured goods trade flows (Limao & Venables, 2001). The development of the Kelik River Cross Border Post in the highlands, as well as a towering lighthouse that has piqued the interest of the neighboring community, will require a geopolitical plan. With the right strategy, it is believed that the development of the Kelik River Cross-Border Post may assist the economy of the people in the border area and become a good political strategy between the two countries to build relations between the two countries in the border region.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Geopolitical Policy***

Most of the regions in Indonesia border each other with neighboring countries, both those directly bordering on land, sea, and air. The border area is an area that is the boundary of several countries whose security must be guaranteed by each of the countries concerned (Caflish, 2000). The definition of the border area based on experts in international law is the outermost boundary of the territory of two countries that are in contact with each other either in the air, sea, or land, which can be grouped in terms of a customs-free zone or border zone. The boundaries of this territory must be determined based on the provisions of applicable international (EnXie, Reddy & Liang, 2017).

The border region means a region that plays an essential role in the political struggle between two countries. In addition, the border area also acts as a boundary between the interests of two independent jurisdictions (Guo, 2008). Regarding this academically, it is discussed in the scope of geopolitical policy studies. Geopolitics is a term that has been used to describe the study of geography from a political perspective since the late 19th and early 20th centuries, given the growth of political knowledge in the country's geography, which evolved into an

ideology that confirmed the law of expanding the State's frontiers (Malihah & Tanszil, 2008); (Kaledin, Chistobayev, & Elatskov, 2019).

Given the importance of the geopolitical policy role of the border area, which is often said to be the front porch of a nation or State that often encounters various military and non-military threats that can affect the sovereignty as well as defense and security of a country, a Cross-Border Post was built which is located in a sub-district in the border area (Elyta & Sahide, 2021). There is a territorial area of West Kalimantan directly adjacent to the State of Malaysia. This area is called the border area, defined as the territorial boundary between Indonesia and other countries, precisely on land areas included in the country's territory, usually located in the adjacent sub-district area.

### ***Cross-Border Post***

This framework has progressed to include significant changes in boundary thinking from a static perspective (Paasi 2009). Border studies have struggled with the rising knowledge that borders are fluid throughout the last 20 years. At various levels, barriers have been re-articulated. A world without boundaries is a fantasy. Borders would be meaningless in terms of morality. On the other hand, her work has a large following. Cross-Border Post is often defined as a post or checkpoint and crossing service for people and goods between countries. This inspection process is carried out to minimize illegal activities such as smuggling illicit drugs or drugs, human trafficking, etc. Several studies have suggested a variety of cutting-edge technology that could aid border agents in detecting (Bracchi, Cukic, & Cortellessa, 2006).

The acceleration of Cross-Border Post-development in Indonesia was first carried out in 2015. There have been two waves of accelerated Cross-Border Post-development in Indonesia. The first wave of accelerating supporting facilities and infrastructure for border areas and seven integrated Cross-Border Posts refers to Presidential Instruction No. 6 of 2015. The seven areas for accelerating Cross-Border Post-development are Entikong, Aruk, Wini, Nanga Badau, Skow, Mota'ain, and Motamasin. Then, the second wave began in 2019, referring to Presidential Instruction No. 1 of 2019 regarding the acceleration of supporting facilities and infrastructure development in the border area and 11 Cross-Border Post. One of the eleven plans for accelerating the development of this Cross-Border Post is Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post in West Kalimantan, precisely in Sintang Regency.

Until now, the development of Cross-Border Post is no longer only focused on the purpose and function as a National Border Post but can also be one of the drivers of increasing economic growth, which has an impact on the welfare of the community around the border area (Kartikasari & Elyta, 2021). This shows that the world consists of unique regions by preserving their respective identities. Therefore, the community plays an active role in guarding their identity, especially the people in the border area (Paasi, 2009). For example, suppose the acceleration of Cross-Border Post-development runs smoothly according to the plan accompanied by an increase in the completeness of facilities, infrastructure, and infrastructure in the area.

However, in implementing the border trade, it must follow the terms and conditions of the laws and regulations that have been enforced or agreed upon. Cross-Border Post as the front line of border areas requires legal strengthening. Considering that border areas are vulnerable to threats both military and non-military, legal strengthening needs to be carried out to prevent and anticipate the existence of law evaders. This statement is in line with the opinion of (Schendel, 2002), which states that borders need to be strengthened and protected not only from problems related to military colonization but also from evaders of the law.

## Method

This study aims to analyze implementation related to the issue of the Development of the Kelik River Cross-border Post in Sintang Regency. Qualitative research with literature study is the method used in this research. The main source is in the form of national and international journals as well as various local and national news articles as well as some other literature and references.

Document research is another type of qualitative research that is conducted in a way that does not involve going out into the field and looking for data sources. This literature research is also characterized by research conducted solely based on published research and research publications. Library research is carried out by collecting data and information through references from physical and non-physical libraries, documents, articles in journals, books, and other similar sources related to the themes studied (Bennett & Elman, 2006).

The location of this research was carried out in the border area of the Kelik River, Sintang Regency. This location was chosen because the construction of the Cross-Border Post on the Kelik River is part of 11 Integrated Cross-Border Posts that are ready for Detail Engineering Design (DED). Apart from that, the movement of the people's economy in the border area of the Kelik River has become one of the focuses for the government in the construction of Cross-Border Posts on the Kelik River, Sintang Regency. A literature study was used by reviewing written sources from journals and online news related to the construction of the Kelik River Boundary Post in Sintang Regency in the state boundary management program.

## Result and discussion

Workability is the competency standard in question (Elyta & Darmawan, 2021). The 18,108-island Indonesian archipelago covers 2.8 million square kilometers of the ocean (92,877 square kilometers of inland waterways), 1,826,440 square kilometers of land, and 7.9 million square kilometers of Exclusive Financial Zone (EFZ) kilometers (Cribb & Ford, 2009). Unlike other archipelagic international locations, Indonesia is a collection of islands and huge islands, the most populated of which is Java. The demographic, political influence and economic growth disparities across the islands approach the convoluted middle-periphery tensions that define the usage of a's records. The government, notably Cross-Border Post, must implement a policy, primarily as an extension of the vital authorities' hand.

### *1. Existing Infrastructure Conditions in Cross-Border Post of Sungai Kelik and Surrounding Areas*

The province of West Kalimantan has 14 Priority Location Subdistricts (Lokpri) namely Paloh and Sajingan Besar in Sambas Regency; Ketungau Hulu and Ketungau Tengah in Sintang District; Siding and Jagoi Babang in Bengkayang Regency; Entikong and Sekayam in Sanggau District; Puring Kencana, Badau, Batang Lapar, Embaloh Hulu, North Putussibau, and South Putussibau in Kapuas Hulu Regency. Currently, there have been three International Cross-Border Posts, namely Cross-Border Post Entikong Sanggau, West Kalimantan (Indonesia)-Tebedu (Sarawak) which started operating in 1991, Cross-Border Post Aruk Sajingan Besar, West Kalimantan (Indonesia)-Biawak (Sarawak). which started operating in 2011, and the CBP Badau Badau, West Kalimantan (Indonesia)-Lubok Antu (Sarawak) which started operating in 2012.

Meanwhile, residents who live about 20 km from the boundary line can only cross traditional borders, including one or two sub-districts using a Cross-Border Pass. Not all conventional borders have Cross-Border Posts so that residents can pass through even if they don't have a Cross-Border Pass. The Cross-Border Posts are located in Jagoi Village, Bengkayang Regency, Temajok Village, Sambas Regency, and Sungai Kelik Village, Sintang Regency. The Geographical and Demographic Conditions of Border Villages in West Kalimantan can be seen in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** *Geographical and Demographic Conditions of Border Villages in West Kalimantan of Indonesia*

No.	Village	Districts	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Total Population	Distance to Regency Capital	Distance to Pontianak	Distance to Kuching
1.	Entikong-Tebedu	Entikong	110,98	8.674 (2017)	135 (Sanggau)	310	90
2.	Badau-Lubok Antu	Badau	67,08	2.828 (2018)	177 (Putussibau)	997	293
3.	Sebunga (Aruk)-Biawak	Sajingan Besar	352,26	3.336 (2018)	118 (Sambas)	602	95
4.	Temajuk-Telok Melano	Paloh	230	1.909 (2016)	157 (Sambas)	500	Telok Melano-Sematan (27 km) Sematan-Kuching (104 km)
5.	Jagoi-Serikin	Jagoi Babang	51,69	2.636 (2018)	48 (Bengkayang)	247	54
6.	Sungai Kelik-Lacau	Ketungau Hulu	45	516 (2019)	200 (Sintang)	428,19	Kampung Lacau, Sri Aman

**Source:** (BPS of West Kalimantan, 2019)

The National Border Post in Sungai Kelik is an 11 Cross-Border Post whose construction is stated in Presidential Instruction No. 1 of 2019. This Cross-Border Post is located in Desa Sungai Kelik (Kelik River Village), Ketungau Hulu District, Sintang Regency. This Cross-Border Post is included in the Cross-Border Post-development plan in wave II, which is still in the development stage. The Ketungau Hulu area is geographically included in one of the regions of Indonesia, which land borders directly with the Sarawak region, Malaysia. State boundary markers in Sungai Kelik Village can be seen in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1.** *National Boundary Markers in Sungai Kelik Village*

**Source:** (Hidayat, 2021)

As Indonesia's front-line area, it is essential to accelerate the development of Cross-Border Post as a gateway or entry & exit for people and goods from within and outside the country. All stakeholders involved are trying to be as soon as possible to complete Presidential Instruction No. 1 of 2019. The development of road access and the construction of the Sungai Kelik Cross-border Post are significant. Especially considering the many potentials in the border areas, including coal and bauxite mining, agriculture, plantations, and tourism. Indeed, in its application, building a place, especially Cross-Border Post, cannot be said easily because, in these conditions, the State, in this case, the government concerned, makes the physical Cross-Border Post. Still, the government must build other supporting infrastructure, such as access roads, telecommunications networks, electricity, water, etc.

In addition to the road conditions as described above, access to Sungai Kelik village also faces challenges where the construction of a connecting bridge over the Meraki river has not yet been completed, so transporters who want to go to Sungai Kelik inevitably have to cross using a klotok boat or the Sintang people call it "*perahu tambang*" to get through. In addition to the lack of road and bridge networks, electricity, communication, and water networks are still underdeveloped. State electricity is already present in the Ketungau community in the electricity network. It is just that the electricity network has only arrived in the sub-district area, namely Ketungau Hulu, while in the villages, the community does not have access to electricity.

Infrastructure development in the Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post area is an essential point in the geopolitical development of Indonesia and neighboring countries; existing infrastructure must be able to support geopolitics between the two countries

This can be proven by looking at the incident that had gone viral a while ago, namely the struggle of the children to carry out the computer-based national assessment, they were forced to follow it in Bukit Empaung which is 13 kilometers from Nanga Bayan village (neighborhood). Sungai Kelik village on foot with a standard one-hour trip can cover 4 kilometers. Then for access to water, considering that water has an essential function for human survival, border communities get their needs from mountain springs channeled to people's homes through paragon pipes or also known as 'tap water. For health infrastructure, the community is bordered, especially in Sungai Kelik, Jasa, and Nanga Bayan villages. Each area has an Integrated Service Post and a Community Health Center (of Sungai Kelik Village. It cannot be used because the relevant parties have not inaugurated it.

## **2. *The Existing Economy in Sungai Kelik and Surrounding Area***

The disparity in financial development between Jakarta and the regions and among major geographically scattered ethnic corporations has resulted in a tangled suburban connection rife with underlying tensions. Many of these tensions have subsided since the introduction of political and economic decentralization in 2001 (Erb, Sulistiyanto, & Faucher, 2005). However, many of those newly formed local governments' limited governance abilities continue the border development in the outlying districts and islands. Even the established sequence of popular elections for regents, mayors, and governors does not appear to alleviate the problems that surround top neighborhood leadership. However, in the Sungai Kelik area, things have been moving well. The network can run the economy smoothly with surrounding foreign sites and nearby villages by the new rules.

The economy of border communities is always interesting to be discussed in-depth, as is well known by the broader community that geopolitically, border communities sell or buy necessities in neighboring countries (Rohilie, 2020). This statement is true, but we do not know

specifically about this because the border communities, especially Sungai Kelik Village and its neighboring villages, namely the Jasa Village and the Nanga Bayan Village, do not entirely depend on Malaysia for their livelihood. The people are primarily farmers and planters of pepper, rubber, oil palm, and vegetables. These agricultural and plantation products certainly have enormous potential in improving the surrounding community's economy if they are correctly processed.

The process of selling garden products in border areas unknown to the general public is two places to sell these crops. The first, of course, is to sell the harvest to Malaysia; the sale of this garden product goes through many stages. When the garden produce is ready to be marketed, the border community goes to the Indonesia-Malaysia final boundary using land transportation by taking a route that the border community considers a 'rat road,' after arriving at the edge of the two countries, the sellers then walk to the pick-up point. The pick-up referred to here is some parties act as 'transporters' of the people who want to go to the market in Sarawak; these parties are people of Indonesian descent who have lived in Sarawak, Malaysia, and are referred to as 'toke.' When the pick-up is carried out, a unique code is usually applied for foreigners, meaning people who are not known by the 'toke.' Furthermore, after the buying and selling process occurs, the goods that residents of Indonesia's borders usually purchase are generally necessities, namely necessities such as LPG, canned fish, noodles, eggs, etc. Sometimes, apart from essentials, the border communities also do not forget to buy conditions in agriculture and plantations such as fertilizers, poisons, seeds, etc.

Then to return to Indonesia, Then the second place of sale option is to sell garden produce in the Balai Karangan area, Sanggau district. Usually, the results are sold to the essay hall in rubber and pepper because, mainly for the people of the Ketungau Hulu border, the existence of pepper should be taken into account. However, there are often ups and downs in the selling price of pepper in the market. This does not reduce the enthusiasm of the border community to continue planting and caring for pepper. The sale of garden produce in the same place is not carried out by border communities; they often switch places of sale between Sarawak or Balai Karangan, this is because they always follow the market price, it can be said for garden products such as pepper or other garden products that have a high selling price border communities follow the development of market prices, i.e., the higher price is where they will sell their gardens (Awang, 2013).

In response to this, the regional secretary of Sintang Regency, Yosepha Hasnah, revealed that there are also rubber plantations along the border in Sungai Kelik Village, which are around 16,331 hectares (ha), oil palm plantations of 295,478 ha, and pepper plantations 1,858 ha. Therefore, he hopes that the realization of the improvement in the status of the road can be immediately built through central government funds. Furthermore, the Head of the Sintang Regional Border Management Agency, Andon, explained that the number of people crossing in one day at one crossing point is an average of 20 people at the Indonesia-Malaysia border. This is only at one crossing point, while there are 25 traditional crossings along the border, and only nine issues have guard posts. Meanwhile, from Tugu Pangeran Kuning to Semubuk, the provincial road is 56 km long.

The proposal to change the status of the Sintang road to the Kelik River was made by utilizing the national road evaluation process, which is carried out every five years (Timotius, 2020). This condition will be significantly improved if the Sungai Kelik CBP is completed, plus if the road access from Sintang to Sungai Kelik is in good condition. Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post, which will be built on the top of a hill in Sungai Kelik Village, will rise to the top because it adjusts to the geographical location of the area, which is in the highlands. The

development master plan will also accommodate local wisdom with modern designs, as shown in Picture 2 below.



**Picture 2.** *Development Master Plan of Cross-Border Post Sungai Kelik*  
**Source:** (*Equator.co.id, 2019*)

Because from the top of the hill, we can see the expanse of our territory, which is so beautiful, and from the side of nature, it is still beautiful. We can also see the stretch of neighboring Malaysia. The Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post in the highlands is expected to become a unique attraction for the surrounding community to attract local and foreign tourists to visit it, increasing income for the Sintang area.

There is a need to accelerate the development of the Kelik River Cross-border Post as one of the cross-border posts with great potential for economic development and improving relations between the two countries in the future.

## **Conclusion**

Cross-Border Post is a post or place of inspection and crossing to enter and exit people or goods between countries. One of the Cross-Border Post acceleration program manifestations in West Kalimantan is Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post located in Sungai Kelik village, Ketungau Hulu District, Sintang Regency. Given the importance of accelerating the development of the Cross-Border Post as a gateway for goods and people from within and outside the country, the Ministry of PUPR and all relevant stakeholders always strive to complete the construction of the Cross-Border Post as soon as possible. For this reason, it is also necessary to increase other supporting access such as access roads, electricity, telecommunication networks, and so on to maximize the function and process of developing the Sungai Kelik Cross-Border Post.

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