

The Establishment of Indonesian Airways as the Embrio of Commercial Aviation and the Development of the Aircraft Industry in Indonesia 1949-1979

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Abstract

The geographical spread of Indonesia's territory forces the government to have adequate modes of air transportation. If you review the economic context, having a national airline is an important thing to boost state finances or those who manage it. Managing airlines is one way for the government to get maximum mobility to conduct diplomacy with neighboring countries. So with the presence of Indonesian Airways, all these needs can be helped. The purposes of this paper are: First, to describe the history and development of Indonesian Airways. Second, to explain the fate of Indonesian Airways after the KMB was approved. Third, explain the development of Garuda Indonesia Airways and the development of the aviation industry in Indonesia. This research uses the method. The first is heuristics which is the stage of collecting relevant historical data or sources. Second, source criticism is the stage of reviewing the authenticity and credibility of the sources. Third, interpretation, namely interpreting facts that have been tested for truth. Fourth, historiography or historical writing, namely the delivery of a synthesis in the form of historical works. From this writing, it shows that 1. Indonesia was able to start an airline initiated by indigenous figures 2. After the KMB agreement took place, the airline returned to Indonesia and was merged with DAUM. And the management is getting better under the leadership of Wiweko Soepomo. Then did a joint venture with the Dutch KLM airline. 3. The next step is the gradual nationalization of the Dutch KLB, through the mechanism of buying shares from the KLM Group airline. After being officially owned by Indonesia, this opened the door for Indonesian aerospace and boosted the regional economy through airport enclavement.

Keywords: Indonesian Airways, Nationalization, Commercial Aviation

INTRODUCTION

The birth of Indonesia on August 17, 1945 indicated that the freedom fighters, especially the government, had to think about filling Indonesia's independence by themselves. Then on August 22, 1945, based on the results of the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence (PPKI), it was agreed to form the People's Security Agency (BKR). The People's Security Agency (BKR) was not only tasked with handling issues related to military matters, but also dealing with the seizure of civil power from Japan, so that various BKR organizations were formed according to their functions, such as BKR Oedara, BKR Laut, BKR Kereta Api, BKR Pos, and so on. Tentara Keamanan Rakyat Oedara or TKR Aviation Bureau was officially established by the government on April 9, 1946. Following the development of the central TKR organization, TKR Oedara also changed its name, to become the Indonesian Air Force which was later referred to as the Indonesian Air Force (AURI).). The Air Force, which is the backbone of protecting the sovereignty of Indonesia's airspace, only has a few aircraft, which are relics from the Dutch East Indies and Japan. With a minimum capital of aircraft and pilots, the founders of the Air Force attempted to carry out its first flight. On October 27, 1945, the first plane with the Red-White flag flew by Air Junior Commodore A. Adisutjipto at Yogyakarta's Maguwo Airport.

Along with its development, the Indonesian Air Force (AURI) has an initiative, namely to form its own airline. In the context of raising funds which will later be used to purchase aircraft, the Air Force Commodore Suryadi Suryadarmna appointed the Planning and Propaganda Bureau led by Junior Air Officer II Wiweko Soepono who was assisted by Junior Air Officer III Nurtanio Pringgodisuryo. In its implementation the Head of the Information Bureau of the IRJ Junior Officer Salatun was assigned to follow President Soekarno's trip around Sumatra. Several Dakota models (miniatures) made by the planning and construction workshop³ were used as the means.

Based on the description of the background above, writer want to able to write about the history of the birth of an Indonesia airline called Indonesia Airways and the development of this airline until it became a liquidated airline with a Dutch airline which was nationalized by the government so that a new name was born, namely Garuda Indonesia Airways. Along with the times, Indonesian airlines have experienced their own progress and challenges, such as the emergence of innovations regarding air traffic.

The result was the emergence of the aviation industries which at the beginning of their emergence were marked by the emergence of the Aviation Industry Preparation Institute (LAPIP) in 1960, the government realized the importance of the aviation industry, especially with the control of the airline Garuda Indonesia Airways (GIA) in the hands of Indonesia. External factors, countries that are already independent are of course vying with each other to improve their respective technologies to prove who is superior in that field. So with the establishment of the Aviation Industry Preparation Institute (LAPIP). The event that most affected the institution was the problem of relations between Indonesia and Malaysia. As a result of this heated relationship, Indonesia was punished in the form of an economic blockade with European countries. The way to open the economic blockade, Indonesia argued to cooperate with foreign parties through LAPIP.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research was carried out using a qualitative research method, involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. The design of the research method used is qualitative-descriptive method. Qualitative descriptive research generates data that describe the 'who, what, and where of events or experiences' from a subjective perspective (Kim et al., 2017, p. 23). The data collected is in the form of archives and documents obtained from the Indonesian Air Force and Garuda Indonesia Airlines, social media and book, articles, etc. This research focuses on discussing the formation of Indonesia's first commercial airline, which was created by the Indonesian government.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The pioneering of aviation by the Indonesian military began with taking over the remaining Japanese military assets, in 1945 the Japanese who lost in World War 2 also had an impact on the completion of their colonization in Dutch Indonesia. Seeing this opportunity, the People's Security Agency or BKR Oedara occupied Japanese assets related to the world of aviation. BKR seized 70 aircraft from the Bugis Air Base. For training aircraft, they use cureng aircraft, because the majority of aircraft that can fly again are cureng and guntai types. 11 All supporting assets including airports, spare parts and aircraft controls are also prepared by

TKRO members. 12 TKRO members are mostly former pilots and indigenous technicians Militaire Luchtvaart Dienst, Marine Luchtvaart Diensten, Vrijwillig Vliegers Corp.

Then on September 27, 1947 the Indonesian government decided to form an aircraft procurement committee, they raised funds from several circles of indigenous people. Most of the donors are traders from Sumatra. In the process of this fundraising campaign, Soekarno also received great influence, the president's loud and authoritative speech was enough to attract the sympathy of the people who heard it (Depdikbud: History of the Revolution for Independence of the Special Region of Aceh). After having enough capital to buy an airplane, the committee left for Singapore to take the Dakota Avro Anson type aircraft. This departure was also attended by Muhammad Sidiq Attamimi whose job was to transact with the seller. Before leaving for Thailand to make a transaction, this plane was brought back to Indonesia to have its flight registration number changed from the flight registration of the country of origin, namely VH-BBY to RI 003.14

This aircraft is used to support Indonesia's diplomatic relations with neighboring countries. However, the unfortunate event occurred on December 14, 1947, this plane had an accident while on duty carrying some ammunition and medical equipment. Then in February 1948, the government again purchased the same type of aircraft as the previous aircraft. But this time the owner of the plane came from Scotland named Wade Palmer. After the transaction was successful, the government then changed the registration number to RI 004.15 The government also leased planes from British and American citizens. The leased aircraft is a PBY 5A Catalina seaplane. The government also gave registration numbers to the two aircraft, RI 005 and RI 006, respectively.

In 1948, Air Commodore Suryadi Suryadharma proposed to buy planes again. The pattern of preparation for this purchase is almost the same as when purchasing the first RI 003 aircraft. This committee is led by Air Officer III Wiweko Soepono, whose job is to analyze and find the type of aircraft that fits the conditions in Indonesia. Wiweko Soepono's choice fell on the Dakota C 47 aircraft type, the reason being that apart from having a large carrying capacity, TKRO pilots were also familiar with American manufacturers' aircraft types. *Seulawah*”, or *Dakota Seulawah*. This name is taken from the Aceh language which means golden mountain. Taking the name from the Aceh language is a tribute to the people of Aceh.

The events of the Second Dutch Military Aggression in 1948 made the Republic of Indonesia Air Force arrange domestic and foreign flight routes, while the intention of opening routes abroad was a means to gain sympathy from neighbors for Indonesian resistance against the Dutch. The domestic routes that were pioneered covered the regions of Java and Sumatra, while New Dehli, India was the first to open international routes at first. The route that this plane passed was not blockaded by the Dutch.

The unfavorable conditions in Indonesia made it desirable to establish an overseas flight base, the choice of airline base was originally in India, but the authorities there did not allow the formation of foreign civil airlines to enter India. 18 However, this can be resolved even if you have to move countries . The head of the Republic of Indonesia's Consulate in Burma named Maryoenani suggested to the management the formation of an Indonesian civil airline, in the end it was agreed that Burma would be the base for Indonesian civil aviation abroad.

This airline is called Indonesian Airways, the airline's head office is in the city of Rangoon / Yangon. The initial Indonesian Airways flight was carried out on February 1, 1949, for its services to the Burmese government, Indonesia Airways received a positive response there, by being granted a Burmese Civil Aviation B License to Indonesian Airways pilots who had flown in Burma. In addition, there is also a form of cooperation with a local Burmese airline, namely the Union of Burma Airways. Indonesian Airways in its duties is often chartered by the Burmese government, in each charter trip it gets a profit of 10 rupees per mile.

The profit earned was then spent on purchasing additional aircraft fleets, namely the former US Air Force Dakota C-47 and renting a similar type of aircraft from Hong Kong. The two aircraft were given registration numbers RI 007 and RI 009 respectively. Based on the agreement of the Round Table Conference which was held in The Hague, these airlines stopped their operations in Burma and returned to Indonesia. The Round Table Conference acknowledged Indonesia's sovereignty even though with several conditions, but for the airline Indonesia Airways it was an important moment to determine the major steps taken by management. 20 After being returned from Burma on August 3, 1950, the entire Indonesian fleet and crew were merged with the military under the auspices of the Military Air Force Service or DAUM. At that time, the form of the Indonesian state had become the United Republic of Indonesia. If you review the results of the KMB agreement, there will be an agreement regarding the liquidation of the Dutch KLM airline with the RIS government. During the revolution, this was the starting point for future aviation. Along with the anti-foreigner campaign being echoed by the Indonesian people, the Dutch airline KLM in collaboration with the RIS government will be nationalized by buying its majority shares.

The follow-up to the liquidation of KLM IB airlines with RIS was the formation of an airline with the name NV Garuda Indonesian Airways with the main manager being KLM IB because it still had the ability to operate commercial airlines, the process of taking a majority share only took place around 1956. The name "garuda" appeared. came from Sukarno's proposal after using the Dutch-Indonesian joint plane from Yogyakarta to Jakarta. The determination of the name NV Garuda Indonesian Airways was ratified by notary Raden Kadiman with Deed Number 137 on March 31, 1950.

Wiweko is an important figure in the history of Indonesian aviation. This aviation figure who was born in Blitar on January 18, 1923, has had a high interest in the world of aviation since childhood. Wiweko Soepomo's role in developing Indonesian pilot aircraft began when he was still leading Indonesia Airways.

His role with Mr Maramis, Dr. Soedarsono and Mr. Oetoyo in search of funds. Along with the increase in the number of fleets, the need for aircraft operators also needs to increase, so Wiweko began recruiting several air crew personnel, ground crew and several other technicians. The pilots recruited by Wiweko are Americans who already have the ability and experience to handle aircraft.

In the hands of Wiweko Soepono, Indonesia Airways has played a role in the struggle for Indonesian independence. This aircraft succeeded in supplying weapons and ammunition to help the freedom fighters in the country. Small caliber weapons and drugs were smuggled in for Indonesian fighters. Under Wiweko's command, this smuggling task was carried out properly on June 8, 1948.

Wiweko's visionary thinking said that Indonesian Airways must be defended, because this airline is the capital for Indonesian flights in the future. From the capital, Indonesian Airways will be able to build the modern foundations of an air force, aircraft factories, flight schools and aircraft engineering schools.

Wiweko has a big contribution to the airline extension in Indonesia. After coordinating with the Managing Director of Siamese Airways named General Chai, they conducted further discussions involving elements from the two governments, namely Siam and Indonesia. As a result of this agreement, Siamese Airways agreed if Indonesia Airways acted as a booking office agent or opened an official ticket agent in Indonesia.

Wiweko's thoughts are intended to compensate for the weakness of RIS' political negotiations regarding the KMB agreement which allowed the KLM IB airline to operate in Indonesia even though it was under the name NV Garuda Indonesia Airways. Wiweko considers that this is contrary to the concept of air sovereignty which he adheres to. DAUM is also prepared to continue the operations of the airline NV Garuda Indonesia Airways which is still interfering with KLM IB if one day it officially belongs to Indonesia completely.

The process of liquidating the KLM IB airline with NV Garuda Indonesia Airways (GIA), technically operationally, has indeed provided a positive side for indigenous technicians for the transfer of knowledge and aircraft maintenance. In accordance with the agreement with KLM IB, Garuda Indonesia Airways gets mechanical assistance from KLM. In accordance with ICAO standards, these technicians must receive intensive education for 9 months. 24 When viewed from the Self Load Factor the development of GIA in the first year has started to look positive, because the aircraft occupancy rate reached 76% even though at that time they were still competing with airlines. foreigners operating in Indonesia such as British overseas Airways Corporation from England (BOAC), Qantas from Australia, Air India International, Scandinava Airlines System (SAS), Transport Airlines Intercontineuteux (TAI) from France, Malayan Airlines from Malaya, and Union of Burma Airways (UBA) from Burma. 25 The majority of these routes followed the previous KNILM airline flight routes. 26 To accommodate the increasing need for passengers, in 1950 GIA began to increase its fleet, GIA sent delegates to aircraft manufacturing factories such as Douglas, De Havilland, Convair, and Lockheed. The funds used for the addition of this fleet came from the RIS government by making credit with Exim Bank America.

The development of airlines after liquidation is the right step to improve organizational independence. Prepare GIA employees by carrying out large-scale recruitment. Provide scholarships to employees to study in England and the Netherlands. Carry out the nationalization of foreign companies into state-owned enterprises.

President Soekarno on August 17, 1965 formed KOPELAPIP (Command to Implement Aircraft Industry Projects). The big project that will be carried out is to produce the Fokker F27 type aircraft in Indonesia, the option to produce this is to meet increasing market demand, moreover some agencies need this type in addition to showing cooperation with the Netherlands after the Trikora campaign considering that Fokker originates from the Netherlands. 31 From From a technical point of view, the operation of this type of aircraft has specifications like the Douglas C47/DC-3 Dakota which was previously used by Indonesian Airways. Garuda Indonesia Airways as the airline that monopolizes air transportation in Indonesia established a partnership with KOPERLAPIP, and was terminated after Suharto served as President.

Then in 1966 the government continued the development of the aviation industry under the name LIPNUR (Nurtanio Aviation Industry Institute). The business climate in Indonesia is good enough to make it easy for some private parties who are interested in cooperating with Indonesia, they just have to adjust to the government as the holder of power. After the industry is formed, the domestic industry must be independent, not always improvise like at the

beginning of pioneering. At least a few things that must be considered in the process towards industrial independence are: first, starting a business. Second, the performance rating. Third, support with the right education system.

CONCLUSION

The birth of the Indonesian Airways airline started from the initiative of aerospace pioneers in 1945. Through the military air force, Indonesia opened the introduction of aviation technology very simply and only a handful of figures were able to learn this technology. Apart from the very urgent need for aviation for national security, another factor is Indonesia's readiness to fill independence and welcome competition with other countries that are already independent.

The continuation of the liquidation process of Indonesian Airways with KLM under the auspices of the Round Table Conference (KMB) did not necessarily make Indonesian military officials surrender, they tried to defend Indonesia to get full rights over the ownership of the Indonesian Airways airline which changed its name to Garuda Indonesia Airways. One of the options for realizing this business is by nationalizing the company and this step can take several years. The visionary figure behind GIA's success is Wiweko Soepomo, since the beginning of the liquidation he asked the RIS Government to obtain the right to fly GIA from domestic to international flights. According to Wiweko, the right to fly is the main capital for the company to facilitate the operational management of GIA in developing this airline.

One thing that cannot be separated from the development of the aviation industry is economic progress. In an area that has access to flights, such as an airport, the economy will also be lifted. In fact, not only that, other aspects such as social and tourism are also boosted by the access to flights. In the New Order era, airport enclave became quite vital for the progress of an area.

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