International Journal Of Humanities Education And Social Sciences ***(IJHESS)*** *E-ISSN:* **2808-1765**
Volume 2, Number 5, April 2023, *Page. 1599 - 1603*
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The Success of the Bakamla Patrol Ship Weapon In Creating Maritime Security In The North Natuna Sea

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Abstract
The Indonesian Coast Guard's use of firearms in the North Natuna Sea, an area designated as a high-priority zone by the Indonesian government due to high levels of traffic and maritime threats. In August 2020, the Indonesian Defense Minister authorized the Coast Guard to use 5.56 mm, 12.7 mm, and 30 mm caliber guns to secure the sea, which has raised questions about its potential impact on maritime security. The study examines the effectiveness of these weapons on Bakamla ships and whether they can incapacitate rather than kill the threat. Using qualitative research methods, including interviews and literature reviews, the study found that the Coast Guard is capable of using these weapons with adequate ammunition, but the 12.7 mm caliber firearm requires careful use due to its destructive power. The study suggests that the use of these firearms can improve maritime security in the North Natuna Sea, but only when used responsibly and with proper training

Keywords: Bakamla, Weapon System, Maritime Security, North Natuna Sea

INTRODUCTION

The North Natuna Sea is a maritime area that has been designated as a high-priority zone by the Indonesian government. As the main gateway for ships to enter and exit, it experiences high levels of traffic. Maritime threats such as IUU fishing, piracy, and smuggling are also very high in this area due to its proximity to Malaysia, Vietnam, and China. China's Nine-Dash Line is one of the reasons why this area has been elevated to high-priority status.

The South China Sea is the geopolitical and geo-economic heart of many countries, and any changes in international politics and the emergence of threats will affect ASEAN. The ability of military equipment and technology has become part of the strategic plan of each country in responding to global environmental changes. At a minimum, countries must equalize their military technology with neighboring countries that share a border with Indonesia.

To support Indonesia's maritime defense in the South China Sea, in August 2020, the Indonesian Defense Minister allowed the Indonesian Coast Guard (BAKAMLA) to use firearms to secure the sea. The Coast Guard's ships have added weapon systems, where they were previously only using rubber bullets and are now allowed to use 12.7 mm, 5.56 mm, and 30 mm caliber guns.

Bakamla is an official authority that has the responsibility to ensure the security and safety of Indonesia’s waters. Hence, Indonesia Coast Guard carries out a number of missions, such as: 1. To Increase surveillance, monitoring, prevention, and law enforcement in Indonesia’s waters. 2. To strengthen national regulation on maritime security and safety in Indonesia’s waters. 3. To establish maritime security and safety early warning systems in Indonesia’s waters (Renstra Bakamla Document 2020-2024).

The Indonesian Coast Guard is an official authority that is responsible for ensuring the security and safety of Indonesia's waters. In its operations, it has not been clearly stated whether the Coast Guard can use firearms or not, which is of interest to researchers. The use of firearms raises the question of whether it can have a significant impact on maritime security in the North Natuna Sea or whether it could have the opposite effect.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research examines the issue of the effectiveness of 5.56 mm, 12.7 mm, and 30 mm caliber weapons on Bakamla ships in the North Natuna Sea. The research uses qualitative research methods through interviews with related institutions. To complement the data, literature studies are conducted from journals, books, articles, and scientific magazines. Data analysis is conducted descriptively. The data generated will be carefully discussed regarding the phenomenon of adding personnel and ship weapons carried out by Bakamla assigned to the North Natuna Sea.

In this research, the subject is the Indonesian Coast Guard (BAKAMLA RI). The research was conducted on February 6, 2023, by visiting the BAKAMLA RI office. Data collection was obtained from material given by the interviewees, interviews by researchers, literature studies, and a combination/triangulation (Miles Huberman and Sadana, 2014). Data triangulation was conducted by checking the accuracy of information from the interviewees and comparing it with other sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the use of weapon systems is based on the capability of 5.56 mm, 12.7 mm, and 30 mm calibers, as well as the ability of personnel to use the weapons. The caliber weapons' capability is intended to incapacitate, not to kill the threat. The use of caliber weapons is also evaluated based on their ability to hit the threat from various distances, the maximum accuracy achieved, and the availability of adequate ammunition. The weapons' maintenance ability is also necessary to obtain maximum capability from the weapons used.

A 5.56 mm caliber firearm is a type of firearm that uses ammunition with a bullet diameter of approximately 5.56 mm. This firearm is often used by military and police forces worldwide due to its relatively small size, making it easy to use and carry. A 5.56 mm caliber firearm can be used in various types of firearms, including assault rifles, light machine guns, and submachine guns. 5.56 mm ammunition usually has a velocity of around 900-1000 meters per second, with an effective range of approximately 500 meters.

Due to its relatively small size, the 5.56 mm bullet has low penetration power and a lower shock effect on the target than larger bullets. Therefore, 5.56 mm caliber firearms are often used to fire several bullets accurately and quickly at the target. However, the use of 5.56 mm caliber firearms is also controversial, as some people argue that the bullets used can cause insufficient and smaller injuries to stop an attacking target (Sutrisno,2020).

A 12.7 mm caliber firearm is a firearm that uses ammunition with a bullet diameter of approximately 12.7 mm. This firearm is often referred to as a heavy machine gun and is used to destroy vehicles, penetrate walls or construction materials, and attack distant targets. The 12.7 mm caliber bullet is larger than the 5.56 mm caliber bullet and has a greater penetration power and shock effect on the target. 12.7 mm ammunition is typically used in heavy machine guns, light machine guns, or sniper rifles. The average velocity of a 12.7 mm bullet is around 800-900 meters per second, with an effective range of approximately 2000 meters.

Military forces worldwide use 12.7 mm caliber firearms as anti-material and anti-personnel weapons. This firearm has tremendous destructive power, making it possible to quickly and effectively destroy vehicles and protection structures. Additionally, the 12.7 mm caliber firearm is also used for long-range shooting and penetrating construction materials.

However, due to the enormous destructive power of the 12.7 mm caliber firearm, its use must be carried out carefully and only on targets that require significant shooting force. This firearm also has a significant effect on the surrounding environment, as the sound and dust resulting from the bullet's explosion can cause hearing and health disturbances.

The 30 mm gun can also be used as a ship defense weapon or anti-aircraft weapon to repel enemy attacks. A 30 mm gun on a ship is usually mounted on the deck and equipped with sophisticated shooting control systems, such as radar and automatic tracking systems. A 30 mm gun on a ship is usually used to fire tracer bullets (with visible light) and explosive bullets capable of penetrating the ship's hull or attacking airborne targets. This weapon is usually used to attack enemy ships, aircraft, and cruise missiles fired by enemy aircraft.

In addition, a 30 mm gun on a ship can also be used as a guard weapon, firing small-caliber bullets that can repel suspicious small boats or ships approaching the main ship. A 30 mm gun on a ship can also be used as an anti-torpedo weapon, firing at torpedoes launched at the main ship 30 mm cannons on a ship have tremendous destructive power and are capable of firing quickly and accurately at targets that are moving at high speeds. However, their use must be done carefully and only on targets that require such firepower, in order to avoid unnecessary damage to the ship itself or the surrounding environment.

Weapon systems can play a crucial role in addressing maritime security threats, such as piracy, terrorism, illegal fishing, and smuggling. The weapon systems used on patrol ships or maritime security vessels have an important task in ensuring that the vessel can perform its duties effectively and safely (Buerger, 2015). With weapon systems, patrol ships can ensure that they have the ability to protect themselves and prevent threats to maritime security. However, the use of weapon systems must be done wisely and in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. Improper use of weapon systems can trigger conflicts and worsen the maritime security situation.

Looking at the data from the last 8 months based on IMIC, there has been a decrease in cases in Indonesia. This can be seen from the following table:

Tahun	**2022**							**2023**
Maritime Accident	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Agst**	**Sep**	**Okt**	**Nov**	**Des**	**Jan**
CS (*Contrand Smuggling*)	8	8	10	4	14	9	8	2
IUUF (*IUU Fishing*)	11	1	5	3	1	7	3	3
DT (*Drug Trafficking*)	3	4	7	6	1	3	2	1
MP (*Marine Pollution*)	3	4	0	0	6	3	1	1
IF (*Illegal Fuel*)	2	2	1	5	2	1	2	0
IHM (*Irregular Human Migration*)	2	2	1	3	1	5	3	1
PT (*Petty Theft*)	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	0
TR (*Tresspassing*)	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

Source: Recapitulation of IMIC Data by the Indonesian Coast Guard on a monthly basis, 2022-2023.

From the data, it can be seen that there is a trend of decreasing maritime security violations. The use of firearms with calibers of 5.56 mm, 12.7 mm, and 30 mm cannon seemed to be the answer to improving maritime security in the North Natuna Sea. The use of these weapons has become a symbol of new strength for BAKAMLA. The informant stated that such a change would not immediately work well because personnel still need to adjust to it.

The existence of this weapon system also increases the confidence of personnel in facing potential threats in the North Natuna Sea. The operational use of the weapon is not as easy to use during maritime operations. The importance of engagement rules is also emphasized here. The ship commander plays an important role in deciding whether to use the weapon or not if a threat is found during a patrol.

Engagement rules can be used if the ship commander is unable to give commands. The way to do this is as explained by the informant, namely all SOPs for using weapons, the stages, when to use them, what to do if the ship commander is unable to give commands, which are then posted in strategic locations on the ship so that the rules can be used by all personnel.
There are four patrol ships currently operating, three of which are 80 meters in size and one is 110 meters in size. All four ships already have these weapons and are actively operating in the North Natuna Sea. The North Natuna Sea is vast and has all types of threats. When it comes to piracy, illegal fishing in the sea, and others, almost all have used weapons and BAKAMLA as a security guard should change and always upgrade its weapons to be more sophisticated in order to face all potential threats.

CONCLUSION

The success of using weapons systems with 5.56 mm, 12.7mm, and 30 mm calibers in maritime security operations by Bakamla has been effective, as seen from the readiness of personnel in facing potential threats in the North Natuna Sea

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