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Human Security In The Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers: A Case Study of Trafficking In Persons 'Online Scams' In The Philippines

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Abstract: The issue of job fraud victims through online recruitment or online scams has become widespread in the Southeast Asia region. The high flow of mobilization between countries and the ease of visa-free facilities increase the risk of human security threats, including the crime of trafficking in persons (TIP). This paper aims to explain Indonesia's efforts to protect Indonesian citizens/Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) victims of TIP, particularly in the Philippines. The concept of personal security helps identify new security threats that directly impact individuals or citizens. Considering the ease of mobilization and technology, it is possible that future cases caused by online scams will increase. This paper aims to highlight issues that have been overlooked in current discussions. The study adopts a qualitative- descriptive methods, including desk and library research data collection techniques, as well as direct observation. The analysis reveals that successful efforts to protect Indonesian migrant workers in the Philippines contribute to the realization of a key human security concept: freedom from fear. However, there has been no cooperation between Indonesia and the Philippines to prevent similar cases from occurring in the future.

Keyword: Human Security; Indonesian Migrant Workers In The Philippines; Online Scams; Personal Security; Trafficking In Persons.

INTRODUCTION

International security dynamics have evolved alongside developments in technology and knowledge. The expansion of knowledge has fostered critical thinking, leading to the realization that security is no longer solely based on traditional state-centric factors, such as military strength, sovereignty, and territorial boundaries. Instead, security encompasses non-traditional aspects as well. The end of the Cold War ushered in a transformation in the understanding of security. It is now recognized as an implication of threats not only from state actors but also from non-state actors, including terrorism, cyber threats, and piracy. Additionally, the advancement of modern technology has given rise to security challenges that defy traditional explanations. These include energy security, environmental concerns, and even human security.

The era of globalization, marked by industrial and technological developments, has led to the blurring of borders between countries. This phenomenon is characterized by the ease of mobility for people worldwide, allowing them to move from one country to another. However, this convenience also aligns with the rise of criminal activities across national borders, which can evade government control and law enforcement efforts. Consequently, transnational crime not only affects domestic contexts but also poses an international challenge. Additionally, technological advancements have created opportunities for individuals to work abroad as migrant workers. Nevertheless, these conveniences are accompanied by widespread issues faced by individuals living abroad. As a result, the study of international relations has expanded beyond state dynamics to include a focus on individual experiences.

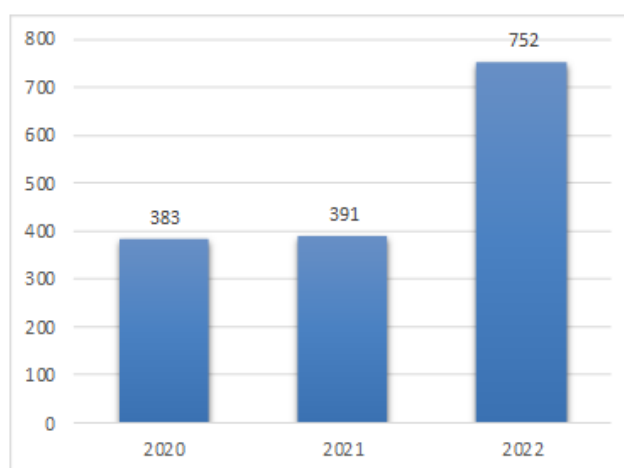
Southeast Asia is a region that grapples with numerous complex transnational crime issues. Virtually all types of transnational crimes are prevalent in this region, including human trafficking, illegal migration, drug trafficking, terrorism, money laundering, transnational prostitution, piracy, arms smuggling, credit card fraud, and corruption (Emmers, 2003). Human trafficking and irregular migration pose significant transnational crime challenges in Southeast Asia, demanding increased attention. This is particularly due to the substantial role Southeast Asian countries play in the emigration of migrant workers. Approximately 23.6 million migrant workers from Southeast Asian nations are employed abroad, with the Philippines alone contributing over six million migrant workers, ranking ninth globally (UNDESA, 2020).

The flow of migrant workers abroad also influences the country's current economy. In Indonesia itself, remittances from migrant workers serve as a source of national development (Eversole & Shaw, 2010). Despite serving as a vital driver of national development, Indonesian Migrant Workers (referred to as PMI, or *Pekerja Migran Indonesia*, in this article) face a multitude of challenges while working abroad. These challenges include discrimination and heightened vulnerability to exploitation. Unfortunately, the media often portrays migrant workers as problematic and burdensome for the country (Eberl, et al., 2018). PMI have even experienced discriminatory treatment during immigration inspections upon their arrival in their destination countries. This phenomenon is also the impact of inadequate protection for these individuals (Silvey, 2007).

Migrant workers are also highly vulnerable to becoming victims of exploitation and human trafficking. Data from the National Agency for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (BP2MI) (2023), reveals a concerning trend. The reported cases of human trafficking involving Indonesian citizens have shown an upward trend, increasing from 41 in 2020 to 68 in 2021, with 60 cases documented in 2022. Additionally, PMIs are vulnerable to exploitation in situations such as unpaid salaries, withholding of travel documents (passports), failure to be repatriated even after fulfilling work contracts, and work that does not comply with the contract (BP2MI, 2023). Moreover, PMIs frequently encounter physical and verbal violence. BP2MI data also highlights that PMIs are victims of job opportunity fraud. Between 2020 and 2022, the number of victims of job opportunity fraud consistently rose: 41 cases in 2020, 68 cases in 2021, and a significant escalation to 134 cases in 2022.

In recent years, the issue of job fraud victimizing individuals through online recruitment or online scams has become pervasive in the Southeast Asia region. Within Indonesia itself, there is a growing trend of Indonesian citizens (referred to as WNI) falling prey to fraud abroad, particularly in Cambodia, Myanmar, and the Philippines. Over the last three years, the Indonesian government has handled more than 2,700 criminal acts of Trafficking in Person (TIP) or *Tindak Pidana Perdagangan Orang* (TPPO) involving online fraud (Komariah, 2023). In 2021, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Phnom Penh

assisted 119 Indonesian citizens who were victims of employment fraud, and in 2022, this number surged significantly to 446 people (Kemlu, 2022). However, this case is not the first time Indonesia has faced such challenges. Previously, hundreds of Indonesian citizens were also documented as victims of similar cases in Myanmar, the Philippines, and Laos (BBC, 2022; Wardah, 2023; Muhammad, 2023). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Indonesia in 2022 reported a significant increase in cases of Indonesian citizens/PMIs working abroad without adhering proper procedures, raising concerns about potential human trafficking (Kemlu, 2022).



Source: Processed by the author based on Laporan Kinerja Dirjen Protokol Konsuler Kementerian Luar Negeri RI, 2020 - 2022

Figure 1. Trends in Cases of Indonesian Citizens Victims of TIP in Southeast Asia

Cambodia has emerged as the primary destination for Indonesian victims of TIP among Southeast Asian countries. Additionally, Myanmar, the Philippines, Laos, and Thailand are host countries where Indonesian citizens have encountered similar vulnerabilities. Data from 2022 indicates that Indonesian diplomatic missions in Southeast Asia have dealt with at least 1,042 cases involving Indonesian victims, as detailed below:

States	Total Victims
Kamboja	703 person
Myanmar	143 person
Filipina	97 person
Laos	68 person
Thailand	31 person

Source: Laporan Kinerja Dirjen Protokol Konsuler Kementerian Luar Negeri RI, 2022

Figure 2. Data of Indonesian Citizens Victims of TIP in Southeast Asia in 2022

The data presented in the table highlights Cambodia as having the highest number of Indonesian trafficking victims, totaling 703 cases. Notably, Cambodia's inclusion in the US Department of State's Tier 3 TIP Report (TIP Report 2022) coincides with the proliferation of illegal online casino and gambling operations within the country. An analysis of TIP victim data in Southeast Asia reveals a concerning trend in the Philippines, where the number of Indonesian citizen victims has surged dramatically from only 7 in 2020 to 97 in 2022. This upward trajectory continued in the first half of 2023, with 390 victims reported (Kemlu, 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023). The surge in the number of Indonesian citizens victimized by employment fraud in the Philippines can be attributed to the Philippine government's COVID-19 pandemic response measures. In 2020 and 2021, the government imposed restrictions on the mobility of foreign nationals entering Philippine territory. However, in

early 2022, these restrictions were eased, and the Philippines reintroduced a visa-free policy for ASEAN citizens. Indonesian citizens, particularly those targeted by online scams, leverage the visa-free facilities available to ASEAN passport holders, facilitating their mobility to other countries.

The significant increase in the number of Indonesian citizens who have become victims of employment fraud, as indicated by TIP cases, over the last two years in the Philippines is an intriguing area of study. Notably, this phenomenon follows the reinstatement of the visa-free visit rule in the Philippines after the COVID-19 pandemic. Previously, the Philippines had imposed restrictions on international mobility by land, air, and sea since March 2020 (Luna, 2020), which were subsequently eased in April 2022 (Department of Tourism Philippines, 2022).

Furthermore, this trend correlates with the rise of illicit gambling enterprises, notably the Philippine Offshore Gaming Operators (POGO). While these illegal online casino and gambling companies operate across multiple Southeast Asian countries, the recruitment of victims—particularly Indonesian citizens or PMIs—follows similar patterns. Typically, the recruitment of Indonesian citizens/PMI victims of TIP occurs through social media advertisements, often in the guise of job vacancies within e-commerce or online game companies, specifically targeting customer service roles.

Based on reports from the Embassy of The Republic of Indonesia in Manila spanning from 2019 to 2022, victims in the Philippines are recruited under the allure of substantial salaries, luxurious accommodations, and relatively undemanding requirements (such as proficiency in Indonesian/Mandarin languages and online technology). Indonesian citizens who travel to this destination country typically take advantage of visa-free facilities available to ASEAN countries. However, upon arrival in their destination country, the victims' passports are often confiscated by illegal companies under the pretext of processing work visas at immigration. Victims are rarely given the opportunity to sign formal work contracts. Unfortunately, many of them face termination on the second day, even when they have committed no wrongdoing, and are subjected to hefty fines. Moreover, while working, a significant number of victims endure exploitation, including excessive working hours, salary withholding, severe penalties if they attempt to escape, communication restrictions, and even physical violence. This pattern of exploitation is not unique to the Philippines; Indonesian victims in Cambodia, Myanmar, and other Southeast Asian countries also encounter similar challenges (BBC, 2022; Muhammad, 2023; Kemlu, 2022; Isa, 2022).

The prevalence of online scams, both in Southeast Asia and specifically in the Philippines, has become a central concern for Indonesia. The escalating number of victims, which continues to rise annually, is intrinsically linked to the safety and security of Indonesian citizens abroad, particularly in the Philippines. Addressing this multifaceted challenge requires concerted efforts by the Indonesian government to safeguard its citizens. Consequently, this article aims to explore the question: 'How does the Indonesian government address individual security threats faced by Indonesian citizens who fall victim to online scams in the Philippines?' An analysis employing a human security approach will be pivotal, given the potential for ongoing increases in Indonesian citizen victims in the Philippines, akin to experiences observed in Cambodia and Myanmar.

When examining the phenomenon of Indonesian Migrant Worker protection abroad, previous research is closely related to the conceptualization of human security or individual security. Therefore, the literature review in this paper will be divided into two groups. The first group of literature focuses on the development of the concept of human security within the context of protecting migrant workers on a global scale. The second group of literature delves into the concept of human security specifically related to problems experienced by Indonesian citizens abroad.

Within the first literature group, researchers concur that the security of each individual and community group serves as a critical instrument in addressing increasingly complex global security challenges. Human security enables the identification of specific issues related to factors causing security threats by prioritizing individuals or humans first—ultimately contributing to world security and peace (Gasper & Gómez, 2015; Kreidenweis & Hudson, 2015; Axworthy, 2001). Moreover, the human security approach offers a novel perspective for tackling human trafficking cases at the local level. By reviewing and redirecting top-down policy trends, human security studies can enhance existing approaches that have proven inadequate in addressing human trafficking cases (Kreidenweis & Hudson, 2015). However, human security does not necessarily replace the national security approach; instead, it seeks to complement and develop state security, human rights, and human development (Ogata & Cels, 2003). Many contemporary security issues cannot be adequately explained using traditional terms alone. The movement of people across national and continental borders reflects the phenomenon of globalization and violence, necessitating enhanced protection measures (Ogata & Cels, 2003). For example, migrant security (Purkayastha, 2018) and human trafficking (Kreidenweis & Hudson, 2015) are critical concerns when viewed through a human security approach, as they directly impact a country's policies. While state security remains essential, it does not necessarily guarantee the safety of individuals and society.

In the second group of literature, the authors recognize that a human security approach can illuminate security protection challenges faced by PMIs abroad. For instance: Maksum (2021) examines post-migrant workers in Indonesia using this approach; Sundiar (2019) focuses on state border issues; Hadi (2008) investigates Indonesian Workers (TKI) in Malaysia; Fitria (2021) explores PMI cases in Malaysia and Hong Kong; Lasim, et al. (2021) discusses the issue of TKI in Saudi Arabia. These researchers emphasize that the human security approach facilitates problem analysis by considering individual conditions, including an examination of Indonesian policies aimed at protecting Indonesian citizens. It is important to recognize that policies regarding the protection of Indonesian citizens abroad may sometimes conflict with host country rules. Despite the state's increasing role in the human security agenda, there remain many unresolved agendas and policies in practice.

Based on these two groups of literature review, it concludes that the human security approach is closely related to personal or individual security. This individual security, in turn, ultimately relates to how a country protects its citizens. Through a human security approach, it becomes evident that negotiation processes and bilateral agreements between countries are necessary to promote individual security. Moreover, as the flow of human mobility across national borders increases, security threats and challenges directly affecting individuals become increasingly complex. The multifaceted and dynamic challenges faced by Indonesian citizens abroad demand prompt state action in formulating effective human security policies. This dynamism also encompasses the pervasive issue of TIP affecting Indonesian citizens abroad. While previous research has discussed migrant workers from the perspective of individual security and protection, specific analysis of the TIP issue remains scarce. TIP, particularly in Southeast Asia, has been an ongoing phenomenon, but its recent rapid increase warrants further examination. Therefore, this article aims to complement existing studies and enrich the discourse on human security in Indonesia.

METHOD

To analyze the Indonesian government's efforts in dealing with individual security threats faced by Indonesian citizens (PMI) in the Philippines, this paper will employ qualitative-descriptive research methods. Lamont (2015) explains that qualitative research utilizes non-numerical data collection and analysis techniques to conduct in-depth studies of events and phenomena within specific regions, organizations, and individuals. Unlike

quantitative research, qualitative methods do not rely on statistical data to measure the intensity or accuracy of research variables. Instead, they select relevant information or documents capable of addressing the research questions. The selection of information or documents is guided by four parameters (Creswell, 1994, p. 148): (1) Research Location (Setting), the specific context where the research takes place; (2) Sources (Actors), Individuals or entities to be interviewed or observed; (3) Events, Specific occurrences or incidents to be studied or discussed during interviews; and (4) Processes, The experiences and events encountered by the resource persons in the chosen location.

This article will draw from both primary and secondary data sources. The primary sources include official documents issued by the Indonesian government, such as reports from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Indonesia and the Embassy of The Republic of Indonesia in Manila. Additionally, the author's direct observations and statements from state actors obtained through electronic media will be considered. Secondary sources will consist of books, electronic media, and nationally and internationally accredited journals or previous studies that support the arguments. Data collection techniques will involve desk and library research, synthesizing information from various sources, and direct observations conducted by the researcher at the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila over a year. The analysis will cover the time span from 2020 to 2023.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Theoretical Framework: Human Security and Personal Security

The concept of human security emphasizes that humans are a central focus in security considerations. While war has traditionally been viewed as an effort to secure a country, it often results in destruction and numerous casualties. This situation prompts a critical question: security for whom and against what? Consequently, the security paradigm shifts beyond the state-centric approach to encompass people and society (Azca, 2006). Human security, at its core, prioritizes freedom from fear and freedom from want (Hadi, 2008). This perspective is also reflected in United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution Number 66/290, which underscores that human security is community-centered and aimed at preventing and protecting all individuals and communities.

“Human security calls for people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people and all communities” (UNGA, 2012)

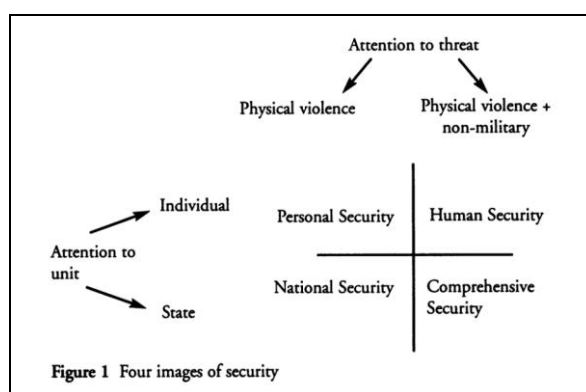
However, in practice, the application of the human security concept often leads to the liberalism paradox. Despite aiming to free humans from state control, it paradoxically reinforces the state's role in defining and addressing human security issues (Amalia, Prasetyono, & Andi, 2020). The essence of the human security framework, however, lies in protecting the fundamental core of human life by enhancing freedom and meeting basic needs (Odaka, 2005). In essence, this means safeguarding basic freedoms, shielding society from critical threats, and empowering individuals to shape their own well-being (Odaka, 2005).

The UNDP document (1994) summarizes human security by categorizing it into several dimensions: (1) Economic Security; (2) Food Security; (3) Health Security; (4) Environmental Security; (5) Personal Security; (6) Community Security; and (7) Political Security. These dimensions ultimately converge into three core concepts outlined by the UNDP: freedom from fear, freedom from want, and life with dignity.

There exists a debate surrounding the conceptualization of human security. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) definition of human security has faced criticism for being overly broad and lacking relevance when associated with ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ perspectives (Acharya, 2001). For instance Song (2015), illustrates an Eastern view, such as that of Japan, which interprets human security as encompassing socio-economic aspects and

threats to life and dignity. In contrast, a Western view, exemplified by Canada, restricts human security to freedom from fear of armed conflict. However, given contemporary phenomena, a comprehensive understanding of human security remains essential (Acharya, 2001).

One of the facets within the realm of human security is individual security or personal security. It guarantees protection for individuals against physical violence, whether originating from the state, non-state actors, fellow individuals, sub-state entities, domestic violence, or even self-inflicted harm (Hadi, 2008). Acharya (2001) contends that human security fundamentally differs from personal security. Although both focus on safeguarding individuals, personal security emphasizes the threat of physical violence alone, while human security encompasses a broader scope, including non-military threats (Acharya, 2001).



Source: Acharya, 2001

Figure 3. Four Overview of Security Concepts

There are indicators showing that an personal security issue is an integral part of human security; thus, these two aspects cannot be separated. This pertains to the concept of human security in the form of freedom from fear. To realize the meaning of freedom from fear, efforts must be made to ensure protection. According to Odaka (2005), there are three approaches that facilitate the implementation of the concept of human security: (1) The first approach involves considering the protection of people's security and their fundamental rights and freedoms. In other words, the state exists to safeguard borders, institutions, and individuals from external aggression or conflict; (2) The second approach focuses on empowering individuals and communities to navigate global dynamics through policies. This includes supporting communities through educational and informational resources; (3) The third and most challenging approach seeks to connect broad issues related to human security. Rapid changes in conditions lead to the emergence of new, increasingly complex problems. These evolving problems related to human security necessitate appropriate policy adjustments to comprehend the presence of new security threats. Ultimately, personal security is inherently linked to a person's efforts to obtain protection from the state, whether within the scope of national sovereignty or abroad (Battersby & Siracusa, 2009). Furthermore, individual security is strengthened when protection through a top-down approach is supported by empowerment, which requires a bottom-up approach (Odaka, 2005).

Dynamics and challenges of the Protection of Indonesian Citizens Abroad

The protection of citizens, particularly Indonesian citizens, represents an essential aspect of individual security efforts. This concept harks back to the core of human security, emphasizing freedom from fear. Migrant workers themselves play a crucial role by contributing to both the sending and receiving countries' economies. Recognizing the

significance of migrant workers within the nation, Indonesian citizens abroad also require state support to ensure individual security and protection.

In fulfilling their protective responsibilities, the state operates through diplomatic representative offices located abroad. This practice is grounded in the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations in Diplomatic Missions, which Indonesia ratified through Law Number 1 of 1982. Indonesian Diplomatic Representatives carry out consular duties and functions that are inherently interconnected. Regarding the duty of protection, the consular function is delineated in Article 5 of the 1963 Vienna Convention (Syahmin, 1984). These functions include: (1) Assisting and aiding citizens of the sending country who require assistance; (2) Issuing travel documents, such as passports and similar travel-related paperwork; (3) Providing protection within the boundaries defined by the laws and regulations of the recipient country; (4) Defending and facilitating the release of citizens of the sending country before courts and other authorities in the receiving nation; and (5) Conducting administrative tasks related to civil registration and notary services, in accordance with the legal regulations applicable in the recipient country.

However, when carrying out consular duties, there are often obstacles due to the lack of consular agreements, both bilaterally and multilaterally. This is especially evident when dealing with more specific consular issues, such as problematic Indonesian citizens, stranded ship crews, citizenship matters, and TIP issues. Furthermore, another obstacle is that Indonesia does not yet have a law specifically related to consular services (the Consular Act). Nevertheless, this Consular Act could serve as a legal basis and benchmark for implementing regular consular efforts. It is worth noting that many countries are still unable to provide legally protected consular assistance. In contrast, Germany has a legal framework in place to protect citizens' rights in obtaining consular assistance through the Consular Law (Okano-Heijmans, 2010).

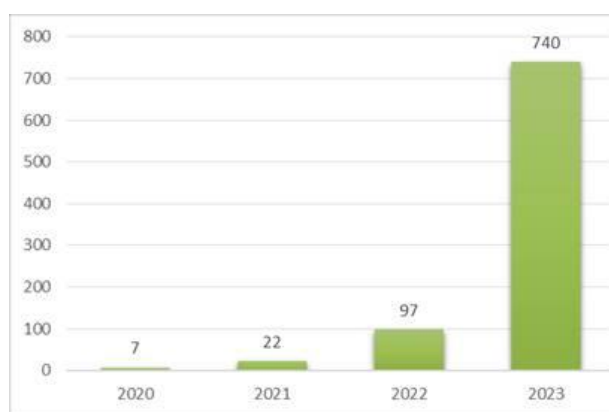
The cases faced by representatives in each country in their efforts to protect Indonesian citizens abroad present unique challenges. In Malaysia, the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia (KJRI) Kota Kinabalu has noted that, on average, PMI in Sabah encounter employment problems due to their lack of legal registration, which consequently denies them decent work rights and opportunities (Warsono, Hanura, & Hanani, 2022). In contrast, the Philippines deals with cases affecting Indonesian citizens that include immigration issues, natural disasters, terrorism, suspects or convicts in legal matters, Indonesian citizens falling ill and passing away, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, other cases involve ship crew-related incidents and victims of TIP. Efforts to protect Indonesian citizens abroad faced increasing challenges in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Philippines is one of the countries profoundly affected by the pandemic since the beginning of 2020. The first positive COVID-19 case in the Philippines was confirmed on January 30, 2020, and on February 1, 2020, the country recorded its first COVID-19-related death outside of China (Ramzy & May, 2020). Local transmission within the Philippines was confirmed on March 7, 2020 (Edrada et al., 2020). In an effort to contain the spread of COVID-19, the Philippine government gradually implemented several policies during the first quarter of 2020. On March 9, 2020, Philippine President Rodrigo R. Duterte declared a national health emergency. The determination of the "Code Red Sub-Level 2" vulnerability status, along with the regional quarantine policy in the capital area (Metro Manila province), came into effect on March 12, 2020. This decree also significantly impacted Indonesian citizens currently residing in the Philippines.

The regional quarantine policy in the Philippines has significantly impacted all sectors. PMI in the Philippines are among the groups directly affected. During this period, complaints and requests for protection from Indonesian citizens to the Embassy of the Republic of

Indonesia in Manila increased rapidly. From the numerous complaints related to this issue, it became evident that many Indonesian citizens in the Philippines were victims of TIP. In 2020, seven Indonesian citizens faced termination by their employers, accompanied by fines. Their travel documents, including passports, were held as collateral, effectively preventing their escape. Moreover, these PMIs lacked clear work contracts and were often recruited solely through social media channels. Tragically, some also endured violence and had to flee. Similar cases persisted in 2021, totaling 22 instances.

In 2022, as the COVID-19 pandemic showed signs of improvement, the Philippine government completely lifted the quarantine policy. The Philippines eased restrictions on international arrivals and reintroduced a visa-free policy. However, this relaxation led to an increase in TIP cases in 2022, totaling 97 cases. The situation escalated further, reaching its peak with a sharp increase until June 2023, resulting in a total of 390 cases. Throughout 2023, until the end of December, a total of 740 TIP cases occurred (KBRI Manila, 2023). The trend data on TIP cases experienced by Indonesian citizens in the Philippines from 2020 to 2023 is as follows:



Source: Processed by the author based on Laporan Kinerja KBRI Manila 2020-2023

Figure 4. Trend of TIP cases experienced by Indonesian citizens in the Philippines from 2020 to 2023

Based on the Laporan Kinerja of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila (2022; 2023), the surge in TIP cases over the past three years can be attributed to three key factors. Firstly, there is a lack of knowledge and understanding among Indonesian citizens regarding legal employment opportunities in the Philippines. Many Indonesian citizens are unaware of the significance of adhering to procedural work engagement and departure processes. Secondly, the Philippine immigration system allows travelers to convert tourist visas into working visas. This streamlined process facilitates the mobilization of Indonesian citizens to the Philippines, as they can pass immigration checks either on a visa-free basis or by using a tourist visa. Unfortunately, this bureaucratic gap has been exploited by TIP perpetrators who recruit prospective Indonesian workers. Thirdly, the surge in TIP cases is partly due to the Philippine government's legalization of both offline and online gambling activities. Consequently, gambling operator companies have proliferated, recruiting workers from various countries, particularly those in the Southeast Asia region, including Indonesia. While these gambling operator companies named as POGO operate legally in the Philippines, their activities often serve as a cover for other criminal endeavors, such as scams, kidnappings, and confinement.

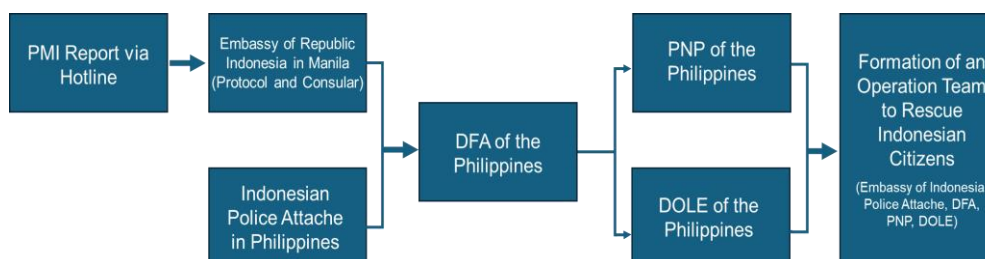
TIP cases in the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries share similar characteristics. Scam companies disseminate job vacancies through social media, enticing potential workers with easy requirements and promises of substantial salaries. These companies fail to provide clear company information or detailed job descriptions to

prospective employees. Additionally, some companies include transportation costs from Indonesia to the destination country, along with accommodation arrangements. PMIs who come to their destination countries also utilize tourist visas or visa-free facilities among ASEAN countries, rather than working visas. The critical factor preventing victims from being able to ‘escape’ from the company is that their travel documents, such as passports, are retained by the company for the purpose of processing working visas. Ultimately, the passport serves as a guarantee for PMIs; if they encounter problems, are terminated, or submit their resignation, they must pay a fine to retrieve their passport.

The Efforts of Protection of Indonesian Citizens in the Philippines

In the context of efforts to protect Indonesian citizens in the Philippines, particularly in cases related to victims of the POGO online scam, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila collaborates closely with the National Police Attaché in the Philippines. The 740 cases that occurred throughout 2023 were not isolated to a single company network. Initially, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila received a report via the hotline indicating that three Indonesian citizens had been isolated by their employer due to their attempts to resign (Siska & Prihawati, 2023). Specifically, these Indonesian citizens were employed at the Clark Sun Valley Hub Cooperation company in Pampanga (KBRI Manila, 2023). This report subsequently revealed significant information regarding the involvement of Indonesian citizens in TIP cases within the Philippines.

Upon receiving the report, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila, in collaboration with the National Police Attaché, initiated coordination with the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). Subsequently, the DFA coordinated with the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). This coordinated effort led to the formation of a PNP rescue team, which successfully identified 242 Indonesian citizens involved in the online scam, either as victims or suspects (Siska & Prihawati, 2023). The sequence of actions is described as follows:



Source: Processed by the author based on Siska & Prihawati, 2023

Figure 5. Flow of Operations to Rescue PMI Victims of Online Scams in the Philippines

In addition, the Philippine PNP also collaborated with the Southern Police District in Clark, Pampanga, to assist in the identification process alongside the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila. The identification process involves several stages (Siska & Prihawati, 2023): First stage is General Identification. This initial stage focuses on gathering information about the Indonesian citizens involved, including their names, pseudonyms, incidents experienced, health conditions, and other relevant details. Second Stage is Localization of Indonesian Citizens. This stage aims to pinpoint the whereabouts of Indonesian citizens, which includes the confiscation of electronic devices. Third Stage is Identification of Victims, Witnesses, and Suspects. In this third stage, Indonesian citizens are categorized as victims, witnesses, or suspects. Notably, during this phase, it was discovered that two Indonesian citizens were declared suspects in Philippine TIP cases. The PMI case in Pampanga further revealed that several gambling companies in the Philippines were involved

in similar cases concerning Indonesian citizens. These companies include Bayport West, BGK Company in Parañaque City, and Hong Tai in Las Piñas City.

In the context of protection of Indonesian citizens, the Protocol and Consular Affairs at the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila engage in coordinated efforts to protect victims. These efforts involve collaboration with the Immigration Bureau and the Philippine Trafficking in Persons Bureau. The victims themselves receive assistance through facilities provided by the Philippine government during the immigration process (Siska & Prihawati, 2023). To ensure protection, the Embassy employs various strategies, including negotiating a reduction in fines imposed by companies, facilitating the return of passports from these companies, issuing Travel Documents Like Passports (Surat Perjalanan Laksana Paspor, SPLP). Additionally, the Embassy assists in processing immigration documents and provides support for repatriation. However, it's important to note that the Indonesian Citizen Protection program does not directly cover return tickets due to specific budget allocations (Siska & Prihawati, 2023). This limitation is due to the specific allocation of the Indonesian Citizen Protection budget for certain cases. Nonetheless, the Embassy strives to allocate costs to companies, families of Indonesian citizens, and relevant government and non-government institutions in the Philippines. In cases involving non-procedural PMIs working within online scamming company networks, repatriation costs are covered by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR). Throughout the entire process, from treatment to return, the Embassy collaborates closely with the Philippine government to offer temporary shelter and essential logistics assistance.

In the context of releasing Indonesian citizens who were victims of TIP in Pampanga, Embassy of Republic of Indonesia in Manila undertook a series of coordination and handling efforts in response to other emerging cases. For instance, PMIs working at the Bayport West company received temporary shelter assistance and passport return assistance from the company. Additionally, the Embassy provided medical aid to PMIs who sustained injuries while fleeing (KBRI Manila, 2023). Legal assistance was also extended to PMIs involved in the Philippine online scamming company network. This assistance included submitting pro-bono lawyers to the Metro Manila Prosecutor's Office to accompany Indonesian citizens with witness status, providing translation services for Indonesian citizens acting as witnesses, and offering immigration consultations for those encountering difficulties in processing immigration documents at the Philippine Immigration Bureau (e.g., overstay, visa downgrading, clearances, deportation and repatriation orders, indigency, etc.) (KBRI Manila, 2023).

In the process of handling TIP cases in the Philippines, several challenges have emerged. Prihawati (2023) highlighted that one obstacle arises from local regulations, necessitating numerous adjustments in cross-coordination with the Philippine government. Despite existing cooperation between the National Police and the PNP through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), further efforts are required to establish collaboration aimed at eradicating illegal companies that pose future risks. Additionally, complexities related to investigating TIP cases, managing immigration processes, and facilitating the return of Indonesian citizens to the Philippines have contributed to delays in resolving PMI cases (KBRI Manila, 2023). From a consular perspective, the visa-free facility simplifies the process for Indonesian citizens returning to the Philippines for similar purposes. The highly enticing job offers often outweigh the risks they encounter, particularly given the Philippines' policy of converting tourist visas into work visas. However, this situation also poses challenges for the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila in monitoring the influx of Indonesian citizens arriving in the Philippines, whether for work or tourism.

To prevent the recurrence of TIP cases in the future, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila is implementing preventive measures. These efforts include

disseminating appeals through the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila website and other social media channels. Additionally, the embassy has established a team of hotline service officers available 24 hours a day to handle emergency reports and complaints. Looking ahead, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila aims to enhance cooperation and coordination with stakeholders in the Philippines and representatives from ASEAN countries. This cooperative approach focuses on sharing information, data, and experiences related to handling Indonesian citizens who are victims of TIP and other challenging situations. However, prevention efforts must also extend to coordination with stakeholders within Indonesia itself. To minimize the likelihood of Indonesian citizens returning to the Philippines after experiencing a TIP case, stricter screening procedures for Indonesian citizens traveling to the Philippines are necessary. This is particularly crucial for those suspected of working in the Philippines without clear working documents or proper company identity. Furthermore, the establishment of a database containing information about Indonesian citizens who have been repatriated or deported from the Philippines is essential. Additionally, measures such as suspending new passports for Indonesian citizens involved in TIP and Other Related Offenses should be considered, leading up to legal actions (KBRI Manila, 2023).

Centralized Efforts in Combating Trafficking in Persons Cases

In addressing the issue of TIP centrally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken several steps: (1) The ministry facilitates the release and repatriation of Indonesian citizens/PMI victims of TIP. Additionally, follow-up psychological treatment is provided for victims in coordination with other relevant agencies, such as Bareskrim Polri (the Indonesian National Police Criminal Investigation Unit) and the Ministry of Social Affairs. These efforts align with national referral procedures for handling TIP victims; (2) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs collaborates with all related agencies to prevent TIP. This collaborative approach aims to address the root causes and mitigate risks associated with trafficking; (3) Encouraging increased bilateral cooperation is essential for tackling cross-border crimes related to TIP.

In addition, the Indonesian government's centralized efforts through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs aim to establish and implement legal instruments and cooperation at both national and international levels, with the goal of enhancing the protection of Indonesian citizens abroad. These achievements include: (1) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended the necessity of international cooperation in addressing TIP crimes. This recommendation was accepted during the Eleventh Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime in Vienna, Austria, held from October 17 to 21, 2022. The discussion centered around the "Implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime."; (2) Recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs significantly contributed to discussions on the protection of PMI during the 4th UN Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights, which took place from November 9 to 11, 2022, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Another significant effort in implementing the protection of Indonesian citizens abroad is the establishment of the Portal Peduli WNI website. Portal Peduli WNI serves as a self-reporting and data collection platform for Indonesian citizens who have resided abroad for more than six months. This platform acts as a comprehensive database, tracking the status of consular services and enabling remote submission of case complaints. Portal Peduli WNI plays a crucial role, particularly during critical situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic or other disasters, including the TIP cases. Through this portal, Indonesian representatives can

monitor the distribution of Indonesian citizens in accredited areas, allowing them to effectively provide aid in emergencies

CONCLUSION

Expanding the concept of security is essential for recognizing and addressing security challenges in the modern era that cannot be effectively tackled using traditional methods. Human security represents a critical expansion of the security framework, emphasizing personal security and the protection of every individual. Achieving freedom from fear requires concerted efforts to provide protecting measures. Ultimately, personal security is closely tied to an individual's access to state-provided protection, whether within national borders or beyond.

Through a case study involving Indonesian citizens who were victims of online scams in the Philippines, the author argues that the concept of individual security plays a pivotal role in identifying emerging security threats that directly affect individuals or citizens. The Indonesian government's efforts to protect its citizens who fall victim to online scams in the Philippines have yielded significant results. Notably, coordination between the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Manila and the National Police Attaché, in collaboration with relevant Philippine authorities, has been instrumental. Additionally, Indonesia has taken centralized steps to prevent and enhance cooperation in addressing cross-border crimes. However, specific high-level cooperation between Indonesia and the Philippines regarding trafficking in persons (TIP) remains an area for further development.

Given the upward trajectory evident in data and graphs, it is probable that cases related to online scams will persistently increase in the future. Moreover, the existence of visa-free facilities facilitates the movement of people, including both Indonesian citizens and ASEAN citizens, across borders. Consequently, this heightened mobility also amplifies vulnerability to individual security threats. Therefore, fostering bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and the Philippines becomes imperative to effectively address the TIP issue, ensuring streamlined processes for rescuing and protecting Indonesian citizens in the future.

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