

The Jakarta Post

Jakarta needs overhaul in key locations

Thom Smyth , The Jakarta Post , Jakarta | Wed, 02/04/2009 10:21 AM | City

Overhauling city aviation and transportation security should be top priorities for Jakarta, an Australian national security expert said Monday.

The massive blaze at Pertamina's fuel depot two weeks ago has raised questions about the security of other critical infrastructure in the country and the readiness of security agencies to respond to threats.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute's Dr. Carl Ungerer said a comprehensive review of security arrangements was required.

"That can only be done with a proper national risk assessment. The threat of terrorism is high in Indonesia, but so far, terrorist groups have preferred to go after 'soft targets'," Ungerer said.

"Transport and airline security should be top priorities."

The fire at Pertamina's Plumpang depot, resulting in one fatality and the loss of 3,000 kiloliters of premium fuel, caused production disruption and the risk of fuel shortages.

At this stage, no cause for the disaster has been released, although suggestions of a thwarted sabotage plan against the depot last year have been strongly denied by officials.

The city administration has confirmed squatters will be evicted from depot's perimeter to create a "buffer zone" designed to improve security and access to the facility, as prior to the blaze squatters were living as close as 30 meters to some of the tanks.

Vice President Jusuf Kalla ordered that the perimeter of the depot be cleared of squatters.

"Both parties, the city administration and Pertamina, have a responsibility to provide the safe zone," Kalla said.

Urban planning expert Surjono Herlambang told The Jakarta Post buffer zones of up to 200 meters are required.

While planning laws differ between jurisdictions in Australia, all require residential buffer zones of up to 500 meters in some areas around key sites such as oil refineries, with significant penalties for those who trespass.

"Critical infrastructure protection has been a high priority since 2001," Ungerer said. "It is listed in the national counter-terrorism plan, and there are regular exercises conducted around Australia to prepare for and respond to an attack, either natural or man-made, on infrastructure."

Official figures show that Australia has spent over US\$1.2 billion (Rp 8.4 trillion) on aviation security since 2001, with a review of the air transport sector currently being completed.

In December, the Australian Government announced the appointment of a national security adviser reporting directly to the office of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in response to a national review of homeland security arrangements.

Despite recent changes however, Ungerer said, Australia faced many challenges in ensuring infrastructure security and the continuity of services, particularly as Australia did not have significant domestic oil reserves and faced extreme weather events like Indonesia.

"Refineries in Sydney and Melbourne have suffered from major industrial accidents in the past, and supply shortages have resulted," he said.

"Currently, the heat wave in Victoria is causing power shortages and rationing as the electricity grid is damaged by the heat."

Ungerer said that while Jakarta did not need to appoint a security adviser like Australia or create a homeland

security agency like the United States, security arrangements could be improved through the cooperation of the different government bodies responsible for maintaining the security of key national sites.

“Given that the National Police is still finding its feet, I doubt another layer of bureaucracy would assist the Indonesian system,” he said.

“President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was a strong and effective coordinating minister under former president Megawati Soekarnoputri, which was probably more important for decision-making.

“Indonesia would be wise to develop a national counter-terrorism plan like Australia’s that sets out clearly the roles of responsibilities of each agency in the event of a terrorist attack or other incident.”

What is critical infrastructure?

Utilities — power, water and gas

Communication systems — including landlines, mobiles, broadband and wireless Internet technology

Transport — includes ports, airports, roads and public transportation infrastructure

Banking services

Healthcare

Natural resources and food supply

Military and government installations

Landmarks — monuments, stadiums, concert halls and places of worship

The Jakarta Post

Cooperation crucial for safe city, country

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Calls to review "inadequate" security arrangements at critical infrastructure - such as airports, hospitals and power plants - are growing following the devastating fire at Pertamina's fuel depot that killed a security guard and destroyed 3000 kilolitres of premium fuel.

Currently, the Indonesian Military (TNI) is responsible for infrastructure security.

However, Centre for Strategic and International Studies researcher Alexandra Retno Wulan said TNI was often in competition with the police force, rather than the two agencies working together.

"Of course the situation is inadequate, but I believe that is not the core competence of the military (TNI) to protect those important places," Alexandra said.

She said the situation would be better handled by a separate body, and called on the government to set up a central security agency.

"There are already provisions in place for the government to set up some kind of high council of security, like the United State's

National Security Agency, as a coordinator for security issues," Alexandra said.

"The problem is, in Indonesia we are experts at making laws for things, but the capability to actually act and make it work is lacking."

Alexandra said that while she had been involved in reform of the military and intelligence services, she thought police force reform to end the competition between the police and other agencies was the most importance issue facing Indonesian security arrangements.

"We can still count on ongoing reform in the intelligence sector, but this is not the case with police. In terms of protecting infrastructure, a coordinating security body and police reform is vital," she said.

Spokesman for international security consultancy firm Control Risks, Oddbjorn Faugstad, said ensuring cooperation between the military, police force and State Intelligence Agency (BIN), rather than a separate coordinating body, was needed to protect key sites around Indonesia.

"It's unwise to believe that one agency or organisation can single-handedly formulate the solutions. Sharing the knowledge, experience of threats, risk and vulnerability will build trust across agencies and sectors," Oddbjorn said.

"Indonesia has its own unique issues and needs to find a model that ensures interest and desire to learn and share information."

He said reforms of the national security agencies were required to improve public confidence in the institutions.

"The public wants to see visible changes and feel safer in their everyday life," Oddbjorn said.

"This means enhancing the image of law enforcement agencies by ensuring they are well equipped, trained and motivated to carry out their duties."

A recent shake-up of senior National Police officials following a Transparency International Indonesia survey into corruption was met with scepticism by experts in the field, who said little improvement to services would result from the staff moves.

Oddbjorn said eliminating corruption was an important aspect of security sector reform.

"If government agencies are being perceived as engaging in corrupt practices, it is likely to impede on their ability to build trust amongst the public."

"Good relations with the public will motivate people to be actively involved in safeguarding our infrastructure by providing information to help law enforcer make sound decisions."

Alexandra said ensuring that the different agencies worked together was a difficult but necessary measure.

"Basically, we are still a very young democracy. Everyone wants to be the number one, they don't want to work together," she said.

-- JP/Thom Smyth

The Jakarta Post

Australia honors inspirational alumni for efforts in RI

Thom Smyth and Rhiannon Horrell, , The Jakarta Post, , Jakarta | Mon, 02/09/2009 6:26 PM | City

The Australian Embassy will present nine awards to alumni of Australian universities in a gala dinner slated for Feb. 21 to recognize Indonesians who have studied in Australia and returned home to excel in their fields.

Australian Ambassador to Indonesia Bill Farmer said last week 38 nominees active in business, environmental affairs, the media, culture and academe had been selected by their peers and past Alumni Award winners.

The diverse group of nominees include the editor of Jakarta Java Kini magazine Alex Hansel Simanjuntak, chairman of Paramadina University's Center for Islam Yudi Latif, special adviser for legal affairs to the president of Indonesia Denny Indrayana, and Linggar Seni art gallery owner Mia Maria.

The awards are handed out in nine categories in all, including for sustainable social and economic development, for research and innovation, for culture and the arts as all as a special award for young achievers.

Speaking at the dinner honoring the nominees, Farmer reaffirmed the Australian government's commitment to helping improve education and living standards in Indonesia even as Australia's economy is feeling the pinch from the global economic crisis.

"*The economic crisis* will not affect the level of assistance offered to Indonesia," he said.

The evening also acknowledged the work of prominent Indonesians with the presentation of special awards for their work in the community.

"These individuals have worked tirelessly . driven by their passion for contributing to improving the lives of others," Farmer said.

Recipient Abdullah Alamudi, honored for his contribution to the media in Indonesia, is currently serving on the Indonesian Press Council and has provided guidance to the government, the military and lawyers on the importance of press freedom.

Lubna Algadrie also received an award for her contribution to education and language studies; I Made Nitis won for his agricultural research.

The winners of the Inspirational Alumni Award were chosen for their contribution to the lives of others, and included legal expert Deddy Mulyana, educator Khairiah Syahabuddin, aid worker Netty Muharni, business owner Hadi Cahyadi and small-business advocate Fanina Yulianthi.

The Jakarta Post

Rivalry still burning at schools

Thom Smyth and Agnes Winarti , The Jakarta Post , Jakarta | Wed, 01/28/2009 3:23 PM | City

"We never fear anything. We are ready to fight!" These are words you would expect to hear from a soldier going into battle.

But when they come from an eight grader student at a Jakarta public school, state high school SMA 6 in Bulungan, South Jakarta, they come as a shock.

The ongoing feud between students at SMA 6 and nearby SMA 70 gained public attention again in October last year, when gangs from both schools clashed in streets during the month of Ramadan, leaving several students badly injured.

Students at SMA 6 described how gangs from both schools armed with chains, sticks and weapons made from bike parts have been involved in several reprisal attacks, the most recent just last month.

"The December attacks were revenge for the fight the week before," said Avay, an SMA 6 student.

Some of these attacks have been recorded on hand phones and uploaded onto the video-streaming site YouTube.

Students writing inflammatory comments anonymously under the posted videos keep the feud running online.

Bus drivers on nearby school bus routes have reported problems to The Jakarta Post in recent weeks.

Feuding between schools is not confined to Bulungan.

On the other side of the city, students at state technical school SKN 27 in Pasar Baru, Central Jakarta, said they were afraid to go near technical school STM 1, nicknamed "Boedoet" after its location on Jl. Budi Utomo, also in Central Jakarta.

"We know not to go there," SKN 27 student Dono said. "We tell all of the first year students to watch out for Boedoet."

The new principal of STM 1 said that while students at his school had misbehaved in the past, the reputation was unfair as behavioral standards had improved significantly in recent years.

"We have counselors to help students," Principal Pakpahan said.

Students from all schools visited were only too happy to describe past clashes, but when it came to the question of why they fight, the students lost a little of their swagger.

"We don't really know why it started," said a group of eighth graders at SMA 6.

"There is a story of two brothers, twins, one was sent to SMA 6 and one went to SMA 70. That's when it started, we think."

Meanwhile, head of the city education agency, Taufik Yudi Mulyanto, said the number of school brawls were on the decline.

"We saw fewer school brawls over the past three years," Taufik told the Post. "Previously, it happened on Saturdays. But, now, not anymore."

Without providing the exact figure on the number of school brawls, Taufik attributed the decline to the success of moral-based education at schools, which included religious teaching and character building."

Separately, SMA 6 teacher Asih Utami Dewi said the clashes possibly occurred because students were "too proud" of their schools.

She said the school took the issue very seriously.

But students say the disputes have been going on for so long they do not think they will ever cease.

"We will be enemies forever," Avay said.

The Jakarta Post

Budget airliner Jetstar sees brisk business ahead

Thom Smyth , The Jakarta Post , Jakarta | Wed, 02/11/2009 12:23 PM | City

While Jakarta reports a decline in the influx of visitors, an Australian budget airliner, Jetstar from the Qantas Group that recently launched its first service to Jakarta from Perth in Western Australia, unveiled a "solid performance" in its first three months of operation.

Jetstar spokeswoman Simone Pregellio said the load factors on both legs of the route were meeting expectations.

She added that while there was "strong business traffic" (people flying for business reasons), there were more passengers flying into Jakarta from Perth than into Perth from Jakarta.

"We have been very pleased with the take-up and everything is meeting our expectations," Pregellio said.

With fares cheaper than their flights to Bali, and almost A\$170 (Rp 1.3 million) cheaper than seats on some other airlines flying the same route, they are aggressively marketing the flights in Perth to encourage travelers to visit Jakarta.

"We hope that with low fares we can stimulate new markets," Pregellio said.

"The interesting thing with Jetstar is, when it started in Australia, it was attracting up to 10 percent of people who had never flown before. We are finding the same effect as we introduce international services - we are still getting a high percentage of first-time flyers."

And with the global financial crisis biting into would-be travelers' savings, Jetstar believes these "first-time flyers" are going to be important in stimulating growth worldwide.

"We certainly approach every route the same way, looking at how we can grow traffic to that particular market," Pregellio said.

"We are quite excited about introducing ourselves to the Jakarta market. It's a new market for us but one that we think has good potential."

Pregellio said that while Jetstar worked on cooperative marketing campaigns with government tourism offices, they "had not been approached" by the city tourism agency that had launched tourism campaigns under the Enjoy Jakarta program for the past five years.

The Jakarta Post

Socceroos kick around ball with students

Thom Smyth , The Jakarta Post , Jakarta | Fri, 01/30/2009 2:52 PM | City



Against all odds: A student from Madrasah Tasnawiyah

Nurul Huda controls the ball while Nikolai Topor Stanley of the Australian national team tries to block it at a match Thursday. *(JP/R.Berto Wedhatama)*

Following their hard-fought nil all draw against Indonesia's national team Wednesday night, Australian team the Socceroos were probably hoping for a relaxing afternoon Thursday at a football clinic in Kuningan, South Jakarta, organized by the Australian Embassy.

Students from West Java's Islamic junior high school Madrasah Tsanawiyah Nurul Huda had other ideas.

Excited about their trip to meet the Australian players, the 25 students relished the opportunity to show off their skills, even scoring a few goals against their more experienced opponents.

The clinic with the students from Cikarageman was attended by six Socceroos including Danny Allsop, Archie Thompson, Billy Celeski, Rodrigo Vargas and Nikoli Toppers Stomley.

Following a quick game against the select squad, students were unanimous in naming youngster Michael Zullo as their favorite.

"It's great for us to come here and give something back. Some of the kids have great technique," Archie Thompson said.

The clinic was organized to develop the football skills of the students and to highlight the work of the Australian Government's aid agency AusAID, which assisted the local community to build Madrasah Tsanawiyah Nurul Huda as part of the Australia Indonesia Basic Education Program (AIBEP).

The program aims to build and equip 2000 public and private junior high schools in remote areas that do not post-primary level education facilities by the end of 2009.

Abdul Malik, a teacher at Madrasah Tsaniwiyah, said the students were avid soccer fans and had watched the Asian Cup qualifier game the night before.

He said they were looking forward to sharpening their skills against the Australian players.

"They train almost every day after school. We want to compete with neighboring schools," Malik said.

The AIBEP program, launched in 2006, sees AusAID working with National Education Ministry, the Religious Affairs Ministry, local governments and communities to build the schools.

AusAID spokeswoman Lisa Mollard said sites were chosen in consultation with all levels of government and with the communities themselves to ensure the schools were well-managed and that education standards continued to improve once responsibility for the schools was handed over to the community.

"This includes curriculum and teacher development and also maintenance and ongoing costs.

It's a holistic approach to school development, not just construction," Mollard said.

The players said Wednesday's match at Bung Karno Stadium in Senayan provided "an unbelievable experience" of playing in front of such a large audience.

"It was the biggest crowd a lot of us had played in front of," said Rodrigo Vargas.

Archie Thompson, whose step-mother is Indonesian, said football training clinics were an important part of developing the game internationally.

"A lot of countries have great raw talent. It's just a matter of getting the right people in to develop that talent."