

# Indonesia: Indonesia, Australia agree on joint operation against illegal fishing

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## FULL TEXT

The governments of Indonesia and Australia have concurred on conducting joint maritime patrol called Operation Gannet 5 to safeguard the sea borders between both nations, including from illegal fishing activities.

The coordinated marine patrol cooperation was marked by the inking of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) held virtually on Monday by representatives of the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency (BAKAMLA), Indonesian Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Minister (KKP), Australian Border Force (ABF), and Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA).

Indonesia and Australia have upheld the commitment to continue to cooperate to promote regional stability, especially in the borders shared by the two countries, Antam Novambar, acting Director General of Marine and Fishery Resources Supervision of the KKP Ministry, stated here on Monday.

"This is one of our collaborations with Australia within the framework of the Indonesia-Australia Fisheries Surveillance Forum. Although the patrol is conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, the operation is strictly implemented using the COVID-19 prevention protocols", Novambar remarked.

GANNET 5 commenced in March 2021, with a workshop to share knowledge on Maritime Domain Awareness, conducted between ABF, BAKAMLA, PSDKP, and AFMA. Since March, regular online meetings and information sharing had been conducted to discuss the requirements for the first joint patrol on May 24-26, 2021.

Meanwhile, according to a joint media release issued by the ABF, AFMA, BAKAMLA, and PSDKP on Friday, the cooperation marked the fifth coordinated maritime patrol on the Indonesia - Australia maritime boundary.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not impacted our ongoing cooperation, the strength of Australia's and Indonesia's maritime security arrangements, and the ability to coordinate maritime efforts is seen today through the achievement of the fifth Operation (Gannet 5), VADM A'an Kurnia, chief of BAKAMLA, stated.

GANNET 5 is part of the continued efforts by Indonesia and Australia to safeguard our territorial waters. The upcoming operation will be conducted through integrated communication among the involved agencies, information exchange, and a joint coordinated patrol by vessels from BAKAMLA, PSDKP, and MBC.

The primary operational objective for GANNET 5 is to detect, deter, and combat illegal activities at sea in addition to bolstering cooperation between the related Indonesian and Australian agencies. The focus for this operation includes illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; people smuggling and human trafficking; and environmental protection and transnational serious organized crimes occurring within the joint operational area. The key geographical focus for this operation is the eastern region of Indonesia that shares a maritime boundary with Australia.

During the operation, BAKAMLA will deploy the patrol vessel KN Tanjung Datu-301, commanded by COL. Arif Rahman. This vessel is equipped with 12.7mm caliber heavy machine guns and a 5.56 caliber DSAR-15P personal defense weapon. The information exchange will also be supported by officers from the Indonesia Maritime Information Centre (IMIC) located at the BAKAMLA headquarters in Jakarta.

The ABF will deploy the patrol vessel ABFC Cape Nelson along with two aircraft to conduct aerial surveillance during the operation. An AFMA officer will be embarked on the aircraft for fisheries surveillance and monitoring activities. The patrols will be supported by MBC and AFMA, located within the ABF headquarters in Canberra.

The PSDKP will deploy patrol vessels (KP) Orca 4, KP. Hiu 14, and air surveillance aircraft. In addition to its objective to thwart IUU fishing practices, this operation will also target illegal Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) on the Indonesia-Australia border.

Rear Admiral Mark Hill, commander for the Maritime Border Command, remarked that this operation intensifies the Australian national security.

Australia is ever vigilant when it comes to threats within our maritime domain. However, these are shared threats that impact not just Australia but also our region. The economic prosperity, safety, and security of our communities is ensured where Indonesian and Australia continue to cooperate through Operation Gannet and other similar cross-border maritime security operations, Rear Admiral Hill remarked.

Since 2018, these joint patrols between Maritime Border Command (MBC), which sits within the ABF, BAKAMLA, PSDKP, and AFMA aim to combat and mitigate illegal activities impacting the prosperity of the countries.

This patrol is a key part of the commitment to strengthening maritime security, as part of the Maritime Plan of Action that implements the Indonesia-Australia Joint Declaration on Maritime Cooperation, according to the joint statement.

Source: ANTARA News

## DETAILS

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