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## **The Role of Defence Force In Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief**

### 1. **Introduction**

As an archipelagic country located between two continents, two oceans, and on the intersection of three of earth's main tectonic plates encompassing mountains, valleys, forests, rivers, and seas, Indonesia is highly prone to natural disasters. The occurrence of disasters is rarely predictable that people are not forewarned. One of the causes is that not all areas are equipped with equipments for detecting early signs of an approaching disaster. Events like the Aceh tsunami in 2004 and Padang earthquake in mid 2009 taught Indonesia many lessons, including the need for a Task Unit with quick and correct working mechanism to be readily operational at any time.

To ensure the goal of lessening the suffering of disaster victims, Indonesia has now formed the National Agency for Disaster Relief (*Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana / BPNB*) tasked with helping the President in coordinating the planning and execution of disasters and emergencies relief, starting from before, during, and after a disaster occur. This includes prevention, readiness, emergency response, and restoration. TNI as one of the nation's asset best equipped with the necessary resources and on high readiness is becoming the spearhead in disaster relief throughout the country. To actively participate in supporting the government during disaster relief, TNI has formed the Disaster Relief Rapid Reaction Force Task Unit (*Satuan Tugas Pasukan Reaksi Cepat Penanggulangan Bencana TNI / Satgas PRCPB TNI*).

This paper will explain in general about the Disaster Relief Rapid Reaction Force (*Satuan Reaksi Cepat Penanggulangan Bencana / SRCPB*) as the field agency under the BPNB, the position of TNI AL in the organisation of SRCPB, the organisation of Satgas PRCPB TNI, TNI / TNI AL's role in disaster relief in Indonesia, and the existing cooperation procedures. Hopefully readers will have an understanding of TNI's role in disaster relief and the diplomatic channel to be used when disaster relief effort in Indonesia must involve units from other countries.

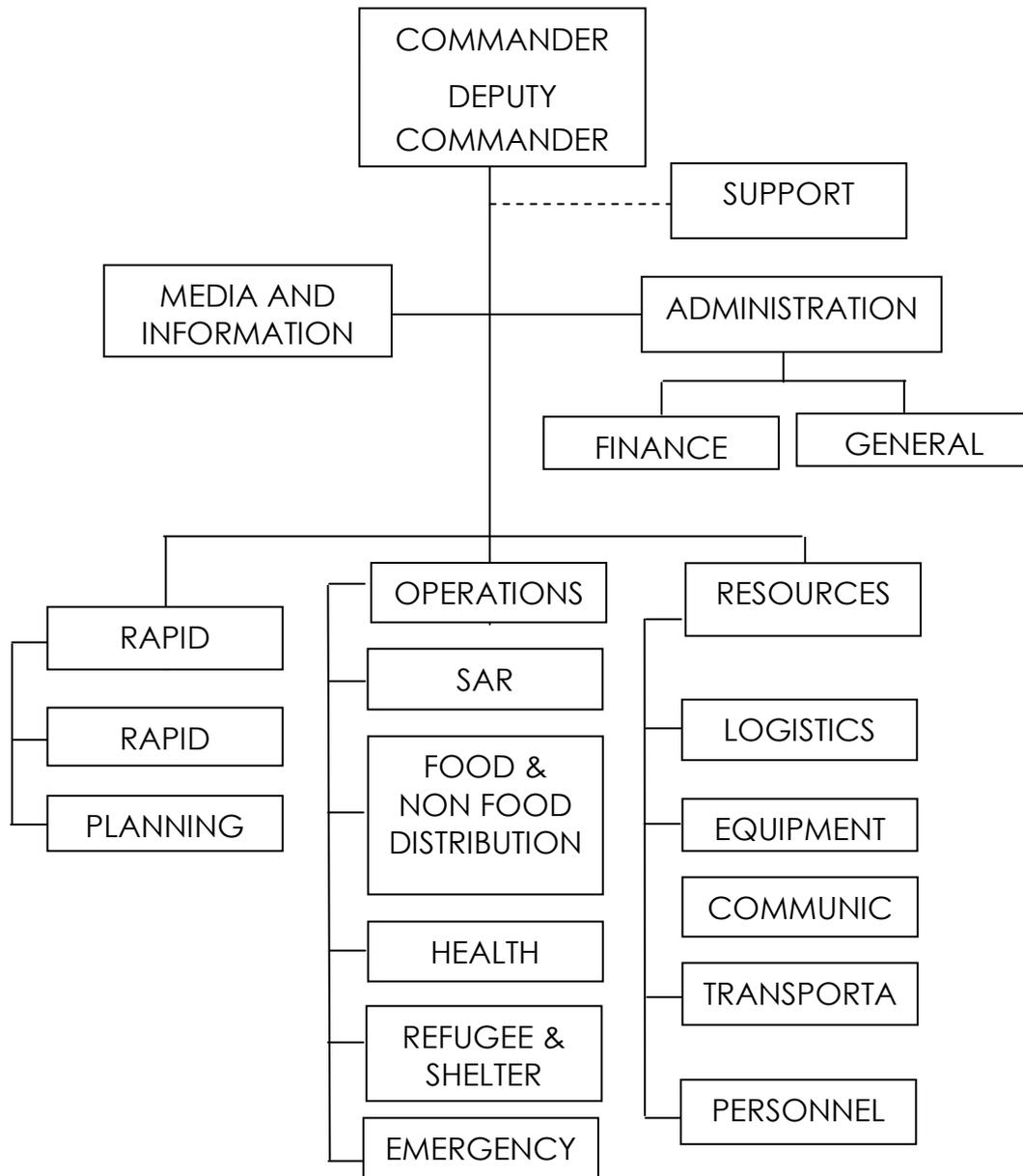
### 2. **Disaster Relief Rapid Reaction Force (*Satuan Reaksi Cepat Penanggulangan Bencana /SRCPB*)**

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<sup>1</sup> Lt Col Aldedharma has joined the navy in 1991 and had a mix of command and staff appointments. He did many courses at home and abroad including the Junior officers' strategic course in Australia and Naval Staff Course in the USA. Currently he is holding appointment as Staff Officer for Strategic Planning in the office of the Planning and Budgeting at Indonesian Naval Headquarters.

The knowledge that Indonesia's geographic condition makes it prone to natural disaster, and that those disasters can cause loss of material and lives that must be prevented as much as possible has motivated the Indonesian government to anticipate such event with the formation of a stand by disaster relief force to act as BNPB's initial reaction team. This unit is called the Disaster Relief Rapid Reaction Force (*Satuan Reaksi Cepat Penanggulangan Bencana /SRCPB*) consisting of combined units from different agencies, designed to quickly and accurately perform initial actions during the emergency response stage.

a. **SRCPB Organisation**



b. The tasks of SRCPB in the emergency response stage are:

- 1) Assesment of damage caused by the disaster and urgent necessities.
- 2) Containment of existing emergency.
- 3) Conducting search, rescue, and evacuation of victims.

- 4) Providing health services, assisting in relocation and establishing temporary shelters.
- 5) Assisting in logistics distribution.
- 6) Assisting in immediate restoration of structures and infrastructures needed for survival.
- 7) Organizing aids and volunteers.

c. **Areas of Responsibility**

Organisationally, SRCPB is under the Head of BPNB and has two Regional Units, namely the Western Area SRCPB and Eastern Area SRCPB. The respective area of responsibility is described in Fig. 1.



d. **Operations Base**

- 1) Western Area SRCPB in Halim Perdanakusuma Air Force Base in Jakarta.
- 2) Eastern Area SRCPB in Abdul Rahman Saleh Air Force Base in Malang.

e. **Working Mechanism**

- 1) **Standby Unit (75 Persons).** Consisting of designated personnel with required qualifications from various agencies / organizations. The names are submitted to BPNB according to requirements and designated as members of SRCPB by Head of BPNB for a certain period of time. The designated personnel must be ready to deploy at any time in under attachment to BPNB. The standby unit is deployed to the scene of disaster with potential massive impact on the life of nearby communities by government decision. Head of BPNB will issue an order to deploy the Standby Unit to the location and perform initial coordination with local authorities, conduct initial response by utilizing local resources that are available in the area before the arrival of the Main Unit. The Standby Unit will also inform BPNB on the actual situation on the site as input for the Main Unit in doing assessment and deciding the amount and type of aid to be sent.

2) **Main Unit (550 Persons).** This is the unit prepared for relief according to the type of disaster. This unit will continue the initial actions of Standby Unit in a more coordinated manner. SRCPB tasks are conducted using information gathered by the Standby Unit that is comprehensively analyzed to minimize the impact of disaster.

3) **Reinforcement (2000 – 3000 Persons).** If the impacts of the disaster require extended and intensive efforts to rehabilitate and recondition the impacted areas, a Reinforcement Unit will be formed to follow up the works of Standby and Main Units. The Reinforcement Unit can be deployed in stages according to rehabilitation and recondition plans decided.

### 3. **The IDF Position in SRCPB**

According to the President's policy that TNI must always be involved in disaster relief efforts, TNI AL (under the coordination of TNI Headquarters) is also included in SRCPB. TNI positions in SRCPB are distributed in the different Sections (as part of SRCPB's Initial Team), among others Quick Assessment and Planning, Operations, and Resources. TNI assigns personnel to be involved in SRCPB (according to BNPB's requirements) with the following breakdown:

#### a. **Quick Assessment and Planning Section**

1)	Quick Assessment Sub Section	3 Persons
2)	Planning Sub Section	4 Persons

#### b. **Operations Section**

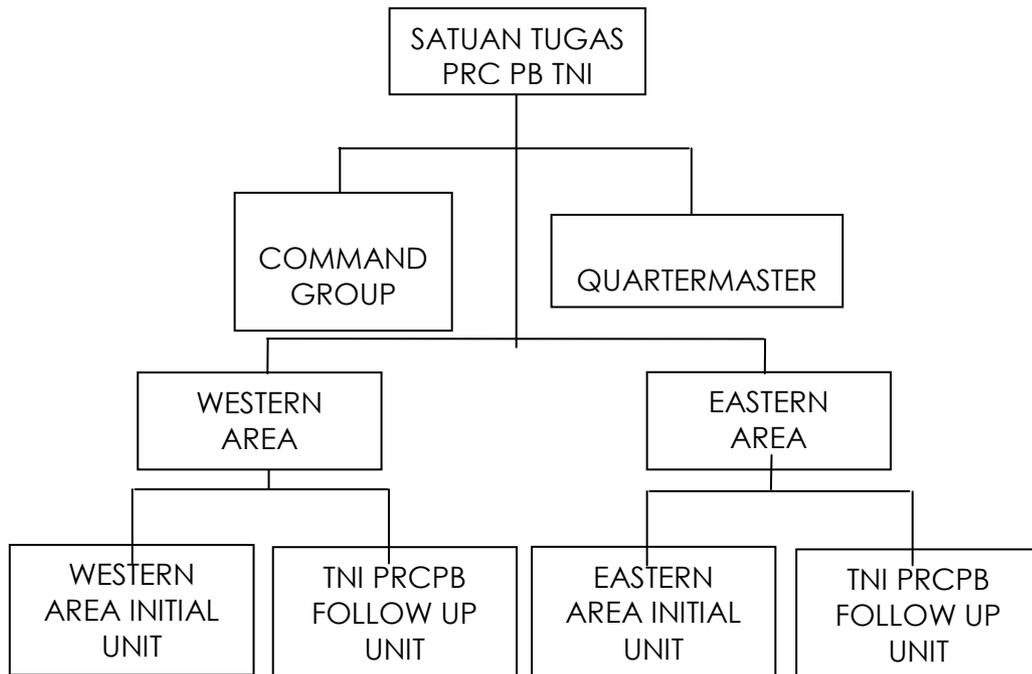
1)	SAR Sub Section	28 Persons
2)	Food and Non – Food Distribution Sub Section	15 Persons
3)	Medical Service Sub Section	40 Persons
4)	Refugee and Shelter Sub Section	14 Persons
5)	Emergency Restoration Sub Section	59 Persons

#### c. **Resources Section**

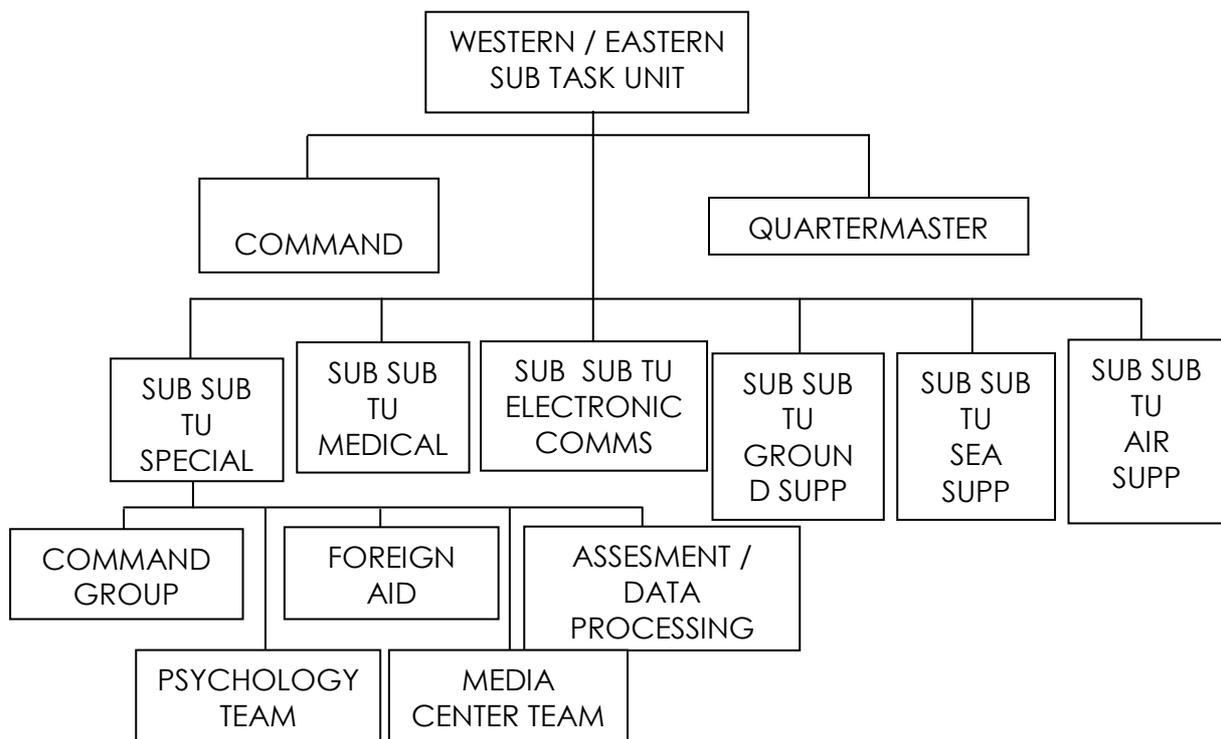
1)	Equipment Sub Section	2 Persons
2)	Communications Sub Section	10 Persons
3)	Transportation Sub Section	47 Persons

4. The IDF Disaster Relief Rapid Reaction Force Task Unit (*Satuan Tugas Pasukan Reaksi Cepat Penanggulangan Bencana TNI / Satgas PRCPB TNI*). Aside from providing the personnel aforementioned, internally TNI have the Satgas PRCPB TNI specifically formed to support the government (in the case BPNB) in disaster relief efforts. Satgas PRCPB TNI is deployed on the order of TNI Commander in Chief according to Indonesian Law No. 34 Year 2004. During actual deployment, after the arrival of SRCPB Standby Unit then Satgas PRCPB TNI will join the SRCPB and support the relief effort under the coordination of SRCPB.

#### a. **Satgas PRCPB TNI Organization**



b. **Sub Task Unit (Western / Eastern) Organization**



c. **Satgas PRCPB TNI Tasks.**

- 1) Conducting SAR.
- 2) Assisting in providing basic necessities for victims.
- 3) Providing protection for disaster prone groups.
- 4) Construction of vital infrastructures.
- 5) Coordinating foreign military aids.

## 5. **The Role of the Navy in Disaster Relief in Indonesia**

As a component of TNI, TNI AL is also responsible under the directive of Indonesian Law No. 34 Year 2004 to perform military operations other than war, among other aimed to assist in disaster relief efforts, relocation of victims and distribution of aids. Thus in principle the role of TNI AL in disaster relief effort Indonesia is part of TNI's role. In accordance with TNI leader's policy, TNI AL is always ready to deploy units for disaster relief at any time.

Beside its legal obligation to do so, the involvement of TNI / TNI AL in disaster relief in Indonesia is also based on the following considerations:

- a. Organizationally TNI is better suited, with the presence of constant watch keeping and universally accepted military customs, TNI units have higher level of readiness for disaster relief compared to other agencies. The deployment of TNI units can be done swiftly and rapidly. Clear and authoritative chain of command will support coordination in the field.
- b. **Personnel Readiness.** TNI personnel are physically and mentally ready for disaster relief. This is the result of continuous training as a logical necessity in a military organization that needs to be always ready for any possibilities.
- c. **Materiel Readiness.** Having a well managed maintenance and repair system, as part of the effort to be always ready, TNI's materiel are the spearhead in disaster relief efforts, especially during the emergency response stage.
- d. **High Mobility.** TNI's tri – force equipments are invaluable assets to support the mobility of Satgas PRCPB formed for disaster relief. TNI has ground, sea, and air transportation equipments that can be deployed at short notice and can also be used to transport aid materials.

In view of those advantages, it is natural that the President instructed BPNB to always involve TNI during disaster relief, especially during emergency response stage. The involvement includes several tasks, including:

- a. Performing Search and Rescue (SAR).
- b. Distribution of aid material.
- c. Medical service.
- d. Clearing and securing of locations.

These tasks are only a fraction of the relief efforts, where the involvement of TNI is coordinated by the government as a political decision of the government and based on the request of local authorities in the area of disaster. TNI is not leading the disaster relief efforts, although it is highly probable that TNI's involvement is needed. Satgas PRCPB TNI performs its role to assist or be attached to BPNB / SRCPB in facing the impact of national level disaster during the emergency response stage.

## 6. **Procedure for Foreign Cooperation**

a. TNI HQ Intelligence Staff as Foreign Aid Team in the organization of Satgas PRCPB TNI will act as the point of contact for foreign military units planning to provide aid for disaster victims in Indonesia. The tasks are:

- 1) Facilitating and coordinating foreign aids, both military and civilian, coordinating with BPNB and operations coordinating units, and afterwards:
  - a) Designating military bases, airports, or seaports to be used as entry points for international aids.
  - b) Establishing coordinating posts (joint secretariat) at the designated military bases, airports, and seaports used for international aids.
- 2) Assisting in administration matters for foreign military units in performing humanitarian actions.
- 3) Coordinate with Operations Coordinating Units about the capability and limitations of units to be projected into target areas.
- 4) Accompany foreign military units during humanitarian aids.

b. Coordination for military aid is done by TNI HQ Intelligence Staff through the respective country's Military Attaché, and during execution supported by Liaison Officers from the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

## 7. **Closing**

Disaster relief / aid operations, especially during the emergency response stage must be executed timely, accurately, and coordinated under a clear command. Disaster relief requires coordination and rapid, accurate, effective, efficient, unified and accountable handling. This will minimize the loss of material and lives. TNI is not the foremost agency in disaster relief, but only a supporting component whose presence is required.

No equipment however advanced can avert a disaster, added with human limitation as God's creature; make it necessary to have assistance from various sources in disaster relief effort. In view of national sovereignty and the different procedures between countries during disaster relief, this paper is aimed to provide an explanation on the existing procedures regarding TNI's role in disaster relief. Through this paper it is hoped that participating countries can understand those procedures and afterwards together explore and formulate standing procedures to be used by respective countries in giving / distributing aids for disaster relief efforts in Indonesia.

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