

Cooperation of Indonesia and China to Escalate Indonesia's Maritime Geoconomy as the Global Maritime Fulcrum in the First Regime of Joko Widodo

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Abstrak

Indonesia memiliki potensi ekonomi maritim yang besar dan berambisi untuk menjadi Poros Maritim Dunia, namun Indonesia memiliki sejumlah tantangan untuk mengimplementasikan pembangunan infrastruktur Maritim, seperti kapital dan jalur logistik strategis. Kemudian, Indonesia menjalin kemitraan strategis dengan China melalui Belt Road Initiative (BRI), yang menyediakan pendanaan, teknologi, dan pengalaman pengembangan. Kerjasama ini mempercepat pembangunan, memperkuat konektivitas antar pulau, dan meningkatkan daya saing global. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus. Kerangka konsep penelitian ini menggunakan kerjasama ekonomi bilateral dan Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) sebagai unit analisis. Kerjasama antara China dan Indonesia berpengaruh positif bagi geoekonomi maritim Indonesia, seperti peningkatan investasi dalam pengembangan sektor ekonomi dan modernisasi fasilitas transportasi maritim. Kerjasama ini juga merupakan upaya implementasi visi Presiden Joko Widodo untuk menjadikan Indonesia sebagai Pusat Maritim Dunia melalui pengembangan pelabuhan, konektivitas maritim, dan industri maritim nasional.

Kata kunci: Indonesia, China, Maritime Economy, Belt and Road Initiative, Global Maritime Fulcrum, Regime, Joko Widodo

Abstract

Indonesia has great maritime economic potential and aspires to become a Global Maritime Fulcrum, but Indonesia obtains some challenges on implementing maritime infrastructure development, such as capital and strategic logistics routes. Then, Indonesia forged a strategic partnership with China thru the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which provides funding, technology, and development expertise. This cooperation accelerates development, strengthens inter-island connectivity, and enhances global competitiveness. This research method uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The conceptual framework of this research utilizes bilateral economic cooperation and the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) as the units of analysis. Cooperation between China and Indonesia has a positive impact on Indonesia's maritime geo-economy, such as increased investment in the development of economic sectors and the modernization of maritime transportation facilities. This cooperation is also an effort to implement President Joko Widodo's vision of making Indonesia a World Maritime Center through the development of ports, maritime connectivity, and the national maritime industry.

Keywords: Indonesia, Maritime Infrastructure, Belt and Road Initiative, Joko Widodo

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia from a geoeconomics perspective is an archipelagic nation with high potential to develop the maritime sector as a strategic economic policy. Since the Joko Widodo regime, Indonesia's maritime potential has been transformed into an ambition to become a Global Maritime Fulcrum, particularly in the development of strategic logistics routes. As an effort to realize this, this regime also implemented the Indonesian Maritime Policy Roadmap toward the Global Maritime Fulcrum, which is the Long-Term Program Plan and part of the Nawa Cita Priority Program (Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2017). Indonesian maritime policy as a policy toward the World Maritime Axis is a response to a number of challenges that still exist in the field of maritime infrastructure, such as international-standard ports, integrated logistics systems, and an adequate fleet. These limitations hinder the optimal utilization of Indonesia's maritime potential in international trade, goods distribution, and inter-island connectivity (Ministry of Communication and Information, 2016).

Through cooperation with China under the Belt Road Initiative (BRI) framework, Indonesia gains access to funding and receives technical expertise and experience in developing strategic infrastructure, including ports, roads, bridges, and other maritime facilities. China is seen as a strategic partner given its significant investment in this sector. This partnership offers geoeconomy and diplomatic advantages, particularly in strengthening ties with Indonesia as one of the key players in Southeast Asia. From an external perspective, this cooperation is also influenced by China's economic policies, such as the Open Door Policy and the BRI program, which connects Asia and Europe through land and sea trade routes.

BRI has involved over 130 countries and encompasses the development of various strategic infrastructure projects, such as ports, railways, highways, bridges, airports, dams, and power plants (James et al., 2023). Indonesia's strategic position makes it one of the main focuses of the BRI. With its status as the largest economy in Southeast Asia, abundant natural resources, but weak infrastructure, Indonesia is an important partner for China (Pramono et al., 2022). China's growing demand for energy and raw materials has intensified its investment in Indonesia, particularly in the development of ports, railways, highways, bridges, airports, dams, and power plants. However, the cooperation of BRI in Indonesia is not without challenges, such as limited awareness at the local level, a shortage of skilled labor, and domestic capital constraints that hinder the smooth progress of some projects (Ifatari & Helda, 2020). Despite these challenges, this cooperation is still considered strategic as it accelerates national infrastructure development while strengthening Indonesia's role in the global trade landscape.

This study highlights the cooperation between Indonesia and China in developing maritime infrastructure through the Maritime Silk Road during Joko Widodo's first regime. Thus, the research question is how the cooperation of Indonesia and China to escalate Indonesia's maritime geoeconomy as the Global Maritime Fulcrum in the First Regime of Joko Widodo? Through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), both countries were collaborating on the construction of ports, maritime logistics routes, and other

supporting infrastructure. This cooperation aims not only to strengthen maritime connectivity but also to promote economic growth and enhance Indonesia's competitiveness at the regional and global levels.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research is a study that continues and develops previous research. There have been many studies on Indonesia's foreign policy direction in the Southwest Pacific region. Previous studies have contributed to and are relevant to this research, namely Bekarekar (2016). This research is the result of thesis research that produces an exciting study. Incidentally, the researcher of this study is a Papuan. So that it adds depth and sensitivity to the object under study, this research explains that Indonesia's foreign policy in the Southwest Pacific region aims to secure all forms of Indonesia's national interests in the region. The most significant urgency of interest is maintaining stability and disrupting the region's countries to separate Papua from Indonesia. The disturbance of countries such as Fiji, Solomon, Palau, Vanuatu, etc., is absorbing Indonesia's concentration to maintain the stability of Papua. Moreover, the independent Papuan movement has always flared up to separate itself from Indonesia. The movements carried out by these Southwest Pacific countries through multilateral and regional forums are very troublesome for Indonesia to explain that Papua is part of Indonesia and that there are no violations and injustices in Papua. That is why Indonesia strives to consistently participate in various meetings held by countries in the Southwest Pacific region. One of Indonesia's efforts is to become part of the MSG organization, an association of Southwest Pacific nation-states.

Indonesia's participation is part of an effort to obtain information or fight against information discrimination by nations that want to separate Papua from Indonesia. Thus, Indonesia's efforts remain contributive even though it was only a reviewing country when Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was leading. However, at least Indonesia can get information and developments in Papua by joining the organization.

The second research explains that the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy in the Jokowi era is different from the direction of Indonesia's foreign policy in the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono era (Wati et al., 2018). The direction of foreign policy in the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono era emphasized globalism, while the direction of foreign policy in the Jokowi era was more identical to bilateralism (Wati et al., 2018).

Then, Indonesia's foreign policy in the Jokowi era also emphasized pro-democracy and pro-people diplomacy. So, if you look at the development of the Papua issue, Indonesia's foreign policy always participates in matters regarding the Pacific Islands. If we look further, Indonesia's foreign policy in the Jokowi era in the Pacific region emphasizes more on political issues. Due to the diversity of political and government systems and cultures in the islands, Indonesia has always promoted democracy. For example, it is being involved in the Pacific Elevation forum. However, it turns out that Indonesia's involvement was responded to negatively by several countries, especially Vanuatu, which has consistently demanded the decolonization of Papua. The diplomatic style of nation-states in the Pacific Islands that emphasizes anti-

colonialism demands that Indonesia release Papua to be independent and take care of itself. However, Indonesia's response remains constructive, remaining part of the MSG organization and providing economic assistance to Fiji and Vanuatu when affected by disasters. The goal is to melt the complex arguments of Vanuatu, Solomon, and Fiji, who firmly favor an independent Papua. Indonesia has always been active in maintaining its commitment to make Papua part of Indonesia, even though these countries have always voiced unfairness towards Papua. Indonesia also continues to build partnerships with Pacific nations to maintain stability and political issues that are always capitalized on by Pacific countries to corner Indonesia.

The following research was conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2013). This research explains that the Southwest Asia region is a strategic area in Indonesia's national interests. The crucial factor in building Indonesia's regional relations is identical to ethnic considerations. In addition, the region inhabited by Melanesian ethnicity makes Indonesia always active in participating both bilaterally and multilaterally. Indonesia's participation is to maintain political stability, especially to maintain potential security threats due to provocations from several regional countries that want Papua to be independent of Indonesia. On the other hand, Indonesia is also an actor and participatory in building a sustainable economy to create and encourage economic prosperity in the region.

METHOD

This study uses qualitative methods with a case study approach and descriptive analysis to examine the cooperation between Indonesia and China in improving maritime infrastructure through the Maritime Silk Road at the beginning of Joko Widodo's first term in office. The focus of the study is on the cooperation between Indonesia and China to improve port development, maritime logistics routes, and other supporting infrastructure in Indonesia during the period 2014–2019. All data for this study were collected from secondary analysis, such as books, scientific journals, research reports, official government websites, online media, and other publications relevant to the cooperation between the both countries. Data analysis was based on the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three stages: data reduction to filter relevant information, data presentation in the form of tables, graphs, or diagrams, and drawing conclusions to integrate research findings (Bakry, 2016).

This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the form and dynamics of cooperation between Indonesia and China within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) through the Maritime Silk Road during President Joko Widodo's first regime (Hans, 2021). The analysis in this study uses the concept of bilateral economic cooperation, namely a strategic partnership between two countries to achieve mutual benefits through trade, investment, technology transfer, and infrastructure development (Sampson, Snidal, 2017). In this context, Indonesia–China cooperation is an important part of the BRI, which is aimed at strengthening Indonesia's maritime sector through the development of ports and logistics networks. Indonesia's strategic position between the Indian and Pacific Oceans makes it a key partner for

China in expanding maritime connectivity in the region. (Gabriel & Hertug, 2015).

Hence, Indonesia has launched the Global Maritime Fulcrum vision under President Joko Widodo to strengthen interregional connectivity and national welfare. The vision has five pillars on which researchers will focus their analysis: strengthening maritime infrastructure and connectivity, such as sea highways, deep-sea ports, and logistics systems (Frandi Kuncoro, 2018). The synergy between the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is complementary: The GMF positions Indonesia as a global maritime center, and the BRI provides the necessary investment and resources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The high potential of Maritime Silk Road for Cooperation between Indonesia and China in the Maritime Infrastructure Development to Indonesia

Indonesia has a very strategic geographical position, located between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. This makes the country highly potential to become a Global Maritime Fulcrum—a main hub for international trade, maritime connectivity, and a sea-based economy. To maximize this potential, the government focuses on developing maritime infrastructure such as Sea Highways, international-standard ports, and the shipbuilding industry.

In 2014, President Joko Widodo launched the Global Maritime Fulcrum vision, aiming to make Indonesia a global maritime hub through infrastructure development, improved connectivity, and maritime security (Yudilla, 2019). China supports this vision through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which focuses on building global infrastructure such as ports, shipping routes, and industrial parks. In Indonesia, key projects include the development of Kuala Tanjung and Bitung ports, the Jakarta–Bandung high-speed railway, and industrial zones like Morowali and Kalimantan. (BRIN, 2023). This cooperation has strengthened Indonesia–China relations, mainly through Business-to-Business (B2B) schemes, increasing foreign investment. However, Indonesia still faces challenges such as limited human resources, technology, and infrastructure, making foreign investment crucial. The BRI, inspired by the ancient Silk Road, was revived by President Xi Jinping in 2013 to boost global connectivity and trade through modern land and sea infrastructure (Fachrunnisaa, 2018).

BRI seeks to revive and expand international trade networks, similar to the ancient Silk Road, through the development of modern infrastructure, including ports, highways, and railway lines (Ramadhani, 2020). The primary objective of this project is to increase trade volumes and cross-border investment flows by building strategic infrastructure. The land and maritime routes under the BRI connect China with various regions, including Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Europe, involving countries such as Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and India. Thus, the BRI serves not only as a tool to restore and strengthen trade relations with neighboring countries but also as a key

strategy to stimulate regional and global economic growth.

The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (MSR) is a key component of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), designed to strengthen international trade and economic cooperation by connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe (UN Tourism, 2022). This initiative promotes major investments in maritime infrastructure, logistics facilities, and tourism through the revitalization of ancient ports (Ghiasy et al, 2017). The MSR aims to enhance trade efficiency, strengthen food and energy security, and diversify maritime communication routes. In addition to expanding China's maritime influence, the project supports the economic growth of participating countries and reinforces global connectivity by integrating land and sea (Song & Fabinyi, 2022).

It refers to Indonesia's interest to become the main actor in Global Maritime Fulcrum which has strategic sea routes for international trade, interregional connectivity, and economic cooperation with partner nations, particularly China (UN Tourism, 2022).

Figure 1: Silk Road Economic Belt in Belt and Road Initiative



Source: Lemhannas, 2019

The image above illustrates the routes of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The red lines represent the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB) by land, while the blue lines indicate the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road by sea. Both are designed to enhance global connectivity and stimulate economic growth.

In 2019, China's investment in Asia reached a record high, covering sectors such as construction, transportation, energy, agriculture, and telecommunications. Indonesia became the largest recipient of BRI investments, with a total of approximately US\$171 billion. These funds, directed largely toward developing countries, are expected to boost infrastructure development, strengthen economies, and expand trade. Improved infrastructure has facilitated business activities such as exports and imports, while also enabling China to distribute its commodities more efficiently to partner countries (Faraswacyen & Kurniawan, 2021).

A notable example of BRI investment in Indonesia is the construction of the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway, aimed at enhancing transportation efficiency

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and supporting economic growth. China remains one of Indonesia's largest trading partners, particularly in raw materials such as timber, oil, rubber, and industrial goods. Furthermore, the BRI has contributed to advancing ASEAN–China integration through regional infrastructure projects that stimulate economic development (Ariawan, 2024). Under President Joko Widodo's leadership, bilateral relations between Indonesia and China have rapidly expanded, especially in investment, infrastructure, and the economy. Indonesia's active participation in the BRI reflects its strategic role in supporting China's initiative to expand intercontinental trade routes across Asia, Europe, and Africa. Through this collaboration, Indonesia is expected to increase its exports to China while gaining broader access to global markets for its domestic products (Wiranata, 2024).

In addition to its economic role, the Silk Road promoted cultural, artistic, and intellectual exchange, contributing to technological progress and societal welfare. This legacy has been revived through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which seeks to reconstruct global trade networks with modern investment support. Thus, the Silk Road has functioned not only as an economic corridor but also as a channel for cultural and religious dissemination (Liu, 2024).

B. Cooperation of Indonesia and China to Escalate Indonesia's Maritime Geoeconomy by Maritime Silk Road in the First Regime of Joko Widodo

Since 2014, President Joko Widodo has promoted the idea of the Global Maritime Fulcrum. This vision was first announced at the 9th East Asia Summit in Myanmar and later formalized through Presidential Regulation No. 16 of 2017 on Indonesia's Maritime Policy. The regulation serves as a national guideline for maritime development with two main functions: first, to direct ministries, agencies, and local governments in planning and evaluating maritime programs; second, to provide guidance for society and business actors to actively participate in realizing Indonesia as a Global Maritime Fulcrum.

The implementation of the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) is coordinated by the Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs, while each ministry and agency carries out the policy according to its authority. The GMF reflects Indonesia's commitment to becoming a sovereign, advanced, and independent maritime nation, actively contributing to regional and global security. It also aims to optimize marine resource utilization and enhance national competitiveness. To achieve this vision, the government launched the Sea Highways program, establishing regular shipping routes from western to eastern Indonesia. Supported by port modernization, adequate fleet provision, and improved facilities, this program strengthens interregional connectivity and promotes the growth of Indonesia's maritime economy. Ports are a key factor in the success of the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF), as around 90% of Indonesia's trade relies on sea transportation (Dhaniswari & Rakhmagina, 2022). The shipbuilding industry also plays a crucial role, not only as a means of inter-island transport but also as a main driver of logistics and a modern maritime economy.

Additionally, multimodal transport is essential in integrating various modes of

transportation within the supply chain. Services include freight forwarding, warehousing, cargo consolidation, and customs clearance, improving logistics efficiency (Nirmala, 2017). The government promotes multimodal systems to strengthen Indonesia's competitiveness and raise its Logistics Performance Index (LPI) ranking. Since 2014, President Joko Widodo's GMF policy has aimed to boost maritime economic growth, strengthen sovereignty, and reduce regional disparities. Despite challenges, the policy has brought positive impacts on the utilization of Indonesia's maritime potential (Dian, 2020). In Indonesia, cooperation with China through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has accelerated infrastructure development. Since its launch, collaboration between both countries in economics, transportation, and technology has steadily expanded. Chinese investment has become a crucial factor in advancing the modernization of Indonesia's infrastructure.

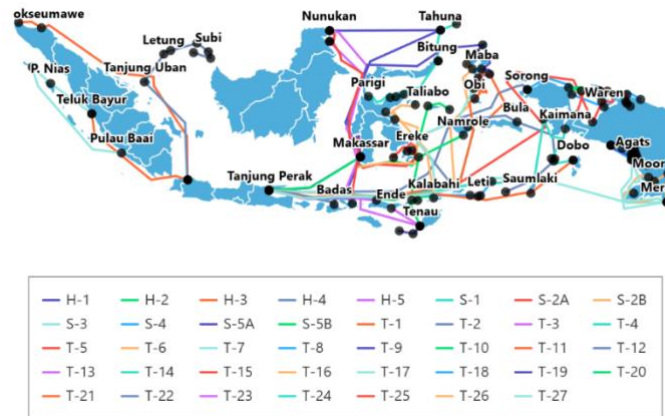
The close relationship between Indonesia and China has led to deeper strategic initiatives, marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the vision of the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF). Signed in Beijing in 2018, this agreement reflects the commitment of both countries to strengthen cooperation through the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and the Silk Road Economic Belt. The MoU aims to enhance regional connectivity and reinforce mutually beneficial economic cooperation. Its scope covers various fields, with a primary focus on infrastructure development as a crucial foundation for supporting economic growth and strengthening Indonesia's (Widhiyoga et al., 2024).

This way becomes a substantial response for infrastructure development in Indonesia that has long been concentrated on the Java Island, causing shipping costs to eastern regions to remain high. The imbalance of cargo flow often leaves ships returning empty, which leads to price disparities between western and eastern Indonesia. Furthermore, it also discouraged many shipping companies from setting fixed schedules, following the principle of "ship follows the trade."

To address this issue, President Joko Widodo launched the Sea Highways Program on November 4, 2015. The program introduced fixed and scheduled shipping routes to strengthen interregional logistics distribution and Indonesia's maritime geoeconomy. In addition to reducing logistics costs and narrowing price disparities, the Sea Highways has become a key pillar in supporting the vision of Indonesia as a Global Maritime Fulcrum, by making the sea the main channel for connectivity in production and trade while also strengthening regional economic relations.

Figure 2. Indonesia Maritime Connectivity

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Source: Ministry of Trade of Indonesia, 2024.

The illustration above shows that the Sea Highways Program is a strategic policy supporting Indonesia's vision as a Global Maritime Fulcrum. This program provides physical connectivity between regions and also reflects the government's commitment to building an integrated and equitable national maritime logistics system. Its main focus is to strengthen maritime connectivity between islands, especially in central and eastern Indonesia, which have long faced infrastructure gaps and limited access to logistics. With regular shipping routes, the distribution of goods becomes more scheduled, logistics costs are reduced, and price disparities between regions are significantly lowered.

According to Bobby R. Mamhit, Director General of Sea Transportation, the development of the National Maritime Axis through the Sea Highways program aims to expand access to regional container shipping, including the construction of international hub ports capable of serving large-capacity merchant vessels (Ministry of Transportation, 2015). The government has designated 24 main ports as key nodes of national logistics connectivity. The program has shown positive results, such as reducing national logistics costs from 24.5% to 19% of GDP. In addition to accelerating distribution and expanding market access for regional commodities, the Sea Highways also creates new investment opportunities in the port and maritime industry sectors. Thus, the Sea Highways serves not only as a route for goods and services distribution but also as a symbol of Indonesia's commitment to becoming a sovereign, independent, and competitive maritime nation at both the regional and global levels (Frenky and Desi, 2018).

The development of the Sea Highways has a crucial role in realizing Indonesia's vision as a Global Maritime Fulcrum. This program facilitates goods distribution, reduces logistics costs, and speeds up delivery, thereby driving economic growth and creating new opportunities for remote regions to market their local products. Additionally, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) strengthens these efforts by supporting maritime infrastructure such as Sea Highways routes and ports. This initiative not only enhances connectivity and logistics efficiency but also aligns with Indonesia's maritime vision, boosting the nation's competitiveness on the global stage.

A notable example of the Public–Private Partnership (PPP) scheme in Indonesia's maritime sector is the construction of Patimban Port in Subang, West Java. This project involves Japanese consortiums such as JICA, Toyota Tsusho, and NYK Line, which contribute to financing, development, and operational management, while the government acts as a facilitator by providing land and policy support. Patimban Port is designed to support national automotive exports and reduce the logistic burden on Tanjung Priok Port. (JICA, 2024) The project aligns with the National Port Master Plan (RIPN) and the Global Maritime Fulcrum vision, serving as a successful example of cross-sector collaboration in strategic infrastructure development. Maritime connectivity is being improved by strengthening port capacity. In the long term, main and feeder ports are expected to become the backbone of domestic shipping while also serving as part of international shipping routes for goods distribution. The following are several examples of such ports:

A. Patimban Port

Patimban Port is one of Indonesia's strategic multipurpose ports, located in Patimban Village, Pusakanegara District, Subang Regency, West Java Province. The port is designed to provide a wide range of cargo and logistics services. In its initial operations, Patimban Port began serving export activities, particularly for automotive products. This initiative marked the port's role as a key piece of infrastructure in supporting the growth of Indonesia's export industry—especially in the automotive sector—while also strengthening the nation's logistics competitiveness in the global market (Hutauruk, 2024). President Joko Widodo officially inaugurated the initial operation of Patimban International Port on December 20, 2020, from the Bogor Presidential Palace. He highlighted that the completion of the port's first phase was achieved despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. Strategically located between Kertajati Airport and industrial zones in Bekasi, Karawang, and Purwakarta, Patimban Port is expected to drive economic growth in the region. Beyond supporting exports and inter-regional connectivity, the port also helps reduce congestion at Tanjung Priok Port and traffic bottlenecks along the Bekasi–Jakarta corridor (Kementerian Sekretariat Negara, 2020)

B. Kuala Tanjung Port – North Sumatra

Kuala Tanjung Port is designed to become a strategic international hub port, serving as a primary access point to western Indonesia. A 2015 study by the Ministry of Transportation projected that the port's development could boost container throughput to 12.4 million TEUs by 2030. The project leverages the growing logistics demand from the Sei Mangkei Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and neighboring provinces such as Jambi, while also positioning itself as a potential alternative cargo hub to major regional ports including Singapore, Tanjung Pelepas, Klang, and Penang. Since its construction began, Kuala Tanjung Port has been prepared to meet freight transport needs in support of Sei Mangkei SEZ's growth while complementing Belawan Port's role within Indonesia's national logistics system. The port is expected to strengthen

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regional economic integration and improve Indonesia's maritime connectivity, especially in the western region (Ministry of Transportation, 2022).

Under President Joko Widodo's leadership, the Indonesian government launched a plan to develop 24 strategic ports as part of the Sea Highways program, consisting of 5 hub ports and 19 feeder ports. The main objectives are to strengthen inter-island connectivity, reduce logistics costs, and enhance Indonesia's competitiveness in the global trade system. The hub ports — including Bitung, Makassar, Tanjung Priok, Tanjung Perak, and Belawan/Kuala Tanjung — are designed to handle large-capacity vessels and serve as national logistics distribution centers. Meanwhile, the feeder ports function to connect production areas with the hub ports. Although this plan has been in place since the early Jokowi–Jusuf Kalla administration, many feeder ports remain in the planning and investment preparation stages (Itaibnu, 2014).

One key project is Kuala Tanjung Port, which was selected as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), particularly along the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, due to its strategic location near the Strait of Malacca. This port is expected to become an international hub for logistics distribution, strengthening Indonesia's role in global trade networks while expanding opportunities for maritime economic cooperation with other countries (Adam, Dwiastutu, 2015). The administration of Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla is committed to establishing Indonesia as a global maritime axis by improving both the quantity and quality of the nation's ports. However, enhancing port capacity and standards requires not only substantial funding but also a high level of expertise and professionalism. Therefore, it is crucial for the government to involve the private sector in the planning and development of ports to ensure more effective and efficient management (Widhiyoga et al., 2024).

The development of ports supporting Indonesia's Sea Highways Program has received support from the international Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by China's President Xi Jinping. Through this collaboration, Indonesia benefits from the construction of maritime infrastructure such as ports and shipping routes, which serve as strategic points in global trade. The synergy between the Sea Highways Program and the BRI is expected to enhance interregional connectivity, expand trade flows, and strengthen Indonesia's position as a global maritime axis. In addition to modern infrastructure, this partnership also covers the economic and trade sectors, providing Indonesia with opportunities to increase export markets, attract foreign investment, and accelerate the distribution of goods with lower logistics costs. Overall, the involvement of the BRI has the potential to help Indonesia overcome funding limitations for large-scale projects, create new jobs, improve trade efficiency, and drive sustainable economic growth.

CONCLUSION

Indonesia has launched the Global Maritime Fulcrum vision under President Joko Widodo to strengthen interregional connectivity and national welfare. The vision has five pillars on which researchers will focus their analysis: strengthening maritime infrastructure and connectivity, such as sea highways, deep-sea ports, and logistics

systems. Cooperation between Indonesia and China within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has been a key pillar in strengthening Indonesia's maritime infrastructure during President Joko Widodo's first term in office. Through the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, the two countries have built a strategic partnership that encompasses the development of ports, maritime logistics routes, and maritime industrial zones.

China has a crucial role for providing investment, technology, and resource support, while Indonesia leverages its strategic location between the Indian and Pacific Oceans to enhance regional and global maritime connectivity. This cooperation is not only focused on physical infrastructure development but also drives economic growth, job creation, and the enhancement of Indonesia's maritime competitiveness. The synergy between Indonesia's Global Maritime Fulcrum vision and China's BRI creates a mutually beneficial relationship: Indonesia gains funding and technological support, while China expands its trade network and maritime influence in the Southeast Asian region.

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