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## Stability above Instability: Trade and Anti-Colonialization in Sukadana in XIX Century

**ABSTRACT:** Sukadana was one of the busiest ports in Borneo in the XIX century. This article – using the historical method and economic as well as qualitative approach – showed that the entry of VOC (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie or Dutch East-India Company)’s merchants made this port even more lively, but also more prone to being divided. Due to the deeper infiltration into the association of the Sukadana palace, this kingdom was split into three parts. All its leaders no longer hold the title as “Sultan”, but rather “Panembahan”. These three were Panembahan Sukadana, Panembahan Matan, and Panembahan Simpang. In 1929, Panembahan Sukadana was abolished, because it proved against Dutch interests. Dutch troops assisted by a traveler from Siak named Tengku Akil, managed to defeat the Panembahan Sukadana’s troops. The Dutch abolished the name “Sukadana” and replaced it with “Nieuw Brussels”. Tengku Akil was seted to be the first Panembahan Nieuw Brussels. His reign was a difficult period, as several indigenous powers opposed him. The one who was most persistent against him was Panembahan Matan. Sukadana Port was an interesting port profile to be revealed. Behind the political disputes of the local rulers, this port was able to expand its business opportunities outside Borneo. In addition, the existence of local forces that disturbed Dutch interests, such as Matan, indicated that the old forces did not remain silent about the existence of colonial powers in the country.

**KEY WORDS:** Colonial Era; Politic; Shipping and Trade.

### INTRODUCTION

Borneo, in the XIX century, was a vast expanse of land that was still mysterious. Many European explorers were interested in revealing it. At

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this time, the local authorities of Borneo, the Malay sultanate, the Chinese *kongsi*, or Dayak associations in the interior faced strong pressure from the British and the Dutch (Kjellgren, 2004; Chandran *et al.*, 2018; and Lewis, 2019).

One of the largest islands in the world has been divided into two management by European administrators. North Borneo was generally occupied by the British, including the Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam. Meanwhile, the rest were occupied by the Dutch, and a small part were still independent territories (Boomgaard, 2001; Aiken & Leigh, 2015; and Sellato, 2019).

In contrast to the British, which made local rulers, like the Sultan of Brunei, an equal and profitable partner. In practice though, it was British interests that would have benefited the most. The VOC (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or Dutch East-India Company), which was then continued by the Dutch East Indies Government, tried to exert a deep and wide influence among the local rulers of Borneo. They wanted broad and perfect domination, as well as judging the Sultan and local leaders as part of the vassal area of the Kingdom of the Netherlands across the sea (Clement, 2017:161-187; Hoogers *et al.*, 2017:4; and Clulow & Mostert eds., 2018).

There a lot of resistance was carried out by local rulers, such as the Pontinak sultanate, but due to a lack of ammunition supplies and internal conflicts, the Dutch troops entered the gap. It has become a common expression in the period of colonial history in Indonesia that the strategy used by the Dutch in controlling a local power was to implement *divide et impera*, or separation and splitting. The Dutch administrators diligently contacted the royal aristocrats to slander one another, resulting in mistrust between court officials (Rochwulaningsih *et al.*, 2017:9940-9943; Clulow & Mostert eds., 2018; and SIRRULLAH, 2019:200-210).

The vast areas of Borneo with forests and rivers posed a real threat to Dutch attempts to control Borneo. Expedition by fielding a large and fully armed army was a situation that depleted the country's foreign exchange. Therefore, the Dutch officers agreed to break the brotherhood of the kingdoms in Borneo with a local conflict that could potentially destroy their unity. This was the most sensible way to gain victory at a low cost. Between 1818 and 1822, Dutch officials succeeded in getting local Bornean rulers, such as Sambas, Pontianak, and Mempawah to recognize Dutch rule over their territory (Barth, 1896:8; Clulow & Mostert eds., 2018; and SIRRULLAH, 2019).

This method was used by the Dutch in Sukadana, a coastal kingdom located in Tanah Kayong. In the XIX century, Sukadana was a port whose management was often fought over by the Simpang and Matan Sultanates.

The two kingdoms were actually still related, but due to a large internal conflict in the past, the Sukadana kingdom was split into two. Sukadana, which was originally the capital of the kingdom, is now only a port whose management is still a struggle between Simpang and Matan.

Previously, the Dutch had seen that in order to exert influence in Sukadana, they first had to build a strong base in Karimata. At that time, Karimata was still under the control of Simpang and Matan. The Dutch commissioner named Tobias, accompanied by a Malay aristocrat named Wan Hasan, went to Panembahan Matan and Simpang to negotiate the opening of trade relations with the Dutch. Hopefully, in this way, the Dutch can build a strong post in Karimata. Usually, the Dutch asked permission to set up posts and warehouses in an area. But in practice, they also prepared regular soldiers who were dispatched from time to time (Gaastra, 2003; Hasanuddin, 2016; and Junaidi *et al.*, 2019:51-60).

## METHOD

The Authors are interested in discussing the political and economic problems in Sukadana Port by using an economic approach. In the economic concept of the colonial era, the terms free access and monopoly were known. Free access refers to a situation in which economic actors compete fairly for goods and market their products. Meanwhile, monopoly relates to the existence of a single economic actor that regulates the market. Furthermore, they do not only regulate the market, but also the infrastructure that surrounds it, such as ports, warehouses, and so on (Ankerl, 1978; Faccarello *et al.* eds., 2016; and Kenichi & Claessens, 2016).

The concept of free access economy is an economic policy used by many kingdoms in the Indonesian archipelago, including the kingdoms in Kayong, Sukadana, Simpang, and Matan that have economic instruments to connect inland trade, to the coast with regulations governed by royal law. The competition between them is still relatively clean and reasonable. The presence of the Dutch there, restarting the economy which led to monopoly. This was what the three kingdoms didn't like at first.

Eventhough the Dutch succeeded in defeating the Sukadana kings, and installed Tengku Akil as the Sultan of Nieuw Brussels, the position of the Dutch could not be said to be the perfect monopolistic economic actor. They do control the politics and the economic system, including the ports there, but resistance from local leaders remains, as shown by Matan's presentation. Matan became one of the centers of anti-colonialism in Sukadana, although it was not clearly shown, considering that Matan was under Dutch rule.

In historical research, there are four stages that must be carried out.

*First*, collection of sources or heuristics. The Authors obtained primary sources, among others from the Dutch East Indies service letter bundle, especially in the *Westkust van Sumatra* Residency and the central government in Batavia. In addition, a number of shipping information was found from newspapers, such as *Locomotief*, *Bataviaatsch Nieuwsblad*, *De Oostpost*, and others. Of course, secondary sources, such as books and journal articles, are also very helpful. *Second*, the collected sources are, then, classified and criticized for their physical condition (external criticism) and the correctness of the information in them (internal criticism). *Third*, from this source a lot of irregular information is obtained, which is then arranged into an orderly and chronological narrative. *Fourth*, historiography is the final activity of a study. The predetermined concepts and discussions are then written down, in this case in the form of articles (cf Sjamsuddin, 2012; Merrotsy, 2017:58-64; Rayton *et al.*, 2018:1-21; Weinstein, 2018:76-83; and Lawson, 2020).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

***Matan's Silent Game.*** Between Simpang and Matan, the last name was the most troublesome for the Dutch. The Matan nobles already understood that it was impossible to fight the Dutch in open war. They were not strong enough to be able to hold back the Dutch troops. To that end, they also collaborated with pirates who roamed the Karimata waters to interfere with Dutch interests there (Barth, 1896:9-10).

When Tobias and Wan Hasan met Sultan Matan, they were received with open arms. The permission requested by the Dutch was granted. After the Dutch deployed troops and built equipment for living in Karimata, they began to get harassment from local fishermen. In J.P.J. Barth (1896)'s record, these fishermen were called pirates. At this point, the reader of history is required to be able to better analyze. Were all powers that opposed the interests of the Netherlands called pirates? (cf Barth, 1896; Stanwood, 2016:561-567; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

The pattern of Dutch economic activity in *Nusantara* (Indonesian Archipelago) was dominant. They want to set up a business on personal gain. The old economic elements had to compromise with them. If not, then, they must be removed, including by means of war. On the other hand, the fishermen in the Karimata waters, who felt harmed by the activities of the Dutch, naturally, they fought back. Profits from the natural resources in Karimata and marine products slowly dwindled, along with the arrival of the Dutch who made regular shipping to and from Karimata.

The Dutch East Indies government immediately concluded, based on information obtained, that this chaos was Matan's scenario. They believed

that Matan had a desire to keep Karimata and other areas, including Sukadana, out of Dutch reach. This assumption did not appear to be directly blamed on Matan, considering that almost every communication that existed between the Dutch representatives and Matan was always welcomed. Even Matan was willing to acknowledge Dutch sovereignty over their country.

Another concern from the Netherlands was Matan's illicit relationship with the British. The Dutch received information that Thomas Stamford Raffles, the British Governor in Bengkulu, Sumatera, wanted Sukadana to become a British satellite port. To achieve that, they collaborated with the local ruler, Panembahan Matan. It was known that Matan also accepted an open offer of British cooperation. Matan's ruler had considered that cooperation with the British was more profitable than the Dutch. Thomas Stamford Raffles had sent his ambassador to provide British troops and weapons assistance to Matan against the Dutch (Barth, 1896:9-10; Raffles, 1978; and Olivier *et al.*, 2020).

The hypocrisy shown by Matan was faced by the Dutch with patience. They remain on good terms with Matan, while looking for loopholes to push out British influence in Matan's court. In fact, the suspicions of the Dutch were not overblown. The British was not serious in realizing their intention to become the manager of Sukadana. They had chosen to cultivate and control their vassal areas in North Borneo. Now, the biggest threat for the Dutch was how to ensure that the rulers of Matan and Simpang remain obedient and fully support all Dutch plans (Stanwood, 2016; Barlow, 2020:172-173; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

In 1822, the Dutch envoy, named Muller, was assigned to ensure that the Simpang and Matan rulers maintained relations with the Dutch and not with the British. He was also deployed to gather information about British movements in the two kingdoms. From Sambas, he departed on a sailing ship named Emma. On the way, this ship met a group of native ships led by Tengku Akil. There was a brief discussion, which meant Tengku Akil and his troops were ready to help the Dutch in bringing order to the rulers of Borneo.

The allegations that had only existed in the head of the Dutch administrator were proven. Muller steered his ship to Matan and before arriving at the dock, he received information that Panembahan Simpang was receiving a guest from the British envoy. Muller waited for the English envoy to leave, and after that, he went to Panembahan Simpang. Incidentally, at that time, Panembahan Matan was also there. The three men were involved in talks about Panembahan Simpang and Panembahan Matan's commitment to support the Dutch. This meeting achieved good results,

because the three of them still kept their commitment (Barth, 1896:11-12).

Matan considered that Karimata Island was a strategic area to control. They no longer heed the agreement with the Dutch. In December 1827, Sultan Jamaluddin, the Sultan of Matan, sent 22 boats and a complete troop to attack the Karimata security post, which was headed by Batin Galang. Batin Galang was the Head of the Orang Laut group that inhabited Karimata. He was an ally of the Dutch. This attack destroyed the Dutch defense line. Quickly, most of the Karimata came under the control of Sultan Jamaluddin's troops (Barth, 1896:12; Young, 2007; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

The Dutch couldn't take this attack. They thought Sultan Matan had violated the agreement between them. Then, the Dutch representative in Karimata contacted Tengku Akil and his troops to join the Dutch troops against Sultan Jamaluddin.

Dutch troops and Tengku Akil departed to face Matan on 16 July 1828. The Dutch troops were led by Captain Dibbetz. After arriving near enemy territory, the Dutch troops split into two, to investigate two river flows. They make observations and inspections of the surrounding area. This method was done to avoid surprise attacks from the enemy. On 2 September 1828, a battle with Matan broke out in the Pawan River. The two troops rowed their boats to approach the opponent's boat, then there was a battle with swords or spears at close range.

This battle was won by the combined Dutch troops and Tengku Akil. The Dutch leaders considered Tengku Akil's assistance to be very useful in securing their alliance in Karimata and Sukadana. Therefore, the Dutch renewed their cooperation with Tengku Akil and promised Tengku Akil a big prize. Of course, the Dutch will not forget Tengku Akil's past services because, previously, he helped the Dutch a lot.

The Matan Sultanate admitted defeat. As a punishment, Sultan Matan was no longer allowed to use the title "Sultan" to be replaced by the title *Panembahan*. Sukadana, which was previously controlled by Matan and Simpang, was eventually taken over by the Dutch East Indies Government on the pretext of upholding justice and security. In 1829, the name *Sukadana* was changed to *Nieuw Brussels*. Tengku Akil was inaugurated as the first Sultan of *Nieuw Brussels* with the title *Sultan Abdul Jalil Yang Dipertuan Nieuw Brussels*. It was also decided unilaterally by the Dutch that Matan and Simpang were under the authority of *Nieuw Brussels* (Barth, 1896:14-15; Atsushi ed., 2018; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

***Shipping and Trade.*** The Dutch East Indies government made *Nieuw Brussels* its satellite area. Sultan *Nieuw Brussels* was a representation of Dutch power in Sukadana, and its vassal areas. It was also stipulated that

the Simpang and Matan kingdoms were under the authority of Nieuw Brussels. Thus, Panembahan Simpang and Matan had to surrender under the rule of Tengku Akil, the first Sultan of Nieuw Brussels (Darmadi *et al.*, 2017:4; Atsushi ed., 2018; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

During his early reign, Tengku Akil attempted to cement the Sukadana, Matan, and Simpang aristocrats. However, this effort did not go smoothly. Some local aristocrats were non-cooperative towards the policies introduced by Tengku Akil. The foremost opposed Tengku Akil. Almost every appeal involving the subordinate rulers was ignored by the Panembahan Matan, including the payment of tribute to Nieuw Brussels. This obscene attitude made Tengku Akil angry and complaining to the Dutch. The Dutch acted as a mediator and reminded that Panembahan Matan was a subordinate of Sultan Nieuw Brussels. This situation lasted for decades later, since 1829 (Handoko, 2015; Atsushi ed., 2018; and Ota, 2018:115-142).

Despite being under political instability, Nieuw Brussels was blessed with a bustling port. This port was the center for trading goods imported from the interior of Borneo or from the islands around Sukadana. Since before the arrival of the Dutch, Sukadana was known as a busy port. The arrival of the Dutch made port management better and more structured.

For port and trade affairs, the Dutch East Indies government did not hand it over to the Sultan of Nieuw Brussels. They chose to appoint a special official called the *Gezaghebber* (regional ruler on behalf of the Dutch East Indies) to take care of this task. *Gezaghebber* usually has offices and warehouses. The office was used as administrative necessity and the warehouse was used by the buying and selling activities of Dutch traders. To maintain security, usually the *Gezaghebber* office was also equipped with regular troops.

In its development, the *Gezaghebber* position was eliminated, and was replaced by another position called *Posthouder*, which had the same authority as the previous position. As a step to optimize the management of the Sukadana port, the Dutch East Indies Government issued a number of related regulations, one of which was the appointment of employees at this port, as seen in the following decree:

*Batavia, den 14 den Julij 1868, No.3*  
*Staatblad No.86*

*Gelezen de missive van den Minister van Kolonien, van 16 Mei 1868, Lt. Aaz No.5/660:*  
*Is goedgevonden en verstaan:*

*Krachtens magtiging des Konings, tegen intrekking der thans blijken Staatblad 1865,*  
*No.48, toegestane sommen van:*

*f 180 'jaar voor eenen inlandschen schrijver te Soekadana;  
f 300 'jaar voor bureau- en lokaalbehoefden voor den controleur te Mampawah; en  
f 36 's jaar voor bureau- en lokaalbehoefden voor den posthouder te Soekadana:*

*1. Zoowel te Mampawah, als Soekadana (Wester-afdeeling van Borneo), in dienst te stellen een inlandschen schrijvers tevens zoutverkoop-pakhuismeester, op eene maandelijksche bezoldiging van f 25 (vijf-en-twintig gulden), te wier aanzien van toepassing zal zijn het bepaalde bij de laatste alinea van artikel 3 van het besluit van 5 Januarij 1851, No. 23, (Staatblad No. 2); en*

*2. te bepalen, dat aan ieder der besturende ambtenaren te Mampawah en te Soekadana zal worden te goed gedaan eene som van f 10 (tien gulden) s' maands voor schrijfbehoefden.*

*Afschrift, Enz  
Ter Ordonancie van den Gouvernour-Generaal  
De 1ste Gouvernements Sekretaris,  
Van Harencarspel.<sup>1</sup>*

***It is meaning that:***

Batavia, 17 July 1868, No.3  
State Gazette No.86

Has read the letter from the Minister of Colonies dated 16 May 1868, Lt. Aaz No.5/660:

Be approved and understood

Under the mandate of the King, financing expenditures were stipulated under Staatblad 1865 No.48, among others:

f 180 (guilders) per year for the indigenous records of Sukadana;

f 300 per year for spending the local needs bureau in Mampawah; and

f 36 per month for the local needs bureau and postal guard in Sukadana. Also stipulated:

1. In Mampawah and Sukadana (*Afdeling* Coast of West Borneo), it was assigned to employ native registrars and salt warehouse managers with a salary of f 25 per month. Other provisions will apply thereafter. This determination is based on article 3 of the Decree dated 5 January 1851 No.23 (Staatblad No.2); and

2. It is determined that the salaries for government officials in Mampawah and Sukadana will be paid f 10 per month, part of which is allocated for office stationery and so on.

Governor General Provisions  
Secretary of the Governor,  
Van Harencarspel.

Many of the ships that had circulated in Sukadana were reported in newspapers throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of these information was in

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, Newspaper of *Java Bode*, on July 18, 1868.

*De Oospost*, on 11 June 1856 edition. It was stated that there was a sailing ship (*een bark*) named *Muas Dennok* belonging to Haji Achmad, who sailed from Sumenep in Madura Island to Sukadana.<sup>2</sup> In newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 3 July 1869 edition, it was reported that on 26 June 1869, a schooner named *Noorpak-Ketapang* sailed from Sukadana, then stopped in Cirebon, Western Java, and continued his voyage to Semarang in Central Java. The captain of this ship was named Ince Banlu (Intje Banloe). It was known that this ship contained 10 animal skin ties obtained from Sintok, Sukadana.<sup>3</sup>

In newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 8 July 1871 edition, it was explained that there were several ships coming and going to Kayong port, Sukadana. A schooner named *Noorpak-Ketapang* belonging to Ince Banlu (Intje Banloe) sailed from Semarang Harbor in Central Java to Kayong or Sukadana. Another schooner belonging to Jelail Mashur (Djelalil Mashoor) also came from Semarang to Pontianak in Western Borneo, then, to Kayong, Sukadana. Not further explained, whether this ship carried passengers or only carried goods.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, still in the same newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 17 May 1872 edition, there was a report about the arrival of a schooner named *Almiah* owned by Haji Achmad, who sailed from Sukadana to Semarang in Central Java. In the same newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 31 March 1879 edition, it was reported that a large boat named *Djoeloeng* belonged to a Haji from Sukadana to Semarang in Central Java.<sup>5</sup>

In the 1 October 1892 edition of *Bataviaatsch Nieuwsblad* reports were reported about a schooner named *Takdir*, owned by Achmad, who sailed from Sukadana to Batavia. On 29 November 1892, it was also reported that a schooner named *Mariana* belonging to a Malay named Moe'in sailed from Batavia to Sukadana.<sup>6</sup>

Some of the ship information above was quite representative of the busyness of inter-island shipping at Sukadana port. There were various commodities traded at the Sukadana port. Two of the most famous were salt and bird's nest. Salt was an important cooking spice for Malays and Dayaks. Salt processing was still done traditionally. The marketing of this item extended to the villages of the Dayak people. The Dutch East Indies government also wanted to control the salt trade, because it was considered profitable (Ali & Tarsat, 2017; Ardhiyanto, 2017:119-134; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Newspaper of *De Oospost*, on 11 June 1856.

<sup>3</sup>Newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 3 July 1869.

<sup>4</sup>Newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 8 July 1871.

<sup>5</sup>See, for example, Newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 17 May 1872; and Newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 31 March 1879.

<sup>6</sup>See, for example, Newspaper of *Bataviaatsch Nieuwsblad*, on 1 October 1892; and Newspaper of *Bataviaatsch Nieuwsblad*, on 29 November 1892.

<sup>7</sup>See also, for example, Newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 2 March 1897.

Bird's nest was an exclusive and valuable trade item. It was not easy to get a bird's nest, because of its location which was difficult to reach. Usually, this bird's nest was found in the mouths of the upper cave. Bird's nest hunters must have good rock climbing skills. They risk their safety to get every bird's nest. Usually, the bird's nest that was sought was the bird's nest. On several occasions, bird's nest was often used as a medium of exchange or a kind of ransom for a case (Barth, 1896:20; Chan, 2016:99-121; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

*Gutta percha*, or latex, has been one of the leading commodities in Sukadana for centuries. In the XIX century, many people still looked for this sap in the interior. The existence of these commodity seekers was, of course, driven by a response to market demand. The Dutch East Indies government also considered that the *gutta percha* could be relied on to drive the Sukadana economy. In fact, in an effort to collect many of these commodities, they often competed with British traders (Ahyat, 2016:28-42; Zanuddin, 2017; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

In the Newspaper of *Algemeen Handelsblad*, on 29 August 1853, it was stated that the ruler of Sukadana (*Gezaghebber*), P.C. Baron van Eck, mentioned that *percha* latex can be found in the hinterlands of Sukadana, Matan, Simpang, Kandawangan, including the Karimata Islands and surrounding islands. This commodity can also be found in almost all areas on the West Coast of Borneo. *Percha* latex seeking groups will enter the interior of the forest to find *percha*. Usually, in one day they can find five to six trees. The perfect time to look for *percha* latex was in the summer. They can survive in the forest for two months.<sup>8</sup>

*Percha* tree was a little mysterious. The character of this tree was not easy to guess, except by people who were really used to taking its latex. Usually, the *percha* tree grows deep in the forest where humans rarely pass. The uniqueness of this tree was that the latex of this tree can only be taken when the plant was 20 years old. The easiest way to find out, if a tree was ready for harvest or not, was by measuring it. When the trunk was as big as an adult, then, the latex of the tree was ready to be taken, by cutting (with an ax or cleaver) the part of the trunk, then tapping it on. It was about two or three inches deep. *Gutta percha* was white.

The latex hunters will wait for the sap to flow until it stops. After stopping, they would cover the cut on the tree with an awning mat. They will go find trees elsewhere. After 10 or 12 days, they will return to the tree, and return to tapping the sap. Within two months of searching, the *percha* sap hunters each could find a full barrel of sap. Typically, a basket

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<sup>8</sup>See also, for comparison, Newspaper of *Algemeen Handelsblad*, on 29 August 1853; and Newspaper of *Rotterdamsche Courant*, on 25 October 1854.

of sap was taken from a hundred *percha* trees.

In the Sukadana, there were two types of *percha* trees, namely brown gums or white gums. Both of them have a selling value. Both have almost the same shape. The shape of the tree from small to mature was not much different, the only difference was its size. Both have white flowers that smell good. The *percha* fruit was like a cone-shaped fig. The taste of the fruit was delicious, causing pleasure and satisfaction for the eaters. The seeds of the *percha* tree can be used as raw material for making oil lamps. The price of white *percha* sap was the same as the brown one.

However, for the most part, the trees found were white *percha*, rather than brown ones. The size of the *percha* was different, some were up to the hugs of three adults. A tree of this size created its own difficulties for tapping the sap. Under the *percha* tree, usually new shoots will grow. However, the existence of these shoots was very vulnerable to danger, because they were the favorite food of wild boar, deer or wild goats. During the East monsoon season in 1852, about 200 piculs of sap patches were obtained from Matan and Simpang, and 20 piculs from Nieuw Brussels (Sukadana). The price of a picul of sap is f 24 to f 26. During the West Winds, searching for sap was closed because it was the heavy rainy season.

The Dutch East Indies government saw the cutting down of *percha* trees, which had no boundaries, as a cause of scarcity of this tree in the future. To anticipate this, Van Eck, the colonial ruler of Nieuw Brussels, had initiated the procurement of patchwork tree seedlings in his office yard. In the future, this commodity will be tested, whether it can be planted and masse, namely by forming *percha* tree plantations. This still requires a lot of experimentation.<sup>9</sup>

Another commodity that was also commonly found in Sukadana was opium. This item was a trading commodity that has a relatively fixed and growing subscription. The properties of this commodity, which created a pleasant atmosphere for its users were the reason for the high demand for opium in the countries of Borneo, including in Sukadana. Opium was considered to be a booster for people's enthusiasm for activities, so it was something that was most sought after. Opium sellers have their own way of marketing their merchandise, so addicts have no trouble getting this item (Chan, 2016:99-121; Collins, 2017:770-790; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

Most of the time, the opium traders were Chinese. They have joined a business chain that connects big traders and small traders. Typically, these small traders or retailers owned boats or canoes that were used to market opium to coastal villages or the interior of Borneo. Their presence

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<sup>9</sup>See, for example, Newspaper of *De Locomotief*, on 29 August 1853.

will always be awaited, because the items they carry are considered as a savior for people who were already congestionists or active opium users (Tagliacozzo, 2005; Ji, 2018; and Sutherland, 2021).

Chinese people will follow the river to the deeper part of the area. They would stop from one village to another to peddle opium. Another habit of Chinese merchants, who carried a lot of merchandise and one of them, was opium. Thus, he did not only sell one type of item. Traveling inland was a challenge in itself. They have to pass through rocky rivers or rivers that have heavy rapids. If these two obstacles have met, then, as much as possible, the trader must keep his goods from getting wet or washed away (Earl, 1837:199-203; Phillips, 2016:1001-1019; and Madjid & Wahyudi, 2020).

The power of the Dutch gave rise to a monopolistic economic situation in Sukadana. Through the Sultan Nieuw Brussels, the Dutch dictated the local kings to issue various economic policies that loosened the interests of the Dutch people there. They also had a great need for ports, so they took over port management from the hands of the local Sukadana rulers. Although there was interference from Matan and a group of fishermen, who were considered by the Dutch as pirates, this was not able to change the economic situation to be open and profitable for the local kings.

## CONCLUSION

Sukadana was one of the faces of the *Nusantara* (Indonesian Archipelago)'s port that had been established since centuries ago. This port had gone through changes in time, while still carrying out the open economy paradigm, which according to some scholars was called the Open Access Economy. However, since the arrival of the Dutch, the management of this port had become closed. The sole perpetrators were Dutch administrators. The Dutch made local kings their subordinates, and they had to obey their masters. The economic situation had turned into a monopoly.

Anti-colonial fervor continued to burn in the hearts of the local population, particularly Panembahan Matan. Although this kingdom recognized the Dutch government. However, they still fought quietly by helping local fishermen disrupt Dutch shipping and refusing to pay tribute as proof of submission to Sultan Nieuw Brussels, a puppet of the Dutch. This was a form of resistance that may be carried out in an area bound by colonial chains.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>**Statement:** We, herewith, made the statement that our paper is not product of plagiarism, not to be submitted to the other journal(s), reviewed as well as published by other scholarly journals; and finally having received, it will also not to be withdrawn by the Authors from this *TAWARIKH* journal. This statement letter was made to be used by the Editor as an appropriate.

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### **Sukadana: Past and Present**

(Source: <https://www.sukadanapost.com>, 09/03/2020)

Sukadana was one of the faces of the *Nusantara* (Indonesian Archipelago)'s port that had been established since centuries ago. This port had gone through changes in time, while still carrying out the open economy paradigm, which according to some scholars was called the Open Access Economy. However, since the arrival of the Dutch, the management of this port had become closed. The sole perpetrators were Dutch administrators. The Dutch made local kings their subordinates, and they had to obey their masters. The economic situation had turned into a monopoly.