COVID-19 PANDEMIC HANDLING STRATEGIES BY THE BADUY TRIBE

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**Abstract.** The first case of COVID-19 in Indonesia was announced by the President on March 2, 2020. As of June 22, 2022, the cumulative number of confirmed positive cases in Indonesia was 6,072,918 cases, with 5,904,825 recoveries and 156,702 deaths. In response to this case, the government made a policy starting with Large-Scale Social Restrictions contained in Government Regulation Number 21 of 2020 until the Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities based on levels (4, 3, 2, and 1) set by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The government's strategy to deal with this is through the 5M health protocol (wearing masks, washing hands, maintaining distance, staying away from crowds, and reducing mobility), 3T (testing, tracing, treatment), and vaccinating. In this regard, an interesting condition occurs in the Baduy tribe in Kanekes Village, Lebak Regency, Banten. The Cisimeut Health Center which oversees the Kanekes Village area noted that so far there have been no reports of positive cases in the village. The results of the PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) and document review show that the combination of traditional strategies and modern strategies in accordance with government policies is carried out in the Baduy Tribe. The obedience of the Pu’un (Chief of the Tribe) to the government is an important factor in the success of this strategy.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, COVID-19 Handling Strategy, Baduy Tribe

**INTRODUCTION**

The first COVID-19 virus was detected in Indonesia on March 2, 2020. As of June 22, 2022, Indonesia's cumulative number of confirmed positive cases was 6,072,918, with 5,904,825 recoveries and 156,702 deaths. This disease causes general symptoms such as loss of smell, fever, dry cough, and fatigue. In more severe cases, symptoms of shortness of breath to gastrointestinal disorders can cause death. The virus is spread through droplets released by an infected person and enters others through the mouth, nose, or eyes (1).
level assessment results will be used as a reference to tighten or relax efforts to handle COVID-19 in each region (2) (3).

The COVID-19 Task Force and the Ministry of Health said that COVID-19 handling activities could be carried out with the 5M movement, namely washing hands with soap or hand sanitizer, maintaining distance when doing activities, and wearing masks, staying away from crowds, and reducing mobility. More preventive measures are 3T, namely COVID-19 testing (testing), tracing close contacts (tracing), and treating COVID-19 patients (treatment). Along with these two things, vaccination efforts are also carried out to reduce the adverse effects of the COVID-19 virus (4) (5).

In general, the COVID-19 pandemic impacts the health, economy, and social community. The direct impact on the health aspect is the number of people infected with COVID-19 and the deaths caused by the disease. In the economic aspect, there is a high open unemployment rate (TPT) and low economic growth. Meanwhile, changes in poverty conditions are an impact that occurs on the social aspect. Almost all regions in Indonesia have been badly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, an exciting thing happened in Kanekes Village, which the Baduy Tribe inhabits. To date, no positive cases have been reported by the Cisimeut Public Health Center.

As of June 14, 2022, the number of positive cases in Lebak Banten was reported at 13,940, with 13,711 people recovering, three people still in isolation, and 226 dead. The five sub-districts with the highest cases are Rangkasbitung, Cibadak, Maja, Cipanas, Sajira. Meanwhile, Leuwu Damar District is ranked 22 out of 28 sub-districts in Lebak Banten. That is, the case in the sub-district where the Baduy is located is relatively low (6).

The Baduy are located in the Kanekes Village, Leuwu Damar District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province. The area is about 5,101.8 hectares, in the vicinity of the Kendeng Mountains, west of the island of Java. The northern Baduy area is bordered by Bojong Menteng Village, Cisimeut Village, and Nayagati Village, Leuwu Damar District; in the south bordering Cikate Village, Cijaku District; in the west, it is bordered by Parakan Beusi Village, Kebon Cau Village, and Karang Nunggal Village, Bojong Manik District; Meanwhile, in the east, it is bordered by Karang Combong Village and Cilebang Village, Muncang District (7).

As a village, Baduy is broadly divided into two regions, namely Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy. Widyomartono (1993) explains that the Inner Baduy is called the Mandala Baduy, a village whose residents must adhere to the customary rules that form the basis of the Baduy people (the tangtu group). Inner Baduy consists of three areas called the forbidden land: the villages of Cibeo, Cikertawarna, and Cikeusik. Meanwhile, the Outer Baduy group (panamping) is spread across 63 villages. The Outer Baduy group violates the Inner Baduy customs, want to leave the Inner Baduy, and marry the Outer Baduy. (8).

The main activities of the Baduy community are agricultural land cultivation (ngahuma) and forest maintenance to protect the environment in which they live. Land use in Baduy is divided into three: agricultural land, settlements, and permanent forest. Agricultural land is land used for farming and gardening. Meanwhile, the forest remains protected by customary rules such as protected forest (lewung kolot/trust) and village protected forest (lewung lindungan over time), which are located around sacred springs or mountains. (7).

Table 1. Land Use in the Baduy area, Kanekes Village

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Usage Type</th>
<th>Square (Ha)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Residential land</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Farm land</td>
<td>2.569.2</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Forest</td>
<td>2.492.1</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.101.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Besides being sourced from agricultural activities, tourism activities (nyaba baduy) are also a source of income for some Baduy residents. Kampung Cibeo and Kampung Gajeboh are the villages most frequently visited by tourists from within and outside the country. The entry and exit of tourists is a risk of COVID-19 transmission, so tourism activities are closed under pandemic conditions.

METHOD

The method applied in this research is qualitative by combining field studies and literature studies. The research activity was carried out to know how the Baduy Tribe carried out the strategy for handling the COVID-19 pandemic. The research was conducted in the Kanekes Village area in Outer Baduy and Inner Baduy. The focus of extracting information is carried out on traditional leaders and village officials as a driver for handling COVID-19 in the region.

The research data collection was carried out in November 2021 through a PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) approach and document review. The PRA approach is carried out by conducting site searches, area mapping, and semi-structured
External Communication with the Baduy

The village officials facilitate communication between Baduy with the government and health services workers. The communication was carried out in the village meeting, which the Cisimeut Health Center usually attended, the Kanekes Village consisting of Jaro Pamarentah (Village Head), Pangiwa, Kokolot, and Carik as representatives of the Outer Baduy. Meanwhile, the participation of Baduy Dalam representatives in these meetings tends to be rare. They are only present if there is a discussion about customary rules.

“Every month the RT and RW heads are gathered to be invited to a meeting” (BL1)

“He said he was afraid that someone would go out without permission, as well as talking to the RT, he had to wear masks like in the City” (BL1)

Village meetings are usually held once a month at the Village Office. The Kanekes Village Office is in Cibleger Village which is directly adjacent to Kaduketug Village (Baduy Dalam). Cibleger Village is not an administrative area of Kanekes Village. The placement of the village office was carried out because there was an interest in an electronic-based administrative system. Cibleger Village itself is the main entrance for tourists who want to visit the Baduy Tribe.

Communication between Baduy Dalam and Baduy Luar

Communication between the Baduy Tribe is carried out at traditional meetings. The things discussed at the meeting were customary rules, traditional ritual activities, and other matters related to the customary rules of the Baduy Tribe. The customary meeting was held in the Inner Baduy because the Pu’un (Chief of the Tribe) could not get out of the Inner Baduy. Meanwhile, communication related to community affairs is led by Jaro or RT.

“Pu’un ordered his deputy to go out, Pu’un only went to the garden, to the village, that was all. The problem is that the three people can’t go out…Only in Inner Baduy, to their own village” (BL1)

“Information will usually be conveyed by each RT head. If I’m not mistaken, Kanekes Village has 67 RT, 13 RW.” (BL1)

“The residents were gathered at the RT’s house. In the village there are also traditional leaders, so sometimes if there are matters from traditional institutions, they gather at the traditional leaders” (BL1)

Communication between Baduy people outside Kanekes Village

Some Baduy residents travel (on foot) out of Kanekes to sell products or to meet with other parties outside Baduy. The areas usually visited by Baduy residents are usually around Banten and Jabodetabek. There has never been a Baduy resident who has traveled outside Java because of the rules that require them to walk, so they cannot use any transportation.

“Baduy people who go to Jakarta carry cellphones, so communication is easy. Usually, you can only use cellphones here in Cibleger because in Inner Baduy there is no signal.” (BL2)

“It does not matter if the Inner Baduy have a cellphone but use it outside the village” (BL2)

Communication between Baduy residents in Kanekes and Baduy residents outside Kanekes is done through smartphones. Residents of the Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy are allowed to have these communication tools, but their use is only allowed in Outer Baduy and outside Baduy. In addition to communicating, Baduy residents also take
advantage of the social media features on their smartphones to promote tourism and the natural products they sell.

**Tribe Structure**
There are two structures in Baduy, namely the customary and government structures. The customary structure is led by the customary leader (Pu’un), while the government structure is led by the Village Head (Jaro Pamarentah). The two structures are acculturated into one system, there is no collision. The best customary leader in the Baduy Tribe is Pu’un in three Tangtu villages.

“There are three: in Cibeo, Cikertawana, Cikeusik.” (BD2)

“Yes, in charge of Jaro 12.” (BD2)

Pu’un's term of office is not determined based on the period but based on Pu’un's ability to hold the position. The position is passed down from generation to generation but not automatically from father to son but can also be passed on to other relatives.

Pu’un’s job is to regulate everything related to customary and cultural rules, while the task of Jaro Pamarentah (Village Head) is to take care of administration related to the government. Structurally, Pu’un oversees Jaro Pamarentah, both of whom have subordinates to help organize all activities in the Baduy Tribe. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the relationship between the Baduy tribe and the government was carried out by Jaro Pamarentah together with village officials.

![Figure 1. Structure of Baduy Tribe](image-url)
Resources
The health protocol facilities for handling COVID-19 in hand washing stations, hand soap, and masks were sourced with the assistance of the Ministry of Tourism and the Lebak Regency Government. The distribution of masks and soap is focused on the main entrance. Before outsiders enter, the Baduy tribe conducts temperature checks, orders hand washing, and provides masks for people who do not bring masks.

“There was a donation from the government, but can't remember the time” (BL1)

“During COVID-19 pandemic, yes (there is resources for handling COVID-19), at the entrance there was provided a hand washing place.” (BL1)

“We are also here at the post, we have soap, masks, you can pick them up at the village” (BL1)

“Two years ago, if someone did not wear a mask, it was given by the head of village... at the entrance only.” (BL2)

Meanwhile, related to food, Baduy residents utilize the natural resources that are already available. This food independence has been passed down from generation to generation through ngahuma activities, namely planting rice in Huma, raising chickens, and planting other food ingredients such as kencur, bananas, durian, and cassava. Rice cultivation in Huma is carried out in the Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy areas. The rice cannot be traded. Meanwhile, other crops such as honey, cassava, kencur, bananas, and durians can be traded.

Disposition
Disposition is given by the Tourism Office on the authority of the Lebak Regency Government in accordance with applicable policies. The Kanekes Village party as a party that has a direct relationship with the government administratively becomes the liaison between the government and the Baduy Tribe. If cases are rising, the government orders the Baduy to close entry access for outsiders and close exit access for Baduy residents. All commands related to handling COVID-19 come from the government, the Baduy follow the rules set by the government.

“If there is an order from the nagari, come to the village. There is Carik, there is the Village Secretary, communication with the Village” (BL1)

“Things that must be conveyed to the community by the RT are recorded, invited by the Village.” (BL1)

Pu’un, as the highest leader in Baduy, handed over all matters related to handling COVID-19 to Jaro Pamarentah. All coordination related to COVID-19 is carried out by the Lebak Regency Government Representative with Jaro Pamarentah without going through Pu’un.

Implementation
The strategy carried out by the Baduy Tribe in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic is the implementation of the collaboration between the government and traditional parties. The Baduy adat party, led by Pu’un, fully supports the government’s efforts to prevent COVID-19 in their area. However, vaccination activities cannot be carried out because it is contrary to customary rules that do not allow the use of products derived from modern technology. The following are the strategies carried out by the Baduy Tribe to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Obey the Tribal Chief and the Government
The Baduy Tribe community adheres to customary rules called pikukuh. The pikukuh has been held for generations as a guide in behaving and behaving. Baduy adat pikukuh is a form of customary rule which, although sociologically believed and accepted as a medium that protects the community from harmful influences, does not yet have a universal certainty value.

“If there is an order from Pu’un to go to the village (office), the representative must go there. What is the word village like (must be heard), in the (office) village meeting” (BL1)

“... customary rules are obeyed, but the government is the same, but customary rules should not be abandoned.” (BL3)

Obedience to pikukuh does not necessarily lead to an attitude of intolerance to the existence of rules or beliefs outside those they hold. This is evident from Pu’un who ordered all his citizens to follow the government’s recommendations in efforts to prevent COVID-19. The order was carried out by all its citizens without a single person refusing.

1. Implementing the total lockdown policy
The Baduy indigenous people have always been known to have a life that is far from the outside world. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Saba Baduy activities were opened which allowed outside parties to enter the Baduy area. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Saba Baduy activities were closed with orders from the Lebak Regency Government, the Tourism Office, and the Lebak...
Regency Health Office. No Baduy residents are allowed to leave, and vice versa, no outsiders are allowed to enter the Kanekes area.

“the duration of the lockdown is the same, sir. Two years everything can not come out” (BL1)

“The ones that were closed were the same ordered by the state and the Regent” (BL1)

“...Yes, I’m afraid but (lockdown here) is not locked up at home like in the City” (BL1)

The total lockdown is carried out until the issuance of the Lebak Regency Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2021 concerning Guidelines for Adapting to New Habits. In this regulation, adaptation of activities at tourist attractions must be carried out according to health protocols. The activity permit is issued by the Head of the Regional Apparatus in charge of Tourism affairs (12).

“This area has been open since August, but not continuously, sometimes closed again, on the orders of the Regent of the Parisiwata Service to come here (to open it).” (BL1)

The opening of the Saba Baduy activity is carried out in stages starting from trial activities in August 2021. The implementation of these activities is monitored and coordinated by the Lebak Regency Tourism Office in accordance with health protocols. This is supported by Jaro Pamarentah Kanekes Village by saying that he will refuse visitors from outside the area who do not apply health protocols.

2. Calling the Baduy Residents outed Kanekes

Baduy residents usually travel in groups outside the Kanekes area to sell produce or meet people they already know. The destination is usually areas in Banten and Jabodetabek. Together with previously known tourists, they are usually invited to go to the mall, meet at a place to eat, and are provided with a place to stay. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these activities increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Therefore, at the beginning of the pandemic Pu’un called all his citizens to go home and stay in Kanekes.

“In the beginning, it’s okay if you do it outside, you can chase it.” (BL1)

“Especially during COVID, no one dares to go to the city.” (BL1)

All Baduy residents at that time obeyed Pu’un’s orders. None of the Baduy residents dared to come back out because they were afraid. Interaction with the outermost villages is also reduced because at the main cooking door there is guarding by the Kanekes Village.

3. Activity Adjustment of Seba Baduy

Seba Baduy is an offering activity from the Baduy Tribe to the government as a form of gratitude for the harvests obtained during the past year. In this activity, the Baduy community voluntarily hand over their harvest to the government. This activity is carried out every year with a procession of the Baduy community with the government at the Lebak Regency Hall and the Serang Banten Governor’s Hall.

“During the COVID pandemic, there was a cause but only 32 traditional leaders. Usually each village consists of ten people. Because of COVID, only the characters will take on the roles.” (BL1)

For two years, the closure of Kanekes Village due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Seba activities were still carried out in accordance with the health protocols implemented by the government. The large procession which is usually attended by representatives of ten people from each village was reduced to only 32 representatives of the Indigenous Baduy Tribe. The representatives are traditional leaders from the Inner Baduy and Outer Baduy.

4. Food Independency

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is felt by almost all people, both in rural and urban areas. On the one hand, there was a decrease in purchasing power of food due to reduced income, but on the other hand there was also panic buying. The closure of public access to the Kanekes area causes no income from tourism activities.

“The Baduy people still do their usual business, farming and so on, no one stay at home” (GD)

“Farming continues, what is reduced is only trading activities, when the pandemic does not sell. Usually sold by visitors, two years the complaint is closed there” (BL1)

“If there is no problem with daily food, there is only a reduced income. In terms of food, it's safe.” (BL1)

However, this did not have much of an impact on the Baduy Tribe. The intercropping pattern of planting several types of food commodities that have been carried out for generations is the key to the success of the Baduy Tribe to be food independent. Baduy residents also store rice supplies in leuit, a special building to store rice that is separated from the main house. The inventory is sufficient to be used for the next year. This causes Baduy residents not to feel the
impact of the pandemic such as the food crisis and hunger due to the economic crisis (13).

5. Physical activity as usual
The government issued a policy requiring the public to limit their movement to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This lack of physical activity can cause a decrease in the body’s immunity, thus increasing the risk of being infected with COVID-19. This is not the case in Baduy. Baduy residents continue to carry out their activities such as gardening or going to the forest to look for honey and other food ingredients.

“Even though the Baduy are closed, no guests come to Baduy. If Baduy people keep farming, don’t stay at home”. (BD1)

Usually, Baduy residents start their activities from 06.00 in the morning until the afternoon at 16.00 - 17.00. When compared to urban residents, the physical activities carried out by Baduy residents are somewhat heavier because they have to walk dozens of kilometers to get to the garden or forest.

6. Treating COVID-19 as an epidemic
Baduy residents regard the COVID-19 pandemic as a salad or plague. Something similar had happened in the past and was considered a catastrophe. In response to this, the three Pu’un held a meeting with other traditional leaders. During the meeting, a joint prayer was held to ask for the safety of the karuhun or ancestors. The prayers offered are different, specific to each salad that occurs.

“In the past, there was also a fairly dangerous disease (such as COVID-19), called ‘sasalad’, but it was a different disease. Usually fever, cough, but rarely”. (BD1)

The meeting to discuss sasalad was held by Pu’un with Jaro Tangtu, Jaro 12, Girang Seurat, Jaro Salapan, Kokolotan and Jaro Pamarentah at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the activities for handling COVID-19 were delegated by Pu’un to Jaro Pamarentah in coordination with the Tourism Office and the Lebak District Health Office.

7. Preferring Traditional Medication
The main treatment of the Baduy Tribe is carried out traditionally according to customary rules. The Baduy community will be given medicine with traditional ingredients that they have prepared and given a prayer to ask for the safety of the karuhun. If the disease cannot be cured, Baduy residents are allowed to seek treatment at the Cisimeut Health Center.

In urgent conditions where the disease cannot be handled by the Puskesmas, Baduy residents are allowed to be taken to the hospital using a vehicle. Especially for Inner Baduy residents with emergency conditions so that they have to use vehicles, these residents must be sentenced to exile or live in Outer Baduy for a year. This exile is a form of self-cleaning. After being exiled for a year, the residents were only allowed to re-enter Baduy Dalam.

8. Curiosity about COVID-19
The Baduy tribe is known as a tribe that chooses to stay away from modernization and stick to traditional rules that have been passed down from generation to generation. However, this principle of life does not make them immediately refuse to learn from outsiders. Some Baduy residents are even able to read and are fluent in using smartphones.

An interesting thing happened during a semi-structured interview with Jaro 12. In the interview a question arose from Jaro 12 about how vaccines work so as to reduce the risk of being exposed to COVID-19. This curiosity shows that the Baduy are open to receiving new knowledge from outside. Even though the implementation is adjusted to the customary rules that they adhere to.

CONCLUSION
The Baduy indigenous people regard the COVID-19 pandemic as a salad or an epidemic that has occurred in the past. The absence of COVID-19 cases in the Baduy indigenous community results from cooperation between the indigenous people and the government. Pu’un’s compliance with government regulations and the Baduy community’s obedience to Pu’un are the primary keys to the successful implementation of handling COVID-19 in the Kanekes area.

The handling of COVID-19 in Kanekes combines traditional, custom-based strategies and modern strategies following government policies. The traditional strategy is carried out through rituals led by Pu’un by offering prayers to the ancestors to ask for safety from the ongoing plague. In addition, the consumption of herbal ingredients is also done to maintain the immune system. Meanwhile, the total lockdown strategy, 3M and 3T, is carried out by government recommendations to break the chain of transmission of COVID-19. The total lockdown is supported by food self-sufficiency so that the Baduy people can still live in prosperity without a food crisis and hunger.

RECOMMENDATION
Similar research related to strategies for handling COVID-19 in remote indigenous communities (KAT) in Indonesia should be carried out by other researchers. Research in remote communities is
important as a basis for policymakers to evaluate existing policies or even create new policies to improve health services in the region.

The complexity and uniqueness of the COVID-19 problem in remote indigenous communities also require unique collaboration. Collaboration should be directed at the middle ground between customary rules and government policies so that the COVID-19 handling strategy can run well. Information should also be conveyed as simply as possible in the language used by the indigenous community so that it can be understood and accepted.

REFERENCES


