

## CULTURAL PRESERVATION THROUGH DIPLOMACY: THE CASE OF INDONESIA'S CULTURAL DIPLOMACY TOWARDS THE JAVANESE ETHNIC GROUP IN SURINAME

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### Abstract

This study attempts to reveal Indonesia's cultural diplomacy towards the Javanese ethnic group in Suriname. The Javanese ethnic group in Suriname is one of the ethnic groups who were immigrants since 1890 by the Dutch government under plantation work. Currently, the Javanese ethnic group is the 3rd largest ethnic group in Suriname after Hindustani and Creole ethnic, with a population of more than 80 thousand people or around 15% of the entire Surinamese community. Through this population, the Javanese ethnic group have an important role in promoting Indonesia in Surinamese society. Due to cultural influence and Dutch being the main language of Suriname, nowadays the young Javanese-Surinamese generation is starting to lose their Javanese culture. With these based on the problem, Indonesia needs to take steps to preserve Javanese culture in Suriname. Cultural preservation can be realized by carrying out soft power cultural diplomacy. This research uses qualitative methods and data collection techniques use literature studies where the data sources are taken from secondary data originating from books, scientific journals, government data, and several online news. Based on the theory of cultural diplomacy by Tulus Warsito and Wahyuni Kartikasari, the author draws two arguments. First, Indonesia's cultural diplomacy towards the Javanese ethnic group in Suriname is not only carried out by the government but is also carried out by non-government actors such as individuals and companies. Second, cultural diplomacy carried out by Indonesia towards the Javanese ethnic group in Suriname is through all aspects of the needs of the Javanese ethnic community in Suriname, such as food, music, news, fashion, education and cultural training.

**Keywords:** Cultural Diplomacy, Indonesia, Suriname, Javanese Ethnic in Suriname.

### INTRODUCTION

Suriname is a republic located on the northeast coast of South America. To the north, the country borders the Atlantic Ocean, to the east by French Guiana, to the south by Brazil, and to the west by Guyana. Suriname has an area of 163,820 km<sup>2</sup> with a population consisting of various ethnicities and cultures, including the three largest ethnicities, namely Creole, Hindustani and Javanese (Ministry of Agriculture, 2001). Meanwhile, other small ethnicities that inhabit Suriname are Amerindian, European, Chinese, Brazilian, Lebanese and Mulatto. Suriname's ethnic and cultural diversity is an interesting thing that other Latin American countries don't have. This is inseparable from the arrival of Europeans, especially the Dutch colonial government which brought ethnic Javanese to Suriname in 1890 to work on sugar plantations (Bruijne & Schalkwijk, 2005).

On August 9, 1890, consisting of 94 Javanese residents who were sent to Suriname to work on sugar cane plantations and the Marrienburg sugar company were recruited by "*The Dutch Trading Company*". The arrival of the Javanese population to Suriname was based on article 70 of the Dutch Royal Decree dated March 22 1872. This decision contained a work contract

agreement for the Javanese in Suriname for five years, and after that they had the right to return to their homeland. And in the second wave, consisting of 582 Javanese residents who were brought to Suriname in 1894. The number of Indonesian immigrants who had entered Suriname from 1890-1939 was recorded at 32,956 people with 34 departures (Darmoko, 2016).

In taking care of the interests of the Javanese in Suriname, the Indonesian government built good relations with Suriname and established a commissariat level representative office in Paramaribo in 195. However, it was closed in 1958 and reopened in 1962 at the Consulate General level. And after Suriname's independence in 1975 the Indonesian Representative was upgraded to an Embassy (Department of Agriculture, 2001). With the establishment of the Indonesian Embassy in Suriname, diplomatic relations between the two countries have increased to international forums. Since Suriname gained independence in 1975, Suriname has always provided its support for the territorial sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia, such as in the East Timor issue at the ME-ACP (African, Caribbean, Pacific) Countries meeting in Geneva in February 1991 (Ministry of Agriculture, 2001).

Bilateral relations between Indonesia and Suriname lasted until the stage of mutual support cooperation in nominations to International Organizations (OI). This is marked by the large amount of unilateral support provided by Suriname to Indonesia from 2014 to 2023, including: Indonesia's nomination as a member of the UN Human Rights Council for the 2011-2014, 2015-2017 to 2021-2023 periods, the nomination of Ambassador Nugroho Wisnumurti as a member International Law Commission (ILC) in the 2017-2021 period, Indonesia's candidacy as a member of the UN Security Council for the 2019-2020 period, and in 2020, Suriname supports Indonesia as a member of ECOSOC for the 2021-2023 period (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

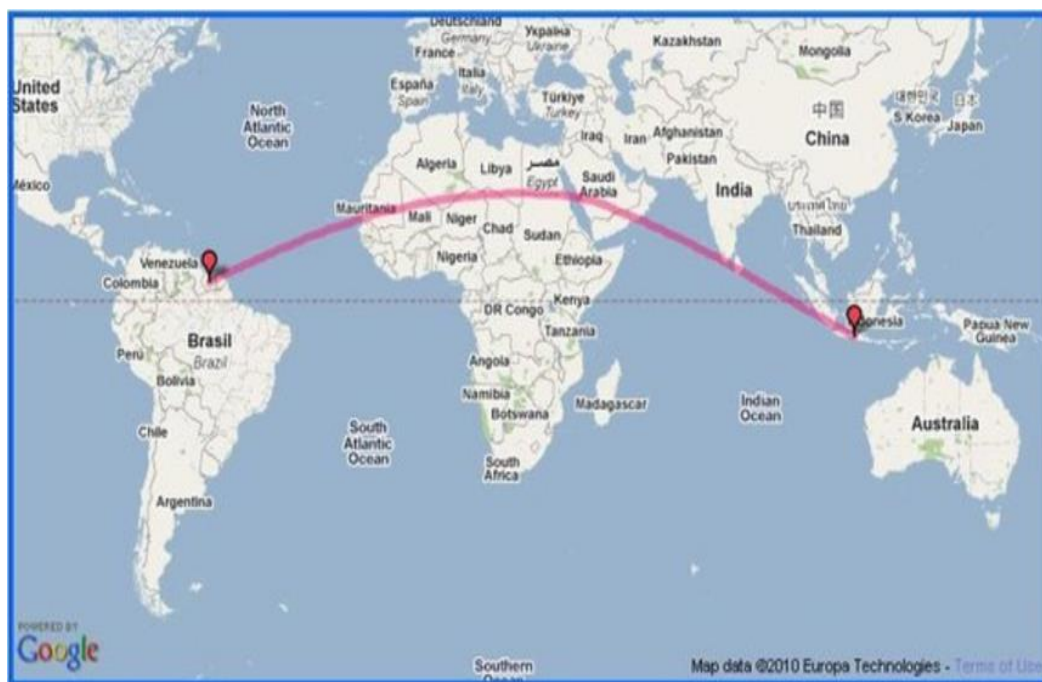
In December 2019, Foreign Minister Retno LP Marsudi made the first full working visit to Suriname in the last 26 years. Apart from holding a bilateral meeting with Suriname's Foreign Minister Yldiz Deborah Pollack-Beighle, Foreign Minister Retno also had the opportunity to pay a courtesy visit to the President of Suriname, Desire Delano Bouterse. During this visit, Indonesia and Suriname agreed to strengthen cooperation in the economic sector. Several aspects of economic cooperation that are encouraged to be strengthened are infrastructure development, mining, energy, development of Sharia banking, and animal husbandry (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019).

Economic cooperation between Indonesia and Suriname will be further enhanced in 2021, which was agreed at the 6th Joint Commission Session (SKB) which was held online. In this economic cooperation, Indonesia will increase potential export products, and the Indonesian private sector will continue its cooperation in the Suriname infrastructure development sector, such as searching for offshore oil sources and port development (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021). Apart from the economic sector, Indonesia and Suriname also focus their cooperation in the field of developing the Suriname Diplomatic Training Center and the visa-free visit agreement for diplomatic, service and ordinary passport holders. The MOU for diplomatic training and education cooperation was agreed in 2018 and in March 2019, the Indonesian side sent a delegation led by the Head of Education and Training Center

which aimed to share Indonesia's experience in developing diplomatic education and training in *Suriname Diplomatic Institute (SDI)* and on March 30 2021 activities were carried out *Tailor Made Course* for officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Suriname (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia).

Currently, it is recorded that the number of Surinamese people of Javanese descent is around 15% of the total population or around 80 thousand people of Javanese descent and many play important roles in government, parliament and the private sector in Suriname (Rahmat, Supriatna, & Kamsori, 2018). However, currently the young generation of ethnic Javanese in Suriname is facing a cultural crisis. The ethnic and cultural diversity in Suriname and Dutch being the main language, have resulted in young people starting to forget Javanese and tending to use Dutch or Surinamese (Hoefte & Mingoen, 2022).

Through historical and cultural ties, as well as geostrategic conditions, Indonesia and Suriname can increase their cooperation which can provide benefits for both countries. Considering Suriname's geostrategic conditions, Indonesia can use Suriname as a gateway to promote its exports to the Caribbean region and even South America and preserve Javanese culture which is starting to fade in Suriname. On the other hand, Suriname can build better relations with Southeast Asian countries or the Asia Pacific region. Based on the background above, the research problem discussed in this journal is: "How is the Implementation of Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy towards the Javanese ethnic group in Suriname?"



**Figure 1: World Map showing the location of Indonesia (right) and Suriname (left)**

Source: (Darmoko, 2016)

## RESEARCH METHOD

In the data analysis technique, the author will use qualitative analysis methods. In general, this type of qualitative research is used to examine social events, spiritual phenomena, and sign processes based on a non-positivist approach. We can look at this in community life, history, behavior, organizational functionalization, social movements, religion, or kinship relations. Qualitative research will produce descriptive data in the form of writing, speech and behavior of the people being observed. With an approach using qualitative research methods, researchers can understand subject objects and feel their experiences in everyday life (Ghony & Almanshur, 2016)

Qualitative analysis is an analytical method that describes and explains a phenomenon in the form of detailed and clear sentences. The structure of these sentences will later become the answer to the problem formulation in this research. In supporting this research, the author will use data collection methods in the form of documents in the form of writing, images or electronic documents that can support the writing of this research. Apart from that, the author will use secondary data sources originating from books, scientific journals, and several online news related to Indonesian cultural diplomacy towards the Javanese ethnic group in Suriname.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Research related to Indonesian cultural diplomacy has been carried out by many previous researchers and has been published in the form of books or journal articles. Among these studies, "Cultural Diplomacy, Concept and Relevance for Developing Countries: Indonesian Case Study" (Warsito & Kartikasari, 2007), "Artist's Book as a Media for Indonesian-German Cultural Diplomacy" (Purnomo & Masdiono, 2020), "Cultural Diplomacy Strategy to Increase Indonesian Batik Exports to Japan" (Destriyani, Andriyani, & Usni, 2020), "Indonesia's Efforts to Increase Maritime Tourism through Cultural Diplomacy in Southeast Asia" (Dwi & Subekti, 2017), "The Practices of Indonesia's Cultural Diplomacy in Saudi Arabia through the Tourism Promotions Programs (2015-2018)" (Putri, Raharyo, & Hikam, 2021), "Cultural Diplomacy as Public Relations in an Indonesian Consulate in Australia" (Vidyarini & Brady, 2012), "Indonesia's Cultural Diplomacy in the Conduct of Indonesian Language for Foreigners Program in Thailand (2014-2019)" (Collins, Adriani, & Rahman, 2020), "The Role of Anime and Manga in Indonesia-Japan Cultural Diplomacy" (Kartikasari, 2018), "Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy through the 2018 International Gamelan Festival in Solo" (Khatrunada & Alam, 2019), "Cultural Diplomacy through National Branding Wonderful Indonesia in the New Normal Tourism Era" (Yulliana, 2021), and "Public and cultural diplomacy practices: Empirical study of foreign Consulate Generals in Bali, Indonesia" (Intentilia & Luh Putu Yeyen Karista Putri, 2023).



Figure 2: Word Cloud from Nvivo 14

Using NVivo 14 qualitative data analysis software, the author found that the research topic of Indonesian cultural diplomacy has been carried out in various countries. However, so far there has been no research that examines the implementation of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in Suriname, especially research that focuses on Javanese ethnicity in Suriname. Therefore, in an effort to create a new research the author will focus on Indonesian cultural diplomacy towards the Javanese ethnic group in Suriname.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Cultural Diplomacy Theory

According to Tulus Warsito and Wahyuni Kartikasari, cultural diplomacy is a country's efforts to fight for its national interests through cultural dimensions, both in micro forms such as arts, education and science, or macro forms such as propaganda, cultural hegemony, and so on. The actors in cultural diplomacy can be differentiated from other diplomatic actors, because actors in cultural diplomacy are not only governmental but also non-governmental. Because the target or target of cultural diplomacy is not only the government but the entire population of the target country (Warsito & Kartikasari, 2007).

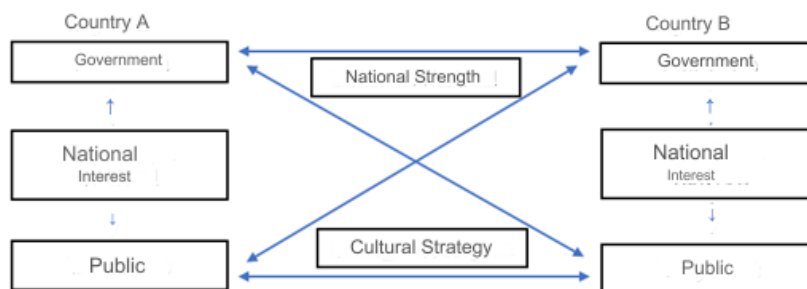


Figure 3: Scheme of Actors and Targets of Cultural Diplomacy

Source: (Warsito & Kartikasari, 2007)

Based on the picture above, it shows that cultural diplomacy actors can be implemented by a government or non-government, and the main target is the people of another nation and not just the government, with the aim of supporting a certain foreign political policy or influencing the government's policy of the community concerned. Therefore, the characteristics of cultural diplomacy concepts are very much based on the characteristics of communication patterns, not on the field of operations or disciplinary fields involved (Warsito & Kartikasari, 2007). In the context of Indonesian cultural diplomacy towards the Javanese ethnic group in Suriname, it is not only carried out by the government, but is also carried out by individuals and companies and is implemented through aspects of the needs of the Javanese ethnic community in Suriname, such as food, music, news, fashion, education and cultural training.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy towards Javanese Descendants in Suriname through Food**

Javanese cuisine is familiar and even very popular among the Surinamese people, such as Afro-Surinamese and Indo-Surinamese. At every big event or party in Suriname, you can be sure that Javanese cuisine will be served. The popularity of Indonesian cuisine in Suriname is due to the influence of the arrival of Javanese people to Suriname in 1890.

According to Rosemarijn Hoefte, the preservation of Javanese culinary delights in Suriname was influenced by the attitude of Javanese people who were isolated from other ethnic groups when they first arrived in Suriname.

Even though they live and work with other ethnicities such as Indians or Africans, the Javanese separate themselves from other ethnicities on large plantations. So this situation can maintain Javanese traditions, because they are not influenced by traditions from other ethnicities (BBC News Indonesia, 2023).

Food is one element of Javanese cultural heritage that is still preserved today in Suriname. Although it hasn't changed, there have been slight adjustments to the use of local Surinamese spices and ingredients. We can find this in Soto cuisine, which in Suriname is known as Sauto and has the characteristic of a clearer sauce.

The popularity and sustainability of Javanese cuisine from generation to generation until now influences the culinary world in Suriname. There are many restaurants or stalls in Suriname that provide typical Javanese food, one of which is Saoenah Market (BBC News Indonesia, 2023).



**Figure 4: Marijkr and her son Gery, sell dry food and dawet ice at Saoenah Market, Paramaribo, Suriname**

Source: (BBC News Indonesia, 2023)

Saoenah Market is a traditional market in Paramaribo that is very similar to traditional markets in Indonesia which has a tin roof and traders prepare their goods on neatly arranged wooden tables. The popularity of Javanese cuisine in Suriname has made Saoenah Market a gathering place for various ethnic groups in Suriname. Edgar Moekiran, one of the visitors who is a Dutch citizen, thinks that Saoenah Market is an ideal meeting place with relatives while enjoying Javanese cuisine. Many of Javanese descent provide typical Javanese food at Saoenah Market, one of which is Marijke and his son Gary who have long been selling typical Javanese culinary delights, such as various types of chips, spring rolls, rolled omelette, stir-fried long beans, fried rice, fried noodles, pecel, and pandan dawet ice (BBC News Indonesia, 2023).

Suriname is a country with a large population of Javanese descent. So Javanese culinary delights such as soto, fried rice, noodles, rames rice and ice dawet are very popular there. However, Javanese cuisine in Suriname is somewhat different from Indonesia. This is because the spices used still follow the recipes brought by the Javanese people who came to Suriname in 1890-1939. This prompted a chef, cake decorator and entrepreneur from Indonesia, namely Yudhi Harijono, to establish an authentic Indonesian culinary restaurant in Paramaribo, Suriname, after his success in opening "Warung Jakarta" in Warsaw, Poland (Hardoko, 2018).

Before efforts to open an Indonesian restaurant in Suriname, in August 2017 Chef Yudhi had promoted Indonesian culinary delights at the Indonesian Ambassador's House in Paramaribo which was attended by Surinamese officials and businessmen. Nasi Liwet was a treat for the Indonesian Embassy's guests, served on a table covered in banana leaves (Tribun Kaltim, 2017). Nasi Liwet or *Sego Liwet* is a typical Solo dish in the form of white rice which has a savory taste and is combined with shredded chicken or boiled eggs. In its presentation, Nasi Liwet is quite unique because it is served with pincuk leaves which makes Nasi Liwet lovers feel a different sensation (Surakarta City Government, 2022). Even though it looks simple, Nasi Liwet served on banana leaves by Chef Yudhi succeeded in attracting the attention of guests to try this typical Indonesian dish. Meanwhile, the guests really enjoyed the Nasi Liwet dish even without spoons and forks. Apart from serving Nasi Liwet, Chef Yudi also held a cooking demonstration in front of invited guests with a menu of balado shrimp. Chef Yudhi's promotion of Indonesian culinary delights was received enthusiastically by guests, thus

encouraging Yudhi's intention to open an Indonesian restaurant in Suriname (Hardoko, 2018). On his next visit to Suriname, precisely on February 13 2018, Yudhi Harijono together with Ismanto Adna, a Surinamese businessman of Javanese descent, opened an Indonesian restaurant called "Lenggang Indonesia" (Hardoko, 2018). Apart from introducing popular Indonesian dishes such as rendang, gado-gado, balado, vegetable lodeh and also soto. This restaurant also introduces culinary delights from various regions in Indonesia that are not widely known by the Surinamese people, such as Manadonese porridge, fish in sour sauce, bamboo shoots, and klapertaart (Mustinda, 2018).

On the other hand, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo introduces typical Indonesian food on various occasions, either through exhibitions, bazaars or special programs such as "*Indonesia Culinary Festival*". The Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo has also never been absent from introducing Indonesian culinary delights in Suriname through exhibitions or exhibitions, such as *Indonesian Day*, *INDOFAIR*, and *International Food Fair*, especially typical Indonesian food that is not yet known by the local community (Asiyah, 2018).

In introducing typical Indonesian food in Suriname, since 2010 the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo has held the "Indonesian Kitchen" event together with the Mustika Television station, which is a local Suriname television managed by people of Javanese descent in Suriname. Apart from introducing typical Indonesian dishes, this event also demonstrates the procedures for making these dishes once a month. On the occasion of "Indonesian Kitchen" which was held in April 2015, two typical Indonesian food recipes were presented, namely, Balinese Chicken Tum which resembles pepes and Solo galantin which is similar to steak. The first dish was demonstrated by Ni Luh Agustini who is an Indonesian dance teacher and the Galantin Solo dish was brought by the wife of the diplomat staff at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo, Windriya Novila (Datiknews, 2015).

In the Indonesian Kitchen program which was held in 2018 at Wisma Indonesia Paramaribo by diplomats, women members of the Dharma Wanita Satu and employees of the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo demonstrated and introduced dishes from several regions in Indonesia to the Surinamese people, including Nasi Liwet, Sate Komoh, Soto Pekalongan, Nasi Gandul, Surabaya Egg Tofu, Ketoprak, Meatballs, Rawon, and several other foods. In order to attract the attention of the multicultural Surinamese community, presenters in the DI program present the program in a mixture of Javanese and Dutch. Based on information from the producer team, the Indonesian Kitchen Program is one of the monthly programs most awaited by Mustika TV viewers. This can be seen in the number of short message responses received on the editorial hotline regarding the Indonesian Kitchen program. So in this case, the Indonesian Kitchen program has proven to play a role in promoting Indonesia through food channels (Asiyah, 2018). Apart from introducing Indonesian cuisine through local Surinamese TV, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo also uses social media Facebook to promote typical Indonesian cuisine in Suriname. In May 2021, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo, via its Facebook page, held another program introducing typical Indonesian cuisine called "*Swit' Indonesia*". In this program, Ni Luh Agustini and her colleague, Giovanni Ismael-Cherr Asmo, introduce one of the typical Indonesian dishes originating from Bali, namely Sate Lilit. In this



video, Ni Luh Agustini, assisted by Giovanni Ismael-Cherr Asmo, demonstrates in detail the procedures for making Balinese Sate Lilit. Not only that, Ni Luh Agustini also explained what ingredients must be prepared, as well as how to serve them when the food is ready to be served (Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo, 2021).

### **Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy towards Javanese Ethnicity in Suriname through Music**

Music has become an instrument of Indonesian cultural diplomacy in creating a positive image and as an effort to preserve Javanese culture in Suriname. An Indonesian artist and musician who is famous by the nickname *The Godfather of Broken Heart* namely Didi Kempot, through his musical works, has succeeded in strengthening the ties of brotherhood between Indonesian descendants and other groups in the pluralistic society of Suriname (Yulianingsih, 2021). Of the 600 thousand inhabitants of Suriname, 80 thousand of the population are of Javanese (Indonesian) descent and the presence of Didi Kempot's Javanese songs provides its own entertainment and at the same time creates a Javanese musical identity in Suriname (Amrullah, 2020). Didi Kempot, whose real name is Dionisius Prasetyo, born in Surakarta, 31 December 1966, is a campursari maestro who has succeeded in introducing Javanese pop songs and is even popular in Suriname. The first song he created in 1989, entitled Cidro, was not initially popular in Indonesia, but was widely heard in Suriname and the Netherlands. Because at that time people of Javanese descent in Suriname were very fanatical about things related to Javanese culture. Apart from that, there is support from a TV station in Suriname called TV Garuda which broadcasts his songs every day (Novita, 2019).

Since the 1980s, Didi Kempot's albums have sold very well and are popular in South America and his songs have always been top hits in Suriname. The songs are not only enjoyed by people of Javanese-Surinamese descent, but other Surinamese residents also enjoy the works of these Indonesian artists and musicians. According to the Minister of Home Affairs of Suriname, Soewarto Moestadja, during his visit to Indonesia in 2013, Didi Kempot was very easily popular with the people of Suriname because he knew their tastes by not only singing Indonesian songs but he also sang in Dutch. Apart from that, to win the hearts of his fans, at every concert in Suriname, Didi Kempot performs Javanese pop songs and Javanese keroncong songs. Where keroncong songs are to entertain audiences aged 40 years and over (Fadil, 2020).



**Figure 5: Presentation of an award by the President of Suriname (left) to Didi Kempot (Right) during a concert at Anthony Nesty Hall, 2018**

Source: (Kuslandinu, 2019)

Before his death on 5 May 2020, this legendary Indonesian musician had held 9 concerts at the Anthony Nesty Stadium, Suriname and Didi Kempot's last concert in Suriname was on Saturday 29 September 2018. This last concert succeeded in curing the Surinamese people's longing for the music. His melodious voice through his old songs and songs with Surinamese nuances, including, *Sir-siran*, *Trimo Ngalah*, *Cucak Rowo*, *Sewu Kuto*, *Cidro*, *Kalung Emas*, *Kenyo Suriname*, and *Longing letter*. In this concert, Didi Kempot was not only welcomed by Surinamese people of Javanese, Indian, Creole and Maroon descent.

However, Surinamese President Desi Bouterse and First Lady Ingrid Waldring Bouterse were also present to enliven and watch the performance of Didi Kempot, who was 51 years old at that time. And on this occasion, Didi Kempot received an award in the form of a Sticking JAMU (Javanese Music) plaque which was handed over directly by the President of Suriname as a form of appreciation for taking part in preserving Javanese culture in Suriname (Iswara, 2020). Didi Kempot's popularity among Javanese-Surinamese and his musical works which are always top hits in Suriname have become a real and effective activity in promoting Indonesian culture in Suriname. From the perspective of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Paramaribo, Didi Kempot is an Indonesian Cultural Ambassador who has assisted the Indonesian government in its efforts to promote Indonesian culture in Suriname. On the other hand, through his musical works Didi Kempot has contributed to preserving Javanese culture in Suriname (Pujianto, 2020).

### **Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy towards Javanese descendants in Suriname through Batik Fashion**



**Figure 6: Various Variants of Indonesian Batik Motifs**

Source: (Policy Research and Development Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019)

After receiving UNESCO recognition, Batik began to be intensively used as a tool in this approach *soft power diplomacy* Indonesia to other countries. This was expressed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Retno Marsudi in her 2019 interview written in the Book *Decades of Batik Diplomacy* that Indonesian Batik is an important tool for *Soft Power Diplomacy* Indonesia. Indonesian diplomats abroad are assigned as ambassadors for Indonesian Batik to always carry

out Batik diplomacy efforts abroad. Either done through presenting, promoting, or through cultural exchange programs to create a positive image of Indonesia to the public in other countries (Wijaya & Purbantina, 2022).

The Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo as Indonesia's representative in Suriname has carried out Indonesia's diplomatic mission through Batik which was presented at the exhibition *Indofair*. *Indofair* is one of the Indonesian government's exhibition programs to introduce Indonesian culture to the people of Suriname. *Indofair* is an annual program initiated by the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo in collaboration with the Suriname Javanese Community VHJI (*Javanese Immigration Commemoration Association*) in 1996 (Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia, 2017).

Meanwhile, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo is collaborating with a national event organized by the Suriname government, namely *Suriname Tourism Festival 2023* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023). In this exhibition, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo introduced Indonesian Batik work to the people of Suriname. Interestingly, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo not only introduced Batik fashion, but also demonstrated various kinds of handicraft products with Batik motifs which are in great demand by the people of Suriname (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

The Regional Governments of Central Java and Yogyakarta are participating in promoting batik in Surinamese society. In October 2015, which coincided with the 15th *Indofair* and the 125th anniversary of the arrival of the Javanese people to Suriname. The Central Java Regional Government delegation, numbering 21 people, made a return visit after the Suriname government had visited Central Java (Siswoyo, 2015). The Governor of Central Java, Ganjar Pranowo, said that his delegation introduced Batik to Suriname by wearing Batik clothing during their visit to the country and only once wearing a jacket in a formal forum (Nurdin, 2015).

Interestingly, the Central Java delegation group promoted Batik abroad by making Batik specifically according to the model of the country they were visiting. The special Batik model that will be promoted in Suriname is Batik with a wayang motif. This motif was chosen because Javanese descent is one of the ethnic groups in Suriname (Nurdin, 2015).

In the 17th *Indofair* program which was held on 1 November and lasted until 5 November 2017, Deputy Governor of the Special Region of Yogyakarta KGPAA Paku Alam last year, when the Governor of DIY Sri Sultan HB X visited Suriname (Kompas, 2017). During this visit, the Yogyakarta government delegation carried a mission to introduce Javanese culture to the Surinamese Javanese community, by bringing a group of dancers and a group of batik makers from Yogyakarta along with all the batik equipment. In introducing typical Yogyakarta Batik in Suriname, especially at the *Indofair* event, batik makers brought directly from Yogyakarta held workshops directly during the *Indofair* event so that they succeeded in attracting the attention of visitors in introducing Batik and enlivening the 17th *Indofair* event (Bahankain, 2017).

Efforts to promote Batik in Suriname are not only carried out by the government, but there are several private industries participating in this. Alleira Batik is one of the Indonesian batik companies that took part in introducing *itfashion* Batik in Suriname on show *Indofair* which was held in 2017. In promoting Indonesian Batik products in Suriname, Alleira Batik presented their own Batik work with the theme "*Beauty in Harmony*" in a fashion show at the opening of the 17th *Indofair*. In the fashion show, Alleira Batik not only introduced modern Batik to the people of Suriname, but also showcased the noble classic Batik collection from the Pakualam Palace. The Director of Alleira Batik hopes that in the future his company can become the fashion choice of Surinamese people because the selection of Batik materials chosen by Alleira Batik has been adapted to the country's climate (Kompas, 2017).

### **Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy towards Javanese Ethnicity in Suriname through Mass Media**

There are three mass media companies in Suriname that play a major role in preserving the Javanese language and introducing Javanese culture in Surinamese society in general, namely Garuda, Pertjajah Luhur, and Radio Mustika. Radio Mustika is a forum for the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo to convey news once a week, but is currently no longer broadcasting due to technical problems. So that leaves the Garuda and Pertjajah Luhur companies (Subagiyo, 2010).

Garuda and Pertjajah Luhur are mass media based on Javanese culture which were founded by Javanese descendants in Suriname and are currently active in introducing Javanese culture through broadcasts on television and radio. Because of his love for Javanese culture which had been inherited by his predecessor, Tommy Radji, the founder of Garuda TV and Radio, broadcasts Garuda Radio using Javanese and established Javanese as the main language in Garuda TV broadcasts as an effort to preserve Javanese in Suriname (Supratikto, 2021).

In introducing Javanese culture in Suriname, TV Garuda made a business visit to Surabaya, Indonesia in October 2015, to build cooperation with one of the regional television networks in Surabaya, namely JTV. Through this collaboration, TV Garuda can broadcast various entertainment programs from JTV Surabaya. One of them is the "Blakra'an" program which takes Surinamese viewers to explore various areas of Surabaya. Nanang, who is the producer of the program, explained that the program "Blakra'an" was packaged specifically for viewers in Suriname so they could recognize the areas in Surabaya and get to know the East Javanese dialect (Supratikto, 2021).

### **Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy towards Javanese Ethnicity in Suriname through the Indonesian Arts and Culture Scholarship (BSBI)**

In an effort to promote Indonesian culture to the Surinamese people, especially those of Javanese-Surinamese descent, the Indonesian government has provided student scholarship programs, student exchanges, sending experts and cultural training conducted by the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo. The Indonesian Arts and Culture Scholarship (BSBI) is a scholarship program provided by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2003. The aim of holding this program is none other than to introduce the young generation from friendly

countries to the diversity of identities and values of the Indonesian nation, such as attitudes and attitudes. respect diversity, politeness, tolerance, kinship and openness. So that it will create a positive image of Indonesia among the international community (Diplomasi, 2015).

In the BSBI program which was held on March 3 and ended on June 11 2015 in Bandung, West Java, participants from ASEAN member countries and ASEAN dialogue partner countries such as the United States, the Netherlands, Suriname, France, India, Timor Leste, Slovakia, and Vanuatu. In implementing the BSBI program for 3 months, the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs collaborated with art studios in Indonesia and universities to provide training in Indonesian language, diversity of arts, culture and religion as well as local Indonesian wisdom. The art studios and universities involved include Saung Angklung Udjo from Bandung, Sanggar Soeryo Soemirat from Surakarta, Sanggar Semarandana from Denpasar, Rumah Budaya Rumahta from Makassar, Studio Tydif from Surabaya, and Veterans University Yogyakarta (Diplomasi, 2015).

The BSBI program which was held from 2015 to 2019 has produced hundreds of alumni, 7 of whom are Surinamese citizens. Naturally, participants who have lived in Indonesia and witnessed Indonesian culture firsthand will develop a love and sense of belonging to Indonesia. This love for Indonesia will later become a BSBI alumnifriends of Indonesia who help promote Indonesia and share Indonesia's positive values in their respective countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia). In 2020, the BSBI program had to be temporarily suspended due to the corona pandemic which hit all regions of the world. In order to reduce and stop the spread of the corona pandemic, the Indonesian government has stopped all residents' activities outside the home, including the BSBI program.

The innovation to organize the BSBI program finally appeared again in 2021, but was carried out virtually considering that the Corona pandemic had not yet subsided at that time. Even though it was carried out virtually, this program was successfully attended by 47 participants from 21 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Pacific.

In the following year the BSBI program was still held online, and in 2023 the BSBI program was finally held again in person in Indonesia, specifically in Banyuwangi, East Java. This year's program was attended by 45 participants from various countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, the Philippines, Timor Leste, Qatar, Kazakhstan and Russia (Banyuwangi Tourism, 2023).

### **Indonesian Cultural Diplomacy towards Ethnic Javanese in Suriname through Cultural Training**

In an effort to preserve Javanese culture in Suriname, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo also held cultural training for the Surinamese population, especially those of Javanese-Surinamese descent. In the form of Indonesian and Javanese language training. Indonesian language training or courses at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo have been implemented since 1987 and Javanese language courses have been actively run since 2005.

The Indonesian language courses were pioneered by Indonesian citizens who work as home staff at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo, Suriname. And some of the teaching staff who first taught Indonesian in Suriname included Mrs. Achie Putanto, Mrs. Isnianto, Mr. Muslindar, and Mr. Sunaryo (Wahyudi, 2021).

Every year this program produces a high response and enthusiasm in learning Indonesian culture through Indonesian and Javanese language training. In 2018, there were 85 Indonesian language course participants and 62 Javanese language course participants. In 2019, there were 50 Indonesian language course participants and 77 Javanese language course participants. However, from 16 March 2020 to 8 May 2022, Indonesian and Javanese language course activities at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo were stopped due to the COVID-19 pandemic that hit Suriname (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022).

Through Indonesian language courses, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo succeeded in strengthening the solidarity and love of the Surinamese people, especially those of Surinamese Javanese descent, for Indonesian culture. This can be seen from the formation of IKAKBI or the Indonesian Language Course Alumni Association on July 11 1990. IKAKBI, which consists of alumni of advanced class Indonesian language courses, is active in organizing activities every Wednesday in the 2nd and 3rd weeks of every month. The series of events are designed to be as interesting as possible with the aim of being able to retrain and apply the Indonesian language skills they have learned, such as conversation nights and creating written works which they will later read in front of the alumni and end in a joint evaluation session if there is something that is not quite right. in the use of Indonesian (Wahyudi, 2021).



**Figure 7: Evening conversation class activities at the Indonesian Language Club at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo**

Source: (Wahyudi, 2021)

After the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo, through its collaboration with the Tlatah Time community which operates in the arts and culture sector based in Jakarta, was finally able to re-organize Indonesian and Javanese language training in 2022. The training program was divided into two levels, namely, basic level and carry-on. Teaching activities for Indonesian and Javanese language courses attended by 38 participants

started on 9 and 20 May 2022 at two locations, namely at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo and Public *School II*, District Commewijne. Apart from those of Javanese-Surinamese descent, other ethnicities are also enthusiastic participants in the Indonesian and Javanese language courses at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo in collaboration with TlatahTime. The Indonesian and Javanese language course participants also have various professions such as state civil servants, politicians, doctors, students, private workers and academics in Suriname (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022).

In its mission to promote Indonesian culture in Suriname, Javanese Gamelan training is on the agenda of the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo to support the achievement of this mission. Javanese gamelan is a traditional musical instrument and is known internationally as a cultural heritage that is inherent in Javanese society. Gamelan music is often performed at celebrations or celebrations to commemorate the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in the teachings of Islam, which in Java is often called the Sekaten event (Hananto, 2020). Javanese Gamelan music training has been held by the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo since February 2014, but was stopped from March 2020 to September 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. On January 12 2023, Javanese Gamelan music training will be held again every Thursday due to the handling of the COVID-19 situation in Suriname which is starting to improve and the lifting of social restrictions by the government. The training was attended by 12 Surinamese community participants with various professions such as State Civil Apparatus, students and private workers in Suriname (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).



**Figure 8: Routine Javanese Gamelan Practice Activities at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo followed by Surinamese children**

Source: (Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Paramaribo, 2021)

The Gamelan music training program by the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo was responded to enthusiastically by the Surinamese people, especially those of Javanese descent, because the people of Javanese descent in Suriname consider Gamelan to be one of the cultural heritages of their ancestors from Java. Apart from that, only the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo has complete Gamelan musical equipment which is not owned by the Javanese community in Suriname. The Javanese Gamelan music training agenda organized by the Indonesian Embassy

in Paramaribo is part of a whole series of Indonesian cultural diplomacy which aims to promote Javanese culture in Suriname. On the other hand, the Gamelan music training also became a platform for people of Javanese descent in Suriname to express their love for Indonesian culture, especially Javanese culture (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2023).

Cultural training in Suriname is not only carried out by the government but is also carried out by one of the higher education institutions in Indonesia, namely Esa Unggul University. The Esa Unggul University community service program succeeded in holding a community service and empowerment program in Suriname for 3 months, from August to October 2018. The Esa Unggul University community service team held 2 major programs, namely fine arts training and Indonesian language training for Javanese and other ethnicities. in Suriname. The fine arts program taught to the people of Suriname will use traditional fine arts methods, namely wood carving which is located in *Directorate of Cultural Paramaribo* and Sana Culture. This program is considered quite important considering that the art of wood carving is part of Javanese culture which is still developing today. And it is hoped that it can be developed by Javanese ethnic groups in Suriname, considering that natural resources, especially wood, are very abundant in that country (Wahyudi, 2021).

Apart from that, in the Indonesian language training program, the Esa Unggul University service team collaborates with the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo in running Indonesian language classes which have been running since 1987 under the auspices of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia Paramaribo. The Indonesian language training class is held every Wednesday at the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo and is divided into 2 classes, namely the beginner class and the advanced class. In this beginner class, it is the initial stage of training to know Indonesian, which means that at this stage all participants cannot write, read, or even understand the vocabulary of daily conversation in Indonesian. Meanwhile, the advanced class is the stage where all class participants are able to read and write correctly and are able to understand sentences in Indonesian (Wahyudi, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

Currently, the Javanese are the third largest ethnic group in Suriname with around 80 thousand or 15% of the population of Suriname. The presence of Javanese ethnicity in Suriname creates historical and cultural similarities between Indonesia and Suriname. Through these historical and cultural ties, it becomes a bridge for Indonesia and Suriname in building bilateral cooperation in various sectors. With the multi-ethnic condition of Suriname and the dominance of Dutch culture, the young Javanese generation in Suriname has forgotten their culture. Under these conditions, Indonesian representatives in Suriname, namely the Indonesian Embassy in Paramaribo, as well as individuals and private companies, are trying to take a cultural approach in preserving Javanese culture in Suriname.

In an effort to preserve Javanese culture and introduce Indonesian culture in Suriname, the Indonesian government and non-government parties have introduced Indonesian culture, especially Javanese culture, in Suriname through cultural diplomacy. One of them is through



music which has succeeded in uniting the Javanese ethnic group in Suriname, even the multi-ethnic people of Suriname in general. Apart from that, cultural diplomacy efforts are channeled through food and Batik fashion, so that the Surinamese people, especially the Javanese-Surinamese ethnic group, understand their ancestral culture more deeply.

On the other hand, to preserve Javanese culture and introduce Indonesian culture in Suriname, the Indonesian government has provided various cultural scholarship programs and cultural training for the Surinamese people. Through this program gave birth *friends of Indonesia* who will be the successor to preserve Javanese culture in Suriname in the future and help promote and share Indonesia's positive values.

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