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**JAKARTA:** President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo's war on drugs continues to take its toll as another person suspected of being a drug dealer was shot dead in Medan, North Sumatra, making a total of 56 suspects extrajudicially killed this year.

The man, identified as Aiyub, a 54-year-old Acehnese the police claimed to be a most-wanted drug dealer, was shot dead by detectives after he resisted arrest, the police claimed.

The police further alleged that Aiyub was a leader of a Malaysian drug network.

Despite mounting criticism, the government has insisted that its tough fight against drug crimes does not violate human rights.

The officers at the scene who carried out the shooting did so according to standard operating procedures (SOPs), said Mualimin Abdi, the director of human rights and justice at the Law and Human Rights Ministry.

He added that accusations of violations of human rights in

Jokowi's policy against drugs were "baseless" because Jokowi did not order the "killing of drug dealers as Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has done."

"President Jokowi says that if there is a legal basis (for shooting) drug dealers, especially foreign ones, then shoot them. That's different from Duterte's order to simply shoot (drug dealers) on sight," Mualimin said on Monday.

Mualimin said the police had SOPs that set out, which allowed them to shoot drug suspects, for example, if they resisted arrest or tried to retaliate and fight back against law enforcement agents.

"(The SOPs) are the legal basis. It would be a violation of human rights if there were no SOPs or if officers did not comply with the SOPs," Mualimin said.

Amnesty International has called for an investigation into the 56 killings as it is worried that officers have not resorted to shooting only as a last resort or in self-defence. — Jakarta Post/ Asia News Network