



# Jesuit Refugee Service

Diocese of Daru-Kiunga

## Newsletter

**JRS would like to take this opportunity to stress that it does not endorse any particular viewpoint in the articles. JRS seeks to bring West Papuan refugees a broad range of points of view. It is up to the individuals to make up their own mind.**

### **PDI-P confident of victory in West Papua**

Cenderawasih Pos  
12 January 2009

The West Papua branch of the PDI-P (Partai Demokrat Indonesia - Perjuangan, Indonesian Democracy Party - Struggle) is optimistic that despite the large number of parties campaigning in the elections in 2009, it will be able to obtain a majority of votes, sufficient for it to function as a single faction (ie, not need to enter into coalition with other parties).

Jimmy Demianus told Manokwari Pos (part of the Cenderawasih group) that it could rely on its traditional supporters because the party had a clear base of its own with Catholic, Protestant and nationalist supporters. The other parties had not been able to grow as big as the PDI-P except for the PDS (Partai Damai Sejahtera, Peace and Welfare Party) which now has a representative in the national parliament.

He said that without making too many efforts (in the past, his party now has seven seats. Nor did they need to rely on help from PDI-P members now holding important local positions.

### **Police give three-week ultimatum for return of weapons seized on 7 January in Puncak Jaya**

Cenderawasih Pos  
13 January 2009

The authorities in West Papua are making strenuous efforts to persuade a group of Papuans who launched a raid on a police post in Tingginambuh to return the weapons along with ammunition which they seized during the raid. Tingginambuh is located Puncak Jaya, in the Central Highlands.

The deputy governor, Alex Hesegegem said they hoped that the local administration would try to secure the return of the weapons as the best way to avoid a physical conflict over the incident. If the weapons are not returned the security forces might well carry out sweepings in the area which would cause misunderstandings with the local community. He hoped that the church would assist in the matter and called on OPM groups not to cause disturbances in the area. We want Papua to be a land of Peace and hope those still in the forest would return to the fold of the Republic of Indonesia.

Meanwhile a report from Puncak Jaya said that incident had caused a halt in the local activities of the government, the schools and

other activities. At present, efforts to get the return of the weapons were using the persuasive approach, hoping families, customary groups, the youth would help get the weapons back.

The incident has caused fear among the local people, many of whom have abandoned their homes and fled into the forest while offices and schools were not functioning, but hopefully things would return to normal in a couple of weeks. The police were questioning a number of people about the incident. A deadline of three weeks has been set for the return of the weapons, after which other action would be taken.

Earlier, the chief of police admitted that the raid had occurred on 7 January because the local policemen had been too lax and there were only two men guarding the post at the time. At the time, around twenty people were watching TV at the post while the police officers were eating in another room. It was while this was happening that the raid took place when the 4 weapons were taken, along with some ammunition. The raid was mounted by a group led by Dekilas Tabuni who had been among the people watching the TV. They are believed to be part of the OPM group led by Goliat Tabuni. He admitted that if they had been more watchful, the incident would not have happened.

He said this should be a lesson for the police in an area like Tingginambut in the interior which is an area of unrest and armed rebels are known to be active.

Asked whether the police would bring in other forces to help, he said at the moment they are relying on local leaders to secure the return of the weapons, hoping that they would use the time to make an approach to the OPM to return the weapons. If this doesn't happen within three week, the security forces will undertake their own searches, helped by personnel from the Cenderawasih military command

## **Indonesia: Release Papuan flag raisers**

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

Date: 14 January 2009

Amnesty International called today for the immediate and unconditional release of 11 Papuan protestors facing three years or more in prison merely because they displayed a banned flag.

The organization urged the Indonesian government to withdraw the 2007 government regulation that bans the display of separatist flags.

The 11 activists were arrested in March 2008 for hoisting the Morning Star flag, a symbol of Papuan independence. The flags were raised during a series of peaceful public demonstrations protesting the 2007 government regulation

The District Court in Manokwari, initially sentenced the activists to eight month's imprisonment. On appeal, the Papua's provincial High Court upheld the guilty verdict on 9 January and extended their sentences. Prominent activist Jack Wanggai was sentenced to three-and-a-half years and 10 others were given three year sentences.

The defendants plan to appeal the decision to Indonesia's Supreme Court.

"Imprisoning protesters for three years just for raising a flag seems designed to make an example of these people in an effort to intimidate other Papuans activists," said Donna Guest, Deputy Director of Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific Programme.

The arrest and conviction of these protesters violates their right to free expression, opinion and association guaranteed under Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party, Amnesty International pointed out

Furthermore, the organization believes that the court's actions, as well as the 2007 regulation that have been criticized by the 11 activists and other demonstrators in Papua, backtrack on the 2001 Special Autonomy Law that granted Papuans the right to express their cultural identity.

Amnesty International called for all the withdrawal of the 2007 regulation and the release of all those arrested for peaceful flag-raising in Papua.

"The imprisonment of peaceful flag-raisers in Papua is a step back from the recent trend towards greater openness and respect for freedom of expression in Indonesia over the past few years," said Donna Guest.

### Background

Papua, Indonesia's eastern-most province, has witnessed a deteriorating human rights situation over the past few years. The indigenous population, ethnically distinct from other parts of Indonesia, has increasingly questioned the Indonesian government's policies regarding Papua's natural resources and the migration of non-Papuans into the area. The Indonesian government maintains a heavy police and military presence, whose members have faced accusations of intimidating and threatening members of the local indigenous community who support greater autonomy or independence from Indonesia through peaceful means.

The 11 activists were charged with 'rebellion' under Article 106 and 110 of the Indonesian Penal Code.

The Special Autonomy Law No. 21 of 2001 allows the use of Papuan regional symbols as an expression of Papuan cultural identity while Article 6 of Government Regulation No. 77 of 2007 prohibits the display of separatist logo or flags

## Police in Papua Say OPM Still A Threat

Jakarta Globe  
January 19, 2009

Markus Junianto Sihaloho

Security officials in Papua have claimed that a clash on Friday between a police unit and members of the Free Papua Movement, or OPM, in Tinggimambut, Puncak Jaya district, confirmed the continued presence of armed separatists in the province.

Papua Police Chief Insp. Gen. Bagus Eko-danto said on Sunday that his officers were investigating the incident.

However, Bagus said he was certain that armed separatists were still a threat in Papua, though police do not require military assistance "at this stage."

"It is about a little group of people that do not want to be called separatists, but they attack police and show us that armed separatists still exist in Papua," Bagus said.

As reported by state-run Antara news agency, one of the suspected OPM members, identified as Yendenak Wonda, was shot during the skirmish and later treated at Mulia General Hospital in Puncak Jaya.

"When Wonda was shot, the others ran away," Bagus said.

He said the incident started two weeks ago when OPM members allegedly attacked the Tinggimambut Police station, wounding Irana Helen, 21, a police officer's wife.

The attackers also took four police guns, Bagus said. "One of [the attackers] was recognized as Yendenak Wonda," he said.

He said the OPM members involved in Friday's skirmish had been identified as belonging to a group led by Goliath Tabuni.

Goliath, the alleged leader of the OPM in the area, is believed to have been involved in the killing in October 2004 of several Indonesian soldiers and civilians who were traveling on the road between Wamena and Mulia.

The OPM is considered to be a low-level separatist group involved in fighting for an independent state in Papua.

The harsh approach taken by security forces in dealing with separatism has given rise to

allegations of widespread human rights violations in the province.

Ferry Marisan, from the Institute for the Study and Advocacy of Human Rights, or Elsham, in West Papua Province, on Sunday urged police to complete their investigation before claiming that separatists were threatening local communities.

He said that police had never provided evidence that Goliath's group was responsible for the attack on the police.

"I say that none of Goliath's men were in the village. The police only found normal villagers," Ferry said.

"It was the police who were trying to burn local villagers' houses and OPM members came to stop them from doing it."

Ferry said that the police should not describe OPM members as dangerous armed separatists because they rarely used firearms, instead carrying bows and arrows.

### **TPN/OPM activist to be charged**

Cenderawasih Pos

20 January 2009

Yendenak Wonda, a member of the TPN/OPM (Terntara Papua Nasional/Organisasi Papua Merdeka) led by Goliath Tabuni who was shot during a skirmish with the police in Tinggineri, district of Tinggisambut, Puncak Jaya. According to the chief of police, he has admitted that he is indeed a member of the TPN/OPM with the rank of captain. According to police chief Paulus Waterpauw, he has also confessed to possessing eleven weapons, some of which were seized during a recent raid on the police post in Tinggisambut. The group involved in the raid, the Goliath Tabuni group is believed to consist of 40 people, while people from the broader community are also said to be involved.

Waterpauw said that they have named Yendenak a suspect and he will be charged under article 365 of the Criminal Code for using violence while seizing goods from others, facing a maximum sentence of seven years. He said this would be dealt with as a criminal offence, not a political matter.

He also said the inhabitants of four *kampungs* bordering on the area under the control of Goliath Tabuni have asked for a police post to be set up there. He said that these people had formerly been part of the TPN/OPM but had now decided to distance themselves from the separatists, because they feel threatened by the TPN who occasionally bring people together to ask for money or for women, as a way of intimidating the local people.

Yendenak is still receiving medical treatment and will need an operation to remove shrapnel from his thigh but this cannot take place until his blood pressure has normalised. According to the police, he is being treated in the same way as other patients although for security purposes, there is a team of four people to keep watch at his bedside.

### **Papuan Armed Attackers May Be Separatists: Police**

Jakarta Globe

January 20, 2009

Nivell Rayda

Police detained on Monday a member of the group that allegedly attacked Tingginambut Police station in Puncak Jaya district, Papua Province, last week, an officer said.

Bagus Ekodanto, Papua Province Police chief, said the man confessed to the crime but told police he was not a member of the separatist Free Papua Movement, or OPM. Police refused to reveal the man's identity.

A group of about 20 attacked Tingginambut Police station on Thursday, taking four SS-1 assault rifles and stabbing the wife of an officer who happened to be at the station.

Police have retrieved the bodies of two suspected group members, Yendedak Wenda Muli and Yembinas Murib, who were killed by police patrolling the area last week.

Agus Riyanto, a Papua Police spokesman, was quoted by state-run news agency Antara on Monday as saying that the two men were carrying the missing guns when they, along

with several other armed men, ambushed patrolling officers.

Agus said the clash erupted when the armed group stopped a police patrol from entering a village.

"They tried to shoot the rifles but didn't realize that the safety locks were on," Agus said.

"They desperately tried to unlock the guns but our officers shot Wenda and Yembinas and immobilized some other members of the group."

Agus was also quoted by Agence France-Presse on Monday as saying that two other men had been wounded and sent to the hospital. Others escaped with the rifles and were still at large, he said.

Bagus, the police chief, called for the rifles to be returned immediately.

"We have announced to the public through fliers and the radio that the rifles must be returned immediately. We won't hesitate to use any measures necessary to retrieve the guns," Bagus said over the phone.

"If we find anyone in possession of the missing guns or any type of firearms, we will arrest them."

The police chief said officers were still looking into whether the attackers belonged to the separatist movement, a poorly-armed separatist group which has waged a low-level insurgency for decades in the resource-rich eastern province.

"It's too early to tell; we are still gathering evidence to see if they were OPM members or not," Bagus said.

"If they were, then it's the military's job to deal with them," he said.

Military officials in the area suspected that the attackers belonged to a group of OPM members led by Goliath Tabuni, the alleged leader of OPM in the area. He has been accused of involvement in the killing in October 2004 of Indonesian soldiers and civilians who were traveling between Wamena and Mulia.

Meanwhile, a local tribal official said on Monday that police had torched dozens of houses and killed pigs belonging to villagers in Papua as they searched for the stolen weapons.

The incident on Sunday came two days after the police encounter with the armed group believed to be carrying the stolen rifles, accord-

ing to the Papua Customary Council, which represents tribal interests.

"About 500 police burned down 30 houses and killed 32 pigs at Tingginere village on Sunday," Dominikus Sorabut, a council official, was quoted by AFP on Monday as saying.

"The police said they were looking for stolen weapons. Residents are now staying at neighboring villages ... They're worried and frightened."

Police rejected the claims but admitted searching Tingginere for the stolen weapons.

"No houses were burned down and no farm animals were taken away from residents," Agus said.

Pro-independence sentiments in the poor province have been on the rise in recent years, fueled by discontent that Papua's riches are being siphoned off by the central government, leaving little for Papuans.

## **Candidates in Merauke warned against anti-NKRI campaigning**

Cenderawasih Pos

20 January 2009

The district head of Merauke, speaking at a gathering of all the electoral candidates in the district where 25 seats at the local assembly are being contested, urged the candidates to avoid horizontal conflicts. This followed the recent decision of the Constitutional Court that candidates who gained the majority of votes would win the seat.

He said that this could result in candidates trying to discredit other candidates or parties trying to discredit each other in order to win votes.

He also urged the candidates not to do anything that might harm national integrity by declaring that if they won, it would lead to independence. He warned that such things would not be tolerated. He said that parties should remember that they are parties within the Republic of Indonesia. 'If such people behave like this, it means that they are anti NKRI (Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia) but even so are standing as a candidate in the election.'

## INDONESIA: Extremely Low Condom Use In Hardest Hit Region

JAYAPURA (IRIN News)  
January 20 2009

At night, Imbi Park, in the Indonesian city of Jayapura, buzzes with a furtive, sleazy energy - this is where, beneath a statue of US World War II hero General Douglas MacArthur, Jayapurians shop for sex.

Knots of sex workers sit and wait among the "Ojek" – the motorbike-taxi drivers - the cheapest way to get around in Indonesia. These street walkers are at the lowest rung of the sex industry in the Melanesian island of Papua, Indonesia's easternmost province.

Some are extremely young. Marcella, 14, told IRIN/PlusNews she had been working around Imbi Park since she was aged 10. Her father was a soldier posted to the next-door province of West Papua, who remarried after her mother died. Marcella did not get on with her stepmother and ran away from home. She knows of six other children from similarly broken homes selling sex.

Marcella shares a room with three women, all divorced, two of whom have children to support. With only limited education in a region where formal job opportunities are scarce, prostitution is one of their few options.

"It's not a good choice, but there is no other choice," said Vanda Kiriho, the director of Yayasan Harapan Ibu, an NGO working with sex workers in Jayapura. "They don't think about the future, only about their survival."

Nearly all the sex workers IRIN/PlusNews spoke to at Imbi Park had a packet of condoms. They were aware of HIV, as were most of their clients, they said, but all admitted they had sex without protection if a customer insisted.

"Men have egos, they want to see themselves as strong and macho, so they don't want to wear condoms," said Kiriho. "They say they are not afraid, and infection or no infection,

they are going to die sometime."

Condom use is extremely low across the two provinces of Papua and West Papua, collectively known as Tanah Papua (the land of Papua). According to a 2006 behaviour study, just 2.8 percent of people used a condom in their last sexual encounter. When sex was paid for, the figure was slightly higher than 14 percent.

Tanah Papua has an HIV prevalence rate of 2.4 percent among people aged 15 to 49, the worst in Indonesia. Its hard-to-reach lowland and highland regions limit the delivery of health and education services, but do not inhibit the mobility of those looking for seasonal work or trading, who are familiar with the footpaths that crisscross the heavily forested terrain. This has allowed the virus to penetrate some of the remotest parts of the island.

Multiple sexual partners are common in Tanah Papua, alcohol abuse and sexual violence are high, over one-third of Papuans have never attended school, and male circumcision, unlike in the rest of Indonesia, is rare; the multiplicity of languages and cultures - roughly 250 - complicates advocacy campaigns.

Under the statue of MacArthur, staring out across the sea to the Philippines, Papuan sex workers make a difficult living among local ethnic Melanesians and working-class migrants from the rest of Indonesia, settled here by the government in the 1970s and '80s in response to a separatist movement opposed to Indonesian control.

### Upmarket STIs

At the top end of the sex industry are the karaoke bars and brothels like Asiefa, a 20-minute drive from Jayapura on the shore of Lake Sentani, one of the more picturesque locations for a house of disrepute.

With dyed jet black hair, sadly only drawing attention to his advancing years, high-waist trousers, and ring glinting on pinky finger,

Hassan Haryanto looks every inch a brothel manager. He ushered the IRIN/PlusNews reporter into his office to show off a declaration signed by, among others the chief of police, proclaiming the complex was committed to "100 percent condom use".

"Those who don't use we can reject," he said firmly. But the injunction has loopholes, judging by the level of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) treated at the brothel's clinic.

The clinic, supported by the international NGO, Family Health International (FHI), treated 328 STI cases in October 2008. "From the examination results they have STIs, so if they're saying they always use condoms with their clients, that's impossible," said the clinic's Dr Hesti Purikasari.

Voluntary HIV testing of 300 women working in the complex in 2006 found 22 were HIV positive. Three of them have since died, but the rest might still be working, said Dr Purikasari. She did not know whether any of them were receiving antiretroviral drugs, as treatment and case management were handled by a hospital in town.

None of the sex workers in Asiefa are Papuan; most of them are from Java, Indonesia's most populous island, lured by the money that can be made from the soldiers and civil servants that are the typical customers of the establishment.

Three women IRIN/PlusNews spoke to in the afternoon lull before business got going, said the many months they had spent in Asiefa were worth it. Despite the monthly deductions for basic services like water and electricity, a kickback to a man who provided "security", and a fee to Hassan, they said money could be made, which was sent home to the parents looking after their children.

They insisted they were HIV-aware, but in an impromptu quiz all assumed the virus could be transmitted by kissing, and one believed it could be caught from a toilet seat. And while

they maintained condoms were a must with customers, none used them with their boyfriends.

"We love and believe our boyfriends, and they don't want to use them," said Dika, curled up on a bed with her two colleagues.

Gus Sutakertya, the head of FHI in Tanah Papua, believes a lot more needs to be done at all levels of society, and without delay. "There are not enough programmes on HIV/AIDS; government and cultural leaders don't talk about AIDS," he told IRIN/PlusNews.

"I'm very worried; if we don't do something now, the future is bleak for Papuans, and Indonesians as a whole."

## **Exiled Papuans Try to Keep Cause Alive**

The Jakarta Globe  
January 21, 2009

Bertil Lintner

The frosty streets and orderly villas of Tyreso, a suburb of Stockholm, Sweden, are a long way from the bamboo huts and steamy jungles of the Papua region. But for Ruben Maury and Daniel Kafiar they have been home for nearly three decades, the base from which they have championed their seemingly Quixotic cause — independence for the western half of New Guinea Island.

Maury, a good-natured man in his 70s who seems to know everybody in Tyreso, is greeted by the local tobacconist with a friendly "hello Ruben," and he is a fixture at the local library. The younger and more energetic Kafiar carries stacks of documents in his briefcase. Both are hard-line advocates of total independence who do not believe in a negotiated Aceh-style autonomy. "We're different from Aceh," Kafiar says. "Historically, our ties have been with Oceania, not Asia. Our connections have always been eastwards, not westwards."

Maury roamed the jungles of Indonesia's Papua for many years in the 1970s, until he and some of his comrades retreated across the border to Papua New Guinea, where he was arrested. Following a year in prison in Port Moresby, he was resettled as a refugee in Sweden in 1979. Kafiari followed a year later, and the two have since represented the Free Papua Movement, or OPM, in Europe. Outlawed in Indonesia, their breakaway cause has found few sympathizers internationally outside a few small Pacific island states such as Vanuatu and Nauru, despite their appeals to governments around the world.

While some international NGOs — among them Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch — have expressed concern over human rights abuses in the provinces of Papua and West Papua, no one, it seems, wants to see the dismemberment of Indonesia.

East Timor was a special case, the argument goes. When Indonesia was proclaimed an independent state on Aug. 17, 1945, it encompassed all the territories of the former Dutch East Indies. Indonesia did not, at that time, claim what was then Portuguese East Timor. When the Dutch finally left in 1949, they held on to their western half of New Guinea. They argued that the territory was culturally different from the rest of the old colony, and that the Papuans would be exploited by the more sophisticated Javanese, if it was handed over to Indonesia.

Throughout the 1950s, the Dutch initiated moves to make their part of New Guinea an independent state. Education was improved, a naval academy was opened, Papuan troops began service, local elections were held and the territory even adopted its own flag and national anthem. But all this happened at a time when Southeast Asia was in turmoil. The communist movement was strong throughout the region, and especially in Indonesia. The United States warned the Netherlands against trying to defend New Guinea if the Indonesians attempted to capture it by force.

"We're victims of Cold War politics," Kafiari says. "No one ever asked us what we wanted. It all happened above our heads."

In a secret letter to then-Dutch Prime Minister J.E. de Quay, President John F. Kennedy wrote: "This would be a war in which neither the Netherlands nor the West could win in any real sense. Whatever the outcome of particular military encounters, the entire free world position in Asia would be seriously damaged. Only the communists would benefit from such a conflict. If the Indonesian Army were committed to all-out war against the Netherlands, the moderate elements within the Army and the country would be quickly eliminated, leaving a clear field for communist intervention. If Indonesia were to succumb to communism in these circumstances, the whole non-communist position in Vietnam, Thailand and Malaya would be in grave peril, and as you know these are areas in which we in the United States have heavy commitments and burdens."

The Netherlands gave in and on Aug. 15, 1962, Indonesia and the Netherlands signed an agreement in New York. The territory was to be handed over to the United Nations during a transitional period, then be transferred to Indonesia — but on condition that the Papuans would have the right to decide their own future. On May 1, 1963, Indonesia took full charge of the territory and renamed it first West Irian and later Irian Jaya. In mid-1969, the promised referendum was eventually held, but The Act of Free Choice, as it was called, was open to only 1,025 hand-picked delegates — and they all voted in favor of integration with Indonesia. The United Nations accepted the result and Western powers turned a deaf ear to protests over the circumstances surrounding the vote.

By then, the OPM had been formed and hit-and-run attacks began in the highlands. Ruben Maury joined the movement in 1970, abandoning his family and a job as a pharmacist in Jayapura. He had been sent to study in the Netherlands in the 1950s and, in 1962, he and five other Papuans were invited to visit Indonesia.

They met President Sukarno and other state leaders but the Papuans made no promises. "We told them that we were on a study tour," Maury says. "They sent beautiful girls to our hotel rooms, but I didn't give in to the temptation, or to their suggestion that we should join Indonesia."

Returning, Maury spent eight years in the jungle with the OPM before he and some of his ill-equipped comrades crossed into independent Papua New Guinea in 1978. There, they received little sympathy — Papua New Guinea did not want to antagonize its powerful neighbor — and were detained for illegal entry. A year later, Sweden accepted Maury and four other OPM leaders as political refugees, and they arrived there in March 1979. Among them was also Jacob Prai, one of the founders of OPM, and JohnOtto Ondawame, who now represents the movement in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

The need to find a solution to the Papuan conflict is still a reality. It became even more pressing after the Free Aceh Movement, or GAM, signed its peace deal with Jakarta on Aug. 15, 2005. GAM gave up its demand for independence in favor of autonomy and agreed to lay down its arms while Jakarta promised to withdraw all nonlocal military and police forces. The peace process was supervised by an Aceh Monitoring Mission set up jointly by the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or Asean. A presidential decree granted amnesty to GAM members. The Aceh agreement has been hailed as one of the most important successes in solving a civil conflict in modern times, and the man who brokered it, former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari, was awarded the 2008 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to restore peace in Aceh and elsewhere. Hasan di Tiro and other exiles were able to return to Aceh, and GAM leaders are now mainstream politicians.

But both Maury and Kafiari reject an Aceh-style solution. They also oppose the split of the former province of Irian Jaya into Papua and West Papua, which was made in February

2003. And the limited autonomy the territory was granted in January 2002 does not satisfy their aspirations either.

"Autonomy is not a lasting solution," Maury says. "The people want independence, not autonomy. We've already made up our minds."

While the OPM unilaterally declared independence on July 1, 1971, it has not been recognized by any foreign country. The mission in Vanuatu was set up in 1987 by Kafiari, who traveled there from Sweden and met Walter Lini, the country's first prime minister. At the time, Vanuatu provided support to the Kanak indigenous liberation movement in French New Caledonia, and was the only country in the region to support the right of East Timor to self-determination. Kafiari remained in Vanuatu for two years before returning to Sweden. Following Lini's resignation in 1991, support for all those movements dwindled, but the OPM was allowed to keep its office open. Now Maury and Kafiari are highly critical of the current two representatives in Vanuatu, Ondawame and Andy Ayamiseba, who they consider "Indonesian stooges."

Their hard-line stance can be somewhat curious, given the low-level of visibility their movement has attained. Kafiari says that separation from Indonesia is a first step. The next would be to unite the entire island — a union of the Western half with Papua New Guinea. "That border was drawn up in Europe in the late 19th century, with a pen and a ruler. It's a straight line. People have relatives on both sides of the border," he says.

But there are also hundreds of different tribes speaking as many different languages in New Guinea, with little to unite disparate villages. The Aceh movement was fairly unified, while the OPM has been torn by factionalism, often along clan and tribal lines. Papua New Guinea itself has had enormous problems establishing a sense of nationhood, and many observers consider it a near-failed state with some of the highest crime and murder rates in the world, environmental degradation and an economy

almost entirely dependent on the export of raw materials.

An independent West Papua — if it ever materialized, which seems unlikely — would also have to deal with fundamental demographic changes. Between 1975 and 1995, a government-sponsored transmigration program resettled tens of thousands of people, mainly from Java, in Irian Jaya. In addition, many people from other parts of Indonesia went there on their own, attracted by business opportunities and the search for new land. This is reflected in the breakdown of religions in the area. In 1964, of 808,336 people, 49.5 percent were Protestants, 26 percent Catholics, 18 percent "others," i.e. animists; and only 6.5 percent were Muslims. Data from 2004 — the last available before the province was divided into two — show a total population of 2,516,284 of whom 23.2 percent are Muslims. Although there are Papuan Muslims, most come from other islands.

And there could be even more migrants in the area than what official statistics indicate. In a July 2007 document titled "West Papuan Churches' Deepest Concern and Appeal to the International Community," local Papuan church leaders stated: "The current composition of the West Papuan population is 30 percent native and 70 percent migrants. The native West Papuans have been marginalized in all aspects of life."

Even if exaggerated, it reflects new contradictions — and potential conflicts — in Papuan society. Jihadi groups have also visited the area, leading to fears that the kind of factional fighting that tore apart the Maluku islands from 2000 to 2002 could erupt in the two Papua provinces.

Maury and Kafiari argue that there is a deliberate attempt to make the area not only "more Indonesian" but also Muslim. Muslims, on their part, claim that Islam is an older religion in the area than Christianity. Muslim traders visited the island's shores before the arrival of the first Christian missionaries in the mid-19th century. However, according to most accounts, the na-

tive population was entirely animist before two German Protestant missionaries, Johann Geissler and C.W. Ottow, set foot at Manokwari in 1855 — even before the Dutch established a permanent presence on the island.

The delicate demographic and religious balance in Indonesia's two easternmost provinces is perhaps the reason why outside powers prefer a continuation of the status quo rather than separation from Indonesia. The Papuans may be victims of old Cold War politics, as Maury and Kafiari argue, but two generations later it seems unlikely that anyone would be prepared to reconsider that fact at this late date.

### The Free Papua Movement

The Free Papua Movement, or OPM, was founded in 1965 in reaction to Indonesia's incorporation of the former Dutch New Guinea through a UN-supervised process during 1962-63. On July 1, 1971, OPM announced the formation of the "independent republic" of West Papua.

At the same time, an armed wing, the National Liberation Army, or OPM-TPN, was established with strongholds along the border with Papua New Guinea. Its current armed strength is unknown but assumed to be in the hundreds rather than the thousands. However, it is believed to have many activists and supporters throughout the western half of New Guinea Island.

In July 2006, the group decided that its objectives should be sought exclusively through nonviolent means, although it has clashed with Indonesia's security forces on a number of occasions even after that pledge was made. It has seven, some say, four, commands which seem to operate independently of each other. In addition, the OPM has two international offices, one in Port Vila, Vanuatu, and the other in Tyreso, a Stockholm suburb.

Since the beginning, the OPM has been plagued by internal schisms and defections, and there seems to be little or no coordinated leadership either at home or in exile. The main

unit operates around Timika and Wamena in the Central Highlands and is led by Kelly Kwalik. Another commander, Mathias Wenda, is reported to be based near Bewani in Papua New Guinea. The overall commander is said to be Richard Yoweni, who is in his 60s.

The movement is outlawed in Indonesia and it is a crime to display the Papuan independence flag in public.

## **Free primary school education not available in Papua**

Cenderawasih Pos  
29 January 2009

The budget for 2009 fails to make available funds to provide free compulsory education to the poorer inhabitants of West Papua. The Institute for Civil Society Strengthening, ICS, in Papua and the Indonesia Forum for Budgetary Transparency have drawn the same conclusion on this matter.

While the Law on National Education stipulates that 20 percent of the national budget should be allocated to education, in Papua, it only amounts to 4.7 percent. Moreover, the Special Autonomy Law of 2001 stipulates an even greater provision for education, namely 30 percent of the budget, whereas the actual amount is 24.18 percent.

In actual fact however, 84.51 percent of this goes to the payment of salaries, allowances and bonuses and office administration, which means that the actual amount available for the people's education is only 15.49 percent, for a total of Rp31.52 billion.

This means, according to Budi Setyanto of the ICS, that the promise of free education made by the governor of the province and the national government has not been kept. 'This contradicts the promise that nine years of education at primary and lower secondary school level for the children of the poorest Papuan families would be provided free of charge.'

Moreover, there has even been a cutback of funding for young Papuans from Rp 6.64 billion in 2008, down to Rp930 million for 2009. At the same time, the allocation for management of education has actually gone up by 230 percent (sic), most of which is for the bureaucracy in charge of education.

The ICS stressed that it is extremely important for the provincial administration to comply with the requirement under the Special Autonomy Law to allocate at the very least 30 percent of the budget to free education for the poorest groups in the territory.

## **Indonesia: Investigate excessive use of force against peaceful Papuan demonstrators**

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL  
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Amnesty International urges the Indonesian authorities to conduct an impartial investigation into reports of police using excessive force to disperse a peaceful demonstration in Nabire, Papua province.

On 27 January 2009, the "Coalition of People who care about the election of the Head of Region" (Koalisi Masyarakat Peduli Pemilihan Kepala Daerah), organized a peaceful demonstration to call for local elections to be held after several delays. The demonstration of about 100 people was conducted in front of the General Election Commission's building in Nabire. Demonstrators erected a tent which blocked one of the main roads and when the police urged them to dismantle the tent, they refused.

According to reports, two days later, police units violently dispersed the remaining peaceful demonstrators in the early morning while they were sleeping on the site. Local sources say police shot rubber bullets at the crowd wounding at least five demonstrators. Police

also kicked and beat some demonstrators with rattan sticks and rifle butts. Many people suffered bruises and cuts as a result.

Officers also were reported to have kicked a 40 year-old human rights defender, Yones Douw, with their boots three times. They beat him on the ears and punched him in the face when he attempted to intervene to stop the clashes between police and demonstrators. They also destroyed his computer memory stick in front of him. Yones Douw is a member of the Papuan Kingmi church (the Papuan branch of the Gospel Tabernacle Church of Indonesia) and a volunteer with the human rights organization ELSHAM (*Lembaga Studi dan Advokasi Hak Asasi Manusia*, Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy).

Police then arrested and interrogated Yones Douw and seven demonstrators. They purportedly refused all eight people access to the outside world and deprived them of food and drinking water during their one day detention. Those injured report that police did not grant them access to appropriate medical care. Police then detained Yones Douw in a cell on his own and interrogated him for several hours. On 30 January the police released all eight people but instructed them to report to the station each day.

Policing of public demonstrations should not deny participants the right to peaceful assembly. This incident occurs in the context of a larger crackdown on freedom of expression and assembly in Papua. On 14 January 2009, Amnesty International called for the immediate and unconditional release of 11 Papuan protesters facing three years or more in prison merely because they displayed a banned flag. Indonesian authorities should give public reassurances that freedom of expression and assembly are guaranteed in Papua. They should also express their support for the legitimate work conducted by human rights defenders throughout the country and take speedy measures to ensure that they are fully protected when they carry out their work.

Amnesty International recognizes the challenges involved in policing demonstrations and that some protestors obstructed public buildings after being asked to disperse. However, the police actions may have contravened the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials and the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials. These stipulate, among other things, that force should be used only as a last resort, in proportion to the threat posed, and should be designed to minimize damage or injury.

Amnesty International urges that an inquiry into the Nabire incident be carried out promptly, with a review of police tactics and weapons in the policing of demonstrations and that its findings and recommendations be made public in a timely manner. The Indonesian authorities should discipline and bring to justice those involved if the force used is found to have been excessive and to have contravened the principles of necessity and proportionality. They should also put in place measures and training to ensure that future policing operations conform to international standards.

Background

Papua, Indonesia's eastern-most province, has witnessed a deteriorating human rights situation over the past few years. The indigenous population, ethnically distinct from other parts of Indonesia, has increasingly questioned the Indonesian government's policies regarding Papua's natural resources and the migration of non-Papuan into the area. The Indonesian government maintains a heavy police and military presence, whose members have faced accusations of intimidating and threatening members of the local indigenous community who support greater autonomy or independence from Indonesia through peaceful means.

On 18 August 2008, Amnesty International urged the Indonesian government to ensure proper accountability for the killing of a peaceful protester Opinus Tabuni who was shot dead that day. On 25 September 2008, the National Commission on Human Rights (*Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia*, Komnas

HAM) who had sent a team to investigate the killing stated that the bullet was "not a standard police bullet. The bullet was a 9mm bullet. It definitely belongs to the military". There has been no progress since then on the investigation into his murder. The family has attempted numerous times to meet the Papua Chief of Police with regards to the case but have been unsuccessful. The Indonesian authorities should initiate a prompt, impartial, independent and transparent investigation into the killing to ensure that those found responsible are held to account.

## 8 HIV patients found in Merauke

The Jakarta Post

February 7, 2009

Jayapura, Purwokerto

Nethy Dharma Somba and Agus Maryono

Health authorities in Merauke, Papua, disclosed that they have found eight new cases of HIV in January through voluntary testing, while authorities in Banyumas, Central Java, said an average of seven people were infected with the disease every month.

"The eight people were detected after 189 people took voluntary counseling and testing \*VCT\*. Two of the eight new cases are prostitutes," Joseph Rinta, Merauke Health Agency head, told The Jakarta Post on Friday.

"Finding eight new cases of HIV is a good sign, because it means the public is more aware about checking themselves. Usually, we only find new cases after the disease has progressed to AIDS."

The testing was conducted by the Reproductive Activity Center (PKR).

Joseph said recognizing people as HIV-positive would enable health officials to ask the sufferers to take antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, as ARV drugs have little effect

after the disease has entered AIDS stage.

"We will give counseling to the new eight patients and their families," he said.

"ARV has been proven to maintain patient's health so that HIV does not rapidly degrade into AIDS."

The center has recorded 1,036 cases of HIV/AIDS, from which 60 patients have already died. Currently, 70 HIV patients are consuming ARV drugs.

"PKR's presence is really helpful in finding HIV-positive residents because 200 people can visit the center daily to be tested for HIV/AIDS as well as for other sexually transmitted diseases," Joseph said.

Data from the Papua Health Agency shows that by September 2008, there were 4,305 HIV/AIDS cases consisting of 2,263 HIV cases and 2,042 AIDS cases, including 382 fatalities.

Most cases are found in the 20-29-year age range, followed by the 30-39-year age range.

The head of the contagious diseases control division at the Banyumas Health Agency, Ani Pratiwi, said her office recorded 323 HIV/AIDS patients during 2008, consisting of 253 HIV cases and 70 AIDS cases. There were 36 fatalities.

"The rising level of HIV/AIDS in Banyumas is a cause for grave concern. It's the tip of the iceberg. These are just the cases recorded by our office. The real number may be bigger," Ani told the Post on Thursday.

Ani said Banyumas ranked second in the number of HIV/AIDS cases in Central Java, after Semarang regency, while Surakarta was ranked third.

As many as 1,359 people contracted HIV in

the province last year, with 502 showing signs of AIDS and 202 deaths.

Ani attributed the high infection rate to widespread prostitution in the regency, such as at the Baturaden tourist resort area where at least 250 sex workers operate freely.

"Another major factor is the sharing of needles among drug addicts, who make up 30 percent of the cases," Ani said.

## Government Urged To Halt 'Failed' Regional Expansion

Jakarta Globe

February 10, 2009

Putri Prameshwari

Proposals to create new administrative regions in the country should be frozen and evaluated for at least 10 years, a legal expert from a Central Java university said on Monday.

The comment, made by Isharyanto, a law lecturer at 11 Maret University in Surakarta, Central Java Province, came a week after a violent protest demanding the establishment of a new province in northern Sumatra led to the death of a senior legislator and sparked calls for the government to halt the creation of new regions.

Isharyanto said the government should stop approving new provinces, districts and municipalities across the country and engage in a thorough evaluation of those that had been created over the past decade.

"Expansions have taken place for almost a decade," he said, "but have they really changed the lives of local people?"

The creation of new administrative regions is usually aimed at providing better and more accessible public services to the public, as well as improving local living standards.

Isharyanto said that 10 years would be enough time for the government to evaluate the success of provinces and districts that had been established in the last decade.

Regional expansion, he said, should be a tool that allows government authorities to be more in touch with local people.

"But they have created horizontal conflicts instead, like in Papua," he said.

Following the end of former President Suharto's authoritarian regime in 1998, regions demanded partitions of provinces, districts and subdistricts as part of the reform euphoria.

The central government split the immense eastern Papua province in two, reportedly to shorten the distances between centers of public services and the regions they served. The western half of New Guinea Island now has West Papua and Papua provinces.

The move, however, has failed to alleviate poverty and underdevelopment there and many people still live below the poverty line, often triggering conflicts among tribes. It has also encouraged corruption among local government officials who were not prepared to manage their own budgets. Isharyanto said that political interests were also a problem.

"State officials still prioritize their own political interests, including their rank in office, rather than thinking about local people," he said.

Following the violent protest in Medan, the capital of North Sumatra Province, which claimed the life of Abdul Azis Angkat, the speaker of the provincial legislative council, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono called for a moratorium on the creation of new regional administrations.

Indonesia is currently comprised of 33 provinces, with 398 districts and 93 municipalities. The country saw the creation of seven new provinces, 173 new districts and 35 new municipalities between 1999 and 2008.

In 2006, the House of Representative ratified the establishment of 16 new regions and eight more followed in 2007.

Last year, the House postponed the ratification of three new regions, but also ratified two others.

## **INDONESIA Archbishop highlights folk wisdom to prevent calamity**

<http://www.ucanews.com/2009/02/13/archbishop-highlights-folk-wisdom-in-preventing-calamity/>

February 19, 2009

MERAUKE, Indonesia (UCAN) -- An archbishop in Papua, Indonesia's easternmost province, says local people should learn from folk wisdom to avert natural disasters.

Sacred Heart Archbishop Nicolaus Adi Saputra of Merauke has suggested people return to the practice of building *wambad*, mounds on which sago trees and other crops can be planted, to protect against rising tides.

The archbishop made these comments in the wake of tidal flooding in early January that hit five of the 16 Catholic villages in Wan subdistrict, part of Merauke district.

Villages were inundated with up to one meter of seawater in the worst flooding in recent years. The floodwaters, which lasted for days, destroyed banana, cassava, coconut and other crops, and 2,514 villagers now face a food crisis, according to reports.

"The problem is that the people no longer build *wambad*," as they did in the past, said the prelate, who served as a priest in the area for six years.

Archbishop Saputra recalled that *wambad* allowed seawater to drain from the land quickly, thus helping to preserve crops. He also emphasized the importance of stocking rice in warehouses to prevent such food crises.

Father Silvester Tokio of St. Isidorus Church in Wan said that after learning about the situation, he immediately called the district head. "He asked me to make a report on the situation."

The district administration later issued a letter asking all governmental units as well as individuals to aid victims by distributing food through the district's social and human development service.

Daniel Pauta, who heads this service, reports his office has received three tons of rice, 163 boxes of instant noodles, medicine and used clothes, as well as 53.4 million rupiah (about US\$4,500). "But half of this money will be used to help earthquake survivors in Manokwari," he said.

An earthquake with a magnitude of 7.2 on the Richter scale struck the city in West Papua on Jan. 4, killing a child, injuring more than 40 people and destroying hundreds of buildings.

In Merauke, Yos Sudarso Senior High School did its bit to aid the Wan villagers facing a food crisis by raising 700,000 rupiah. Principal Petrus Ambarura said teachers and students of the Catholic school donated the money as "an expression of our concern." He added that money was handed to the district's social service on Feb. 5.

## **UPI: Rights Severely Curtailed in West Papua**

United Press International  
February 18, 2009

By Norman Voss

Hong Kong, China — The increasing number of arrests and detentions on political grounds in the Papuan provinces of Indonesia are a matter of grave concern. In recent months, several incidents were reported in which indigenous Papuans were arrested and charged with subversion and secession after engaging in peaceful political protests.

For example, Buktar Tabuni was arrested on Dec. 3 last year following a peaceful protest he had helped organize on Oct. 16. He was charged under Articles 106, 110, 160, 212 and 216 of the Indonesian Penal Code, despite the fact that he had conformed with legal requirements regarding public protests.

Tabuni was later transferred to Abepura Prison, where he was allegedly subjected to torture and ill-treatment.

Following Tabuni's arrest, other activists gathered lawfully at Theys Eluay Memorial Park in Jayapura, Papua, to demand the release of political prisoner Tabuni and the right to exercise the freedoms of expression and assembly. On Dec. 17, Seblom Sambom, one of the participants in the gathering, was also arrested and faces charges under Article 216 for participating in the protest on Oct. 16. Punishment may be up to 20 years imprisonment.

On Oct. 17, one day after the October protest, Yosias Syet was found dead in his home. Syet was a known activist in Papua and had helped in the preparation of the lawful protest the day before. There is reason to believe that his murder was related to the exercising of his right to freedom of expression and assembly and that the security forces in Papua were involved in his murder.

Since Indonesia took over sovereignty of the western half of the Papuan island after a questionable referendum supervised by the United Nations, many indigenous people have experienced a deterioration of their livelihood due to mining activities, exploitation of natural resources, transmigration of non-Papuans into the region and a heavy military presence.

Protests by indigenous Papuans and attempts to exercise the right to self-determination as promised in the U.N. handover of the province have been answered with armed violence, including massacres, in the past.

Not long ago, a political process was underway between Jakarta and the indigenous Papuans. At that time, political acts were

treated as political acts and responded to with dialogue. Former President B. J. Habibie, who was in office till 1999, held meetings with Papuan representatives on the issue of self-determination.

But the recent pattern has been different. Political protest is addressed with arrests and the increasing use of charges of subversion and treason, which was not the case before, although the laws have not changed.

Even with the new autonomy law for West Papua, the peaceful expression of political views is met with arrests and torture. The climate for human rights defenders remains hostile and activists are vulnerable to political arrest and prosecution.

The government of Indonesia is urged to suspend all arrests and prosecutions resulting from persons exercising their right to the freedom of expression of political views and the right of assembly. The application of subversion and treason articles in the penal code must stop. Many democracies do not even have such articles, as such legislation denies freedom of conscience, opinion and expression.

Are these cold war tactics? Has the reformation spirit of political dialogue come to an end? All political prisoners and prisoners of conscience must be released.

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(Norman Voss is a staff member of the Asian Human Rights Commission in Hong Kong. He studied physics and pursued a master's degree in international and public affairs. His work presently includes human rights issues in Indonesia and the advocacy of human rights reforms.)

## 2008 Human Rights Report: Indonesia

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, State Department, USA

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/ea/p/119040.htm>

February 25, 2009

The US Department of State's [Human Rights Report for Indonesia in 2008](#) (released 26 February 2009) depicts the stark reality of repression and discrimination in West Papua. The report notes that "at least 30" Papuans, including one 16 year old boy, are incarcerated for peaceful dissent, specifically, for raising the morning star flag. The report notes repeated incidents in which Papuans suffered beatings and even murder at the hands of Indonesian military and police in retaliation for peaceful protest. The report cites the UN conclusion that torture is systematic in Indonesian prisons. It also details the killing of some of these Papuans by security forces who act with impunity.

The report also describes extensive illegal activity by security forces in West Papua: "military and police were often complicit in trafficking (of persons) and in protecting brothels." The report also notes that NGOs and human rights advocates suffered monitoring of their activities as well as threats and intimidation.

The report is unflinching in its description of the repressive environment in West Papua: "During the year indigenous people, most notably in Papua, remained subject to widespread discrimination and there was little improvement in respect for their traditional land rights. The Government failed to prevent domestic and multinational companies, often in collusion with the local military and police, from encroaching on indigenous people's land."

## Update on the Trial of Buchtar Tabuni in Jayapura

Papua Pos

26 February 2009

The second hearing in the trial of Buchtar Tabuni took place on 25 February at the District Court in Jayapura.

The lawyers defending the defendant presented their response (eksepsi) to the charges filed against the defendant at the first hearing on 18 February. On that occasion, Buchtar was charged under Article 106 of the Criminal Code for subversion (makar), relating to his activities as the coordinator of a demonstration in Jayapura which supported the establishment of the International Parliamentarians for West Papua in London on 15 October 2009.

While the hearing was in progress, hundreds of Papuans demonstrated outside the court calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

Inside the court, Buchtar's lawyers, Iwan Miode SH and Rahman Ramli SH said that the charges filed at the previous hearing were unclear. As examples of the lack of clarity, they drew attention to the allegation that the defendant was a person without any education, whereas in fact he had graduated from a university in Jayapura. They also accused the prosecutors of misusing the word 'Free' which they interpreted as meaning 'free from the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.'. Whereas the word 'free' has a huge significance, such as for example freedom from hunger, freedom from poverty, freedom from ignorance and not living in a state of backwardness.

[According to Indonesian court procedures, an eksepsi is presented on behalf of the defendant in order to argue that the trial should not proceed. It is not intended as a comprehensive defence of the defendant.]

At the end of the hearing which lasted only half an hour, it was announced that the next hearing would take place on 4 March when the

prosecutor would respond to the eksepsi of the defence counsel.

The crowd outside the courthouse carried banners calling for the immediate release of Buchtar and denounced the use of the word 'makar' which is being used in all cases when Papuan people give expression to their aspirations. During speeches delivered to the protesters, it was stated that the police in Papua had mounted a case against Buchtar Tabuni in order to distract attention from the shooting to death of Opius Tabuni last August. [There has been no move as yet to identify the person believed to have been responsible for the death of Opius Tabuni.] It was, they said, also a move to obliterate freedom of expression and the right to demonstrate for Papuan people in the land of their birth.

They called for an end to all forms of legal intimidation by constantly accusing Papuans of being subversive (makar), of being separatists and a variety of charges for allegedly being against humanitarianism. The demonstrators also called for the release of Seby S Sembon although it is not clear from the press reporting whether Seby is also on trial with Buchtar Tabuni,

The demonstration proceeded peacefully and the participants disbanded after the end of the court hearing.

## **Police on the Hunt for Shooter in Papua**

The Jakarta Globe  
February 28, 2009

Arientha Primanita

Armed violence erupted again in Papua Province on Friday morning leaving one man injured after a shooting incident by what police believe was a member of the Free Papua Movement, or OPM, separatist group, National Police spokesman Insp. Gen. Abubakar Nataprawira said.

Abubakar said intelligence officers from the

Puncak Jaya subdistrict police, along with nine Mobile Brigade officers from the provincial police, were currently in pursuit of the perpetrator.

"The shooter shot twice, first hitting a man and the second shot hitting an oil drum in a car," Abubakar said.

He said a man named Andreas was injured by a shot that grazed his forehead.

Abubakar said Andreas was sitting in the back of a pickup truck as it was crossing a bridge at the Kurage River in Puncak Jaya district.

The shooter, Abubakar said, fired at the car from high a nearby mountain.

"The suspect fled to somewhere up the mountain after the shooting," Abubakar said, adding that this was a typical separatist tactic.

In January, a group of 20 people believed to be members of the outlawed OPM attacked the Tingginambut Police station, also in Puncak Jaya district.

The group were armed with SS-1 assault rifles and stabbed the wife of an officer who happened to be at the station.

Police then shot dead two suspected group members, Yendedak Wenda Muli and Yembinas Murib, during a police patrol.

The two men were carrying guns when they ambushed the patrolling officers along with several other armed men.

Military officials in the area suspect that the attackers belonged to a group of OPM members led by Goliath Tabuni, the alleged leader of OPM in the area.

## **Governor of Papua introduces free primary education and health for Papuans**

Cenderawasih Pos  
2 March 2009

The Governor of Papua, Barnabas Suebu, announced that starting today, all payment for education at the primary and lower middle school level for indigenous Papuans will be abolished and that medical treatment will also be provided free of charge. He said that these provisions were being introduced in two gubernatorial regulations introduced today by the Governor.

Speaking at a press conference, the Governor said that development activities must properly focus on the needs of the people and on the human development programme, including pregnant women, babies as well as school children. The health facilities must be adequate and there should be proper provision for better housing, clean water, while economic development should start at the kampung level.

He acknowledged that this was a 'grand mission' that it would by no means be easy. It involves development for the people and their culture and their natural surroundings, so as to enable people to stand on their own feet, to develop themselves. The name given to the programme is: Rencana Strategis Pembangunan Kampung, RESPEK (Strategic Kampung Development Plan), and would incorporate a Communities Movement for Kampung Development.

With regard to health facilities, all indigenous Papuans are to be exempted from payment for treatment at district and local clinics, and at the three main hospitals: in Jayapura Dok II, in Abepura and the hospital for mental disorders in Abepura. All Papuans who are unable to afford treatment in these hospitals will be treated free of charge. He went into detail about the levels of medical treatment and said that this would include examination by a doctor, diagnosis, operations, the provision of medicines and other facilities such as blood tests. This

would also apply to accident and emergency facilities.

He said that these provisions would also be made available in all the government hospitals throughout the province, including those in the districts and in the municipalities.

He went on to say that all Indonesian citizens living in the province would not have to pay school fees for children in nine-year compulsory education. They should also be exempt from paying for special equipment required at the school unless the school's parents committee decides that money should be raised to cover these requirements. In such an event, the money should be raised from the parents in accordance with their means. Those unable to pay should be exempted.

As regards fees for secondary schools (SMA) and vocational schools, this would be available free of charge only to those indigenous Papuans who cannot afford to pay.

He said that children from peasant families, fishermen families, unskilled workers' families and those without regular employment would be eligible for education free of charge. This will also apply to the families of lower grade civil servants and families of army and police force personnel. School committee meetings should ensure that in the case of those required to pay, this should be applied according to the financial means of the parents.

He said that the level of both education and health should reach a minimum standard. Government services in education and health must truly serve the common people and serve them in the best possible way, thus ensuring that, in future, Papuans are well-educated and of good health.

## **Children walk long distances to school**

Kompas  
2 March 2009

Children who live in the Central Highlands of

Papua have to walk very long distances to get to school every day, said an official of World Vision, Ardiyanto Parula. She gave the example of Kurulu, a sub-district in the district of Jayawijaya where the terrain is very difficult and there are no roads to use so children who live in the kampungs must walk to school. This often means walking a distance of anything between six and ten kilometres, she said.

In the Central Highlands which is high above sea level, the land is very steep, adding to the problems of walking the distance. However, for people living in these relatively isolated kampungs, the primary schools are mostly located in the more developed areas which are very far from the kampungs. 'The journey to school could take more than an hour.'

Sometimes because of the difficult terrain, the children take a short cut which can be even more difficult and dangerous.

Although the children are very keen to go to school, the journey can be particularly hazardous when the weather is bad and there's a lot of rain which makes the ground very slippery and muddy. The rivers can overflow and flood the surrounding area, making the journey even worse. Under conditions like this, the schools cannot function because the teachers don't turn up.

These long distances often mean that the parents are not keen to let their children go to school, because of the possible dangers on the way. What often happens is that the children arrive back home having learned nothing because there were no teachers at the school. She said that teachers rarely go to schools in the interior because of these problems.

She said that although the children are very keen, the government pays very little attention to make sure that the community in general and the children in particular are assured of a decent education.

## **Regulation on free education needs to be supervised**

Cenderawasih Pos  
3 March 2009

A member of the Papuan Regional Assembly, Paskalis Kosay said that the Governor's move to provide education and health facilities free of charge is a very positive move and is welcomed by everyone. 'We reached agreement about this some time ago, during our discussions about the 2008 budget, he said, and it had the support of all the factions.

But he said that there should be no demands made to parents for money for any reason whatsoever because the provisional government has already allocated the funds to pay for this policy.

He said supervision of the policy was necessary so as to ensure that it is applied in all the primary and lower secondary schools. Supervision is needed not only at the schools but also over those in charge of allocating the money. He said that at the present stage, it was still in the nature of a pilot project; if that proceeds well, it will also be applied to the upper secondary schools.

Kosay said that the policy should have been applied when Special Autonomy was introduced [in 2001] which stipulates that 30% of the budget should be allocated to education. 'Plenty of money was made available for OTSUS which should have meant that education and health would be available free of charge [since then].' He said he hoped that in the coming 19 years of OTSUS, the provision of education would improve, along with better health facilities.

He said that all hospitals should also provide free services and should not be asking patients to pay for anything.

The Dean of the Faculty of Pedagogy at Cenderawasih University, Drs Festus Simbiak and the Executive Director of the Institute for Civil Engineering, Budi Sutyanto gave differing

opinions about the policy, discussing in particular the budgetary arrangements and at which level of administration, the funds would be allocated.

It was essential, one of them said, that people know clearly how it will apply. Bodies such as the churches, the mosques, the sub-district chiefs should also be involved in keeping a watch so as to make sure that there is uniformity in people's understanding of the policy and the objectives are clear.

Several school children also expressed delight over the Governor's policy. One boy was quoted as saying that this would be a great help to his mother, knowing that she would no longer have to pay for his schooling or pay for his books. He and another child said that they only hoped that the money for the policy would not be swallowed up by corruption.

## **Police operations underway in Tinggi Nambet**

Cenderawasih Pos  
3 March 2009

The police are paying special attention to a place called Tinggi Nambet (in Puncak Jaya district) in view of an intensification in activities being undertaken there by TPN/OPM (the armed wing of the OPM, Free Papua Organisation). The intensification has been underway since January this year, and has included an attack on a police post, an attack on members of the police, the burning of two Indonesian national flags and shots fired at a civilian. [Earlier it was reported that four weapons had been seized from the police command post.]

The chief of police, Bagus Ekodanto, said special security activities by the police are being undertaken in view of the elections that will take place in just over a month's time.

The area is believed to be an operational area of the TPN/OPM under the leadership of Goliat Tabuni. The police hope to prevent a repetition of these activities.

However, the local sub-district chief, Lukas Enembe has told the local media that he believes that those who attacked the police post a while ago were not from the OPM but were just ordinary criminals roaming in the area. He doubted that the OPM was involved because the number involved was very small and they were just looking for food and stealing things from the people. He said he has been involved in 'persuasive' actions to persuade them to surrender the weapons.

The police said he was not aware of the activities of the sub-district chief and said he was planning special operations to hunt down the people involved.

The leader of the local church, Rev. Lipiyus Biniluk said he has been making approaches to the people in the area but without achieving anything so far. He said he would continue with his efforts, together with the police and the government try to convince the people, especially with the elections being held so soon.

## **Victim of a shooting is getting better**

Cenderawasih Pos  
3 March 2009

Puncak Jaya: The condition of the man named Andreas, who was shot during an incident in Kampung Gurage in Tinggi Nambet is now improving. A reporter from Cepos was able to visit the victim after the shooting which took place on 28 February and found that he is now able to speak although he is still in a state of shock. He will soon be able to leave hospital.

He has had three stitches in his left ear, a nurse at Mulia Hospital told him.

The local police chief confirmed that security operations, both open and concealed, were under way, 'but we have to be extra careful because these operations are taking place in an area regarded as being a 'problematic' (rawan) area'. One official suggested that the problems might be because some groups in the area had been helped by the government

which had made others jealous..' Or perhaps their food had run out.

The police commander said that, with regard to the four weapons that had been seized, they were still adopting the 'persuasive approach'. He said that thanks to efforts by the church, there had been a positive response from the group under Goliat Tabuni to hand over the weapons but another group had raised objections

The weapons were seized on 8 January when an officer's wife was wounded. On 15 January, police were on a mapping operation in the district when they were attacked by the TPN/OPM and an exchange of fire took place. The third incident occurred on 21 February when two Indonesian national flags were burnt and then on 27 February, shots were fired at the police post.