

The Papua Report

April 2004

The following is the fourth in a series of monthly reports prepared by the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights – Indonesia Support Group providing updates regarding developments in Papua. The RFK Center has monitored and reported on the human rights situation in Papua since 1993 when Bambang Widjojanto received the annual RFK Human Rights Award.

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Indonesian Police Shoot to Death Peaceful Election Boycott Proponent

On the eve of Indonesia's April 5 parliamentary elections, Indonesian police shot dead a Papuan who urged fellow villagers to protest the elections by boycotting the vote.

Police officials said they shot Marius Kogoya for allegedly trying to discourage people from voting in the legislative election. According to police accounts Kogoya was shot as he attempted to flee with three other pro-boycott advocates. The four Papuans had been detained by police in the remote Bokondini area for allegedly distributing leaflets to local people, asking them to abstain from voting on April 5.

More than 40 percent of the voting irregularities that required re-balloting in the April 5 nationwide election transpired in Papua. Moreover, many Papuan communities were prevented from

exercising their franchise because they did not receive the necessary voting equipment in time for the ballot.

Five Shot Dead near British Petroleum Base Camp in Extortion Bid

Indonesian officers with the Mobil Police Brigade (Brimob) shot five people dead near the British Petroleum liquid natural gas project in Papua on April 20. According to a recent story (4/27) in the leading Indonesian-language newspaper *Suara Pembaruan* the incident was staged by Indonesian security forces “in hopes of gaining access” to the BP project.

Indonesian officials claimed that their troops killed the five after being attacked by guerrillas from the Free Papua Movement (OPM) who were wielding bows and arrows. However, there has not been any historical or recent activity of the OPM in this region, according to the human rights NGO ELSHAM. The Jayapura-based *Cenderawasih Pos* reported that those killed were followers of Manase Furima, an indigenous religious leader. Furima was wounded in the attack. Among the dead was a 25-year-old woman.

BP has trained local Papuans to guard their base camp in an attempt to avoid contracting Indonesian security forces. Officers from the elite Brimob police unit were briefly employed by BP to guard explosives, but this contract was not renewed.

Noted Policy Analyst Issues Damning Criticism of Megawati Administration's Actions in Papua

Sidney Jones, Southeast Asia Director of the *International Crisis Group*, told Australian media in early April that Jakarta had grossly mishandled the troubled province of Papua and now appeared to be prepared to watch it disintegrate.

Jones said: "Of all of the issues confronting the Indonesian government, there isn't a single one at the moment that is as sensitive as Papua." She added, "There's no area of the country that is in more need of good governance, and no part of the country that is less likely to get it. I don't think there's anywhere in Indonesia where the policies of the Megawati government have been so misguided..."

Jones described Special Autonomy for Papua, enacted by the Indonesian legislature but blocked by the Megawati Administration, as "dead," notwithstanding strong support for the plan from the U.S. government and the rest of the international community. She described the Megawati Administration and Indonesian military's plans to divide Papua into three provinces and the creation of 14 lower-level district administrations across Papua as having divided the people. She added that the fragmentation of Papua raised the danger of ethnic conflict.

Lawyers for Leading Human Rights Group ELSHAM Walk Out During Defamation Suit Proceedings

The Indonesian military is suing the Papuan human rights NGO ELSHAM in relation to the August 2002 ambush at the Freeport copper and gold mine in Papua that left two American and one Indonesian schoolteacher dead and eight other American civilians injured. ELSHAM (the Institute for Human Rights Study and Advocacy) investigated the ambush and released publicly its findings that there was evidence of Indonesian military (TNI) involvement in the attack.

The judge presiding over the Rp 50 Billion (US \$5.5. million) defamation suit refused requests by ELSHAM's defence team to recall witness Decky Murib to the stand on April 14. Murib was a key witness in the initial ELSHAM inquiry into the attack who had provided evidence of military involvement to investigators. On March 31, 2004, when Murib was brought to the stand as a witness by military prosecutors, he changed his testimony and alleged that ELSHAM investigators coerced him into giving false information about military involvement in the attack. ELSHAM lawyers told reporters that the judge had not granted them sufficient opportunity to cross-examine Murib on the stand.

Indonesian military commander in Papua Maj. Gen. Nurdin Zainal initially called the recantation by Decky Murib a "victory" for the TNI. Observers strongly suspect, however, that Murib changed his account under strong pressure from the TNI (*see March 2004 Papua Report*). Murib first testified in September 2002 about TNI involvement in the ambush, termed by the U.S. Embassy as a "terrorist attack" on American citizens. Murib has worked as an informer for Indonesian Special Forces (Kopassus) personnel in the Freeport mining area for a number of years.

The military is demanding that ELSHAM pay it damages and make a public apology through the local and international media. ELSHAM stands by its findings, which were supported by the Indonesian police investigation of the incident and that now reportedly have been confirmed by the U.S. government. On April 28, proceedings against ELSHAM resumed.

AFL-CIO Backs New York City Shareholder Resolution on Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc., as Key Vote for 2004

The AFL-CIO, the U.S.'s largest trade union representing more than 14 million American workers, has urged Freeport (FCX) shareholders to vote in favor of a shareholder resolution brought by the New York City Teachers' Retirement Service (NYCTRS) and the New York City Employees Retirement Service (NYCERS). The resolution, which was approved by the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission, will come before Freeport shareholders at the company's May 6 annual general meeting, to be held in Wilmington, Delaware. Rising out of concerns regarding the Indonesian military's reported involvement in the August 2002 ambush at Freeport in which American citizens were killed and seriously injured, the NYCERS/NYCTRS resolution calls on Freeport management to end its direct financial payments to the Indonesian military (which totaled some \$10.3 million for 2001 and 2002).

Papuan Pastor Appeals for Human Rights Protections in Visit to Washington

Reverend Isaak Onawame, leader of 92 Evangelical churches with a combined congregation of 92,000 parishioners, visited Washington, D.C., in April, meeting with State Department and Congressional officials. Accompanied by members of the RFK Center's Indonesia Support Group, Reverend Onawame detailed the plight of thousands of Papuans in the southern highlands whose lives have been disrupted and endangered by military operations that began in 1996. He also spoke on behalf of several Christian pastors whose advocacy of peace, non-violence and human rights has led to their incarceration. (These pastors are the subject of an Amnesty International appeal which identifies them as "prisoners of conscience," see item below.)

Reverend Onawame also described in detail the threat of HIV/AIDS now spreading rapidly throughout Papua (see additional reporting below).

Papuan Human Rights and Democracy Activists Canvass Europe to End Repression in Papua

During April, three prominent Papuan human rights and democracy activists traveled extensively in Europe to update governments and local activists about the situation in Indonesia's easternmost province, and to ask for support for implementation of Indonesia's Special Autonomy Law for Papua.

According to John Rumbiak, ELSHAM International Advocacy Coordinator and RFK Indonesia Support Group member, "About 100,000 Papuans have perished in the 40 years during which Papua has been under Indonesian rule." Rumbiak was accompanied by Tom Beanal, a Papuan tribal leader from the Body for Traditional Law (Dewan Adat) and the Acting Chairman of the political mass organization Papua Presidium Council (PPC), as well as by Viktor Kaisiepo, the European PPC representative.

Rumbiak appealed for European Union support of Papuans' efforts to persuade the government of President Megawati Sukarnoputri to engage in constructive dialogue with Papuans. Rumbiak has been speaking about Papua internationally since Indonesian military pressure forced his departure from Papua in 2002.

Kaisiepo's and Beanal's pacifist mass movement PPC brings together different Papuan faith-based groups, women's and youth organizations, tribal leaders, urban professionals, students, civil service functionaries, and non-governmental organizations. The legendary Amungme tribal leader Beanal, whose community's lands were expropriated by the Indonesian government and New Orleans-based Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc., for the company's mining operations in Papua, took on leadership of the PPC after the Indonesian military abducted and assassinated PPC chairperson and prominent moderate Papuan civic leader Theys Eluay in November 2001.

Papuans are arguing internationally for support of the concept of Papua as a 'Land of Peace' and are asking the international community to pressure Indonesia to pull Indonesian military troops

such as Special Forces (Kopassus) personnel out of Papua because of their enormously destabilizing activities and their well-documented record of crimes against humanity against indigenous Papuans.

HIV/AIDS Rampant in Papua; Military-run Brothels and Inadequate Government Health Services are Sources of the Problem

An April 13 report by the Jakarta Post claimed that the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in Papua has reached 1,398. Of that number, 912 people have been diagnosed HIV-positive and 486 have developed AIDS. According to the Papua Administration health office, the disease has killed 172 people in Papua since it was first detected in the province in 1992.

Executive Director John Rahail of the Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association (PKBI) in Papua was quoted as saying that the number of people who had contracted the deadly disease could be much higher and that the current figure may only be the tip of the iceberg. He estimated that the actual number of people with HIV/AIDS could be 10 times the current estimated figure and if the estimated figure -- 1/17 of the 2.4 million-strong Papuan population was correct, it meant that Papua was overrun by the disease.

Rahail said the virus had spread evenly across almost all areas in the province, including remote areas. Rahail said the spread of HIV/AIDS in remote areas was mostly caused by villagers who procured the services of sex workers in towns, after which they returned to their home villages and passed on HIV/AIDS to their partners. Studies undertaken by international researchers have identified prostitution centers established and run by the Indonesian military to service migrant workers and others as a principal source of the infection. The military is also reported to be moving HIV-infected prostitutes from other parts of Indonesia to Papua.

Government-provided health care in Papua is the worst in Indonesia, further exacerbating conditions that facilitate the transmission of the disease. Another factor contributing to the high number of people infected with the lethal disease is the lack of public awareness and knowledge on HIV/AIDS.

A recent report by University of Victoria Professor Dr. Leslie Butt and colleagues, published in Pacific Health Dialog, notes that government efforts to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS and promote condom usage have been largely ineffective. Condom promotion is restricted to mainly urban areas, where more migrant Indonesians live. Nation-wide stigmas about condom use also adversely affect prevention efforts in Papua. Most of the promoters are non-indigenous migrants. There are essentially no condom outreach initiatives in rural locations, where the majority of indigenous Papuans live. As a result, infection rates in the province are skewed, with higher infections reported among indigenous Papuans in the Freeport mining town of Timika and in Merauke. Indonesian government spokespersons attempt to blame the spread of HIV/AIDS on risky sexual behavior of Papuans, without also recognizing that non-indigenous Papuans also engage in risky behavior. They also downplay deficiencies in government outreach efforts.

Amnesty International Condemns Incarceration of Papuan Pastors and others

Amnesty International (AI) has issued a "Prisoners of Conscience Action 2004" appeal on behalf of nonviolent Papuan activists, including Christian pastors Reverend Obeth Komba and Reverend Yudas Meage. The appeal also included Amelia Yiggibalom and Murjono Murib, who like the two pastors are members of the Wamena Panel, the local branch of the Papua Presidium Council.

The AI appeal identifies 17 other Papuans now in detention whom AI notes were subjected to beatings and racist abuse, denied food and water and prevented from sleeping. AI's appeal reports that interrogations of the 17 were carried out "without the presence of a lawyer, and (that) at least two of the detainees are known to have been forced to sign statements without first being permitted to read them." According to AI, several of the detainees claimed to have witnessed the torturing to death of Yohanes Udin, a young photographer from Flores, Nusa Tenggara, who had been in Papua on a documentary project.

On December 21, 2003, 12 of the prisoners, including Reverend Obeth Komba, Reverend Yudas Meage and Murjono Murib, were transferred from Wamena Prison to Abepura Prison in Jayapura District without prior notice to their lawyers or families (*see January 2004 RFK Papua Report*). There is concern that the failure to allow the prisoners to inform their families at the time of their transfer may be contrary to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Standard Minimum Rules).