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The West Papua Report June 2005

The following is the 16th in a series of regular reports prepared by the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights (CHR)-West Papua Advocacy Team providing updates on developments in West Papua. The CHR has monitored and reported on the human rights situation in West Papua since 1993 when Indonesian lawyer Bambang Widjajanto received the annual RFK Human Rights Award.

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Indonesian Military Brothels Contribute to Skyrocketing HIV/AIDS Rate in West Papua; Highest in Indonesia

The Indonesian government reveals, in its report for next month's **Asia and the Pacific 7th International Congress on AIDS** in Kobe, Japan, that West Papua has replaced Jakarta as the site of the worst **HIV/AIDS** infection rate in Indonesia with a rate of 24.06 cases per 100,000 persons. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in West Papua has increased dramatically from 6.69 percent in 1999 to 16.7 percent in 2002. West Papua also has the poorest health service and education infrastructure in the archipelago.

U.N. AIDS country coordinator for Indonesia Jane Wilson noted that "one of the challenges is the low percentage of condom use in commercial sex." According to leading clergy members and other credible sources, the illegal brothels established in West Papua by the **Indonesian military** are a significant source of the infection. Many of the prostitutes brought by the military to West Papua from other parts of the archipelago are HIV positive. The military, according to these sources, uses prostitution rings as sources of income from work camps and as a means of bribing tribal leaders so as to obtain their cooperation in setting up illegal timber-cutting operations.

Sources: *The Jakarta Post*, June 25, 2005, as well as interviews with Papuans

Notorious Ex-Militia Leader Wins Major Party's Nomination as Gubernatorial Candidate in West Papua

Yorrys Raweyai, a former leader of one of Indonesia's most feared military-backed militias, has been nominated by the **Golkar Party**, Indonesia's most powerful political party and by two smaller parties, for July's gubernatorial election in West Irian Jaya. (**Note:** West Irian Jaya province was created from the western part of West Papua in February 2003. Creation of the province

violated West Papua's Special Autonomy legislation and created a basis for an expanded military presence in West Papua. Indonesia's Constitutional Court in November 2004 agreed that the split violated West Papua's autonomy legislation, but inexplicably ruled that because West Irian Jaya had already been created, it should remain separate from the rest of West Papua.)

Yorrys is a member of Golkar and leader of the party's **Youth Movement (AMPG)**. Golkar scored a massive win in West Papua in the 2004 general election. Yorrys, of ethnic Chinese and Papuan background, was a deputy leader of "**Pemuda Pancasila**," a youth organization that in the 1980s and 1990s ran illegal operations and was used by the Indonesian military to intimidate and terrorize the local population. Yorrys served jail time for involvement in the **Soeharto**-era sacking of then-opposition party leader **Megawati Sukarnoputri**'s political party headquarters in 1996, but was released subsequently on bases that remain unclear.

Other candidates declaring themselves in the race are: **Retired Brigadier General Abraham Octavianus Atururi**, the incumbent, who was nominated by former president Megawati Sukarnoputri's **Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP)**; and former West Papua **Secretary Dortheis 'Dicky' Asmuruf**. Sources in West Papua report that Yorrys has particularly strong support from **Vice President Yusuf Kalla**. That support contradicts promises of **President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**, whose pledge to support Special Autonomy for West Papua has been violated by the creation of West Irian Jaya province absent the consent of the Papuan people.

Source: June 24, Laksamana.net

BP Denounced for Security Pact with Indicted Indonesian War Criminal

*[Editor's Note: British NGOs monitoring BP's US\$5 billion Tangguh liquefied natural gas project in West Papua have expressed dismay that the company entered into an important security agreement for the controversial project with **Brigadier General Timbul Silaen**, a high-ranking Indonesian police commander charged by U.N. prosecutors and separately by Indonesian prosecutors for his role in war crimes and crimes against humanity in East Timor. For more details, please see the **RFK Center's January 2004 Papua Report**, available at: http://www.rfkmemorial.org/human_rights/1993.htm.]*

Timbul Silaen was West Papua's chief of police at the time he signed the agreement in April 2004. He occupied the same position in East Timor when the Indonesian military and its militia proxies unleashed a storm of violent devastation there, killing hundreds of civilians, forcibly displacing hundreds of thousands more and destroying almost all of the tiny territory's infrastructure following the country's historic vote for independence in 1999.

Timbul Silaen is charged in East Timor with "superior criminal responsibility" for acts or omissions undertaken as part of "a widespread or systematic attack directed against the civilian population [of East Timor] . . . especially targeting those who were believed to be linked to or sympathetic to the independence cause in East Timor." The specific offenses alleged against him are the crimes against humanity of persecution, other inhumane acts, and deportation or forcible transfer of population. Silaen was indicted by the **U.N.-backed Serious Crimes Unit** and **Special Panels for Serious Crimes**. In common with hundreds of other Indonesia-based suspects, he failed to submit to the jurisdiction of the court, which prematurely ceased work last month.

The nature of Silaen's alleged crimes against East Timorese independence supporters is especially relevant to the context of West Papua, where support for independence is equally strong. **TAPOL (the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign)**, **Down to Earth**, the **International Campaign for Ecological Justice in Indonesia**, and the **Free West Papua Campaign** have written to BP accusing it of endorsing impunity in dealing with Silaen, of paying lip service to the human rights of the Papuans, and of persistently refusing to acknowledge the wider human rights context, in West Papua and Indonesia, within which it is operating.

Although Silaen has now moved on, the company's willingness to deal with him casts considerable doubt on its commitment to corporate social responsibility in relation to the Tangguh project," according to TAPOL.

Adapted and excerpted from a June 20, 2005 TAPOL press release.

Notes from Ground Zero, Part II: RFK West Papua Advocacy Team Member Reports on Deteriorating Human Rights Situation in West Papua

We are pleased to offer readers another first-hand account by a member of the RFK Memorial Center for Human Rights' West Papua Advocacy Team, who recently visited West Papua. The member, a person with extensive experience in West Papua, offers the following observations regarding the visit.

West Papua's Political Economy

The political economy in West Papua has changed dramatically since my 2002 visit, with urban areas of West Papua becoming increasingly less Papuan. Papuan researchers contend that approximately 70% of urban Papua is dominated by transmigrants (Indonesian migrants organized by the central Indonesian government through a controversial and widely discredited official program to move to West Papua, making Papuans a minority in the towns and cities).

The open market in central Wamena operated by the indigenous Dani community, the major Central Highlands tribal group, has been transformed. Once the main location to buy foodstuffs, it has been moved to the outskirts of town, forcing Dani farmers out of "downtown," where new shops owned by transmigrants have been built. In Abepura, near the West Papua capital in Jayapura, a new large, three-story mall is operated largely by and for migrants. This "development" underscores the growing economic, political, and social inequities dividing transmigrants and Papuans. Papuans, by and large, lack the economic resources to shop in such centers. This trend is likely to accentuate growing social inequalities as well as economic and political marginalization of Papuans.

Indonesian Judge Physically Attacks Papuan Student in Connection with Questioning of Heavy Prison Sentences for Peaceful Political Activists

At the May 10 Jayapura court trial of **Yusak Pakage** and **Philip Karma** (see the May '05 *West Papua Report*), the judge beat a Papuan female student outside the court. The judge beat her after she requested clarification about why the trial was being held without Papuan lawyers present, and why Philip Karma got 15 years and Yusak Pakage 10 years for peacefully raising the Papuan flag, while **Basyir Bachtiar**, who faced charges related to the 2002 Bali bombing that killed hundreds, was sentenced to only two and one half years. Papuans have demanded that the judge be removed or fired, but nothing has happened.

Indonesian Military Operations in Central Highlands Kill Dozens of Internally Displaced Papuans; Occupy Church Buildings

In the course of military operations provoked by an August 2004 Indonesian military attack on Papuan resistance elements in Mulia, military and military police (BRIMOB) forces in the Central Highlands have burned villages and destroyed gardens that local people depend on for their livelihoods. The military and police occupied church buildings, using them as a base of operations and to bivouac troops. The military has not responded to requests from Papuan church leaders for the troops to leave the churches and allow displaced civilian populations to return to their homes. Thousands of mostly Dani villagers who fled their homes remain in forests or have sought refuge with relatives. Dozens are confirmed dead due to sickness and starvation resulting from this internal displacement.

Intimidation and Repression at Theological College

In June, two incidents took place on the **Walter Post Theological College** extension campus in Nabire that indicate growing military efforts to intimidate Papuan students and faculty. In the first of these two incidents, two Indonesians believed to be military personnel entered the campus and warned the faculty and school administration not to allow **Rev. Benny Giay** to teach at the college. (Dr. Giay is a renowned cleric and scholar whose works have been published in Europe as well as in Indonesia.) Earlier, in May, police officials came to the college's campus in Jayapura to collect the names of faculty members. The officials threatened the school, suggesting that the police could operate as they saw fit. The police personnel ignored school officials' request for a letter from the policemen's superiors.