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## Referendum to be held in East Timor

*After 23 years of brutal Indonesian military occupation which has cost the lives of one third of the population, the people of East Timor will have the chance to decide on the future of their country in a Referendum conducted by the United Nations. This is an outstanding victory for the martyred people whose resistance to Indonesian aggression has never wavered. However, the conditions under which the Referendum will take place are less than satisfactory.*

The Referendum will give the East Timorese a choice between accepting or rejecting an Indonesian offer of wide-ranging autonomy. Rejection will pave the way for East Timor to become an independent state. The agreement on the Referendum reached in May at talks between the Indonesian and Portuguese foreign ministers, held under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General, followed the announcement in January by President Habibie that his government was prepared to leave the matter of East Timor's future to the people themselves. Given Foreign Minister Ali Alatas' stubborn refusal ever to countenance a referendum in East Timor, the act of self-determination is being called a 'popular consultation'.

Soon after the accords were signed in New York on 5 May, preparations for the Referendum began with the formation of the United Nations Assistance Mission for East Timor or UNAMET, under Ian Martin, a former secretary-general of Amnesty International, who has undertaken similar missions on behalf of the UN in Rwanda and Haiti and recently served as Deputy High Representative for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The unfurling of the UN flag in Dili on 3 June was of momentous significance for the people of East Timor, quickly followed by the gradual build-up of UN personnel who will consist of six hundred electoral officials, political advisers and technical staff, along with 284 unarmed UN 'police advisers' coming from a large number of countries. UNAMET is also employing a large number of local Timorese staff for jobs ranging from translators and interpreters to drivers and office workers. The presence of UN officials with their vehicles teeming on the streets of Dili and UN helicopters bringing in supplies for the great event has changed the very face of East Timor.

But things have not proceeded smoothly because of the activities of pro-integration militia gangs, funded, armed and controlled by a powerful faction within the Indonesian armed forces which is strongly opposed to President Habibie's decision. These generals are bent on sabotaging

the Referendum, either by terrorising the people into opting for autonomy or, if they are unsure of securing such an outcome, by preventing the Referendum from taking place at all. These obstructionist tactics have already compelled the UN Secretary-General to twice postpone the registration of voters, which has pushed the ballot from 8 August till 21 or 22 August, or maybe even later, because of the unsatisfactory security situation.

### Conditional go-ahead from Kofi Annan

Having postponed the ballot to later in August, voter registration was due to commence on 13 July. However, there were three serious attacks on UN offices and a con-

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voy (see below) forcing another reconsideration of the schedule. The Indonesian authorities persisted in claiming that security conditions were satisfactory and no further postponement was acceptable, an assessment that was at complete variance with the UN's view.

To emphasise Jakarta's claims, a delegation of thirteen top-ranking cabinet ministers, including Wiranto and Ali Alatas, paid a one-day visit to Dili. They reiterated their claims about security and made noises about steps being taken against groups that had launched attacks on the UN. It was largely in response to this that Kofi Annan announced on 14 July that he would allow registration of voters to go ahead two days later. However he made this conditional on 'meaningful, visible improvements in the security situation (being) observed in the immediate future'.

In a letter to the UN Security Council he said that 'the security situation in the territory as a whole remains serious and there has not been time to properly assess how far recent steps taken by the government would result in an improvement', adding that 'violence and intimidation have continued to be carried out with impunity by pro-autonomy militias'.

He added the proviso that halfway through the 20-day registration period, he would make another assessment to decide whether registration could continue. In other words, if security fails to improve, the timetable is likely to be set back again.

## Security arrangements deeply flawed

At the heart of the problems dogging the process is the decision written into the 5 May Accords for security during the Referendum to be the sole responsibility of the Indonesian police force, *POLRI*, and the failure of the Accords to provide for the withdrawal from East Timor of the Indonesian armed forces, formerly called *ABRI* but now known as the *TNI*.

Security arrangements during the process leading up to the Referendum are provided for in a Memorandum by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan which states that *POLRI* 'has sole responsibility for the maintenance of law and order'. As regards the *TNI*, it only provides for the 'redeployment' of the Indonesian military forces without specifying what this means. The Memo also says that an urgent first step is 'bringing armed civilian groups under strict control and discipline' and that there should be 'an immediate ban on rallies by armed groups while ensuring the freedom of all groups and tendencies... to organise and conduct peaceful political activities'. In addition, and crucially, the Memo calls for 'the prompt arrest and prosecution of those who incite or threaten to use violence against others. In this connection, it has been noted with concern that public threats have already been issued to the United Nations by certain individuals.'

These were the stated conditions set by Kofi Annan on 4 May, the day before the Accords were signed by Indonesia and Portugal. More than two months later, armed groups continue to terrorise the population, none of the many militia leaders known to have been responsible for killings and abuses against the population has been arrested and prosecuted, while threats against the UN have turned into actions forcing it to close down some offices and withdraw personnel from certain parts of East Timor. [See separate item.]

According to the Agreement signed by the Portuguese and Indonesian foreign ministers, the Indonesian police must exercise 'absolute neutrality'. Developments on the ground show that nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed it surpasses understanding how the UN could have agreed to supervise a Referendum in East Timor in the belief that the Indonesian army and police, for more than two decades the force in charge of the occupation of East Timor, could behave neutrally.

## UNAMET stands firm

From the moment the UN mission began to function, there have been numerous serious incidents sparked by actions of the militia - killings, forcing inhabitants to leave their villages, widespread terror - to which the UNAMET head, Ian Martin, and its spokesman, David Wimhurst, have responded angrily.

In mid June, Ian Martin and other officials happened to be passing through Leotela, a village 30 kms west of Dili, when they came across members of the *Besi Merah-Putih* (Red-and-White Iron) militia dousing houses with petrol, assaulting an old man, and driving villagers out of their homes. Martin protested, the incident was widely reported but no one was arrested and the militia action was not halted. [*Jakarta Post* and *Kompas*, 19 June]

In June, Eurico Guterres, head of the *Aitarak* (Thorn) militia, responsible for the killing of dozens of people in Dili on 17 April, was appointed head of a newly-created civil defence guard in Dili called *PAM Swakarsa*, to assist the Indonesian police in the performance of its law and order duties. The appointment was endorsed by Colonel Timbul Silaen, East Timor chief of police. The UN's David



Xanana and Horta meet again after 23 years.



Wimhurst expressed amazement, describing the appointment as being akin to 'having a fox guarding the hen-house'.

Martin and Wimhurst have both vigorously condemned the holding of tens of thousands of villagers who have been driven from their homes by militia gangs, stressing that their virtual incarceration will obstruct participation in the registration for the ballot.

## UNAMET under attack

Attacks on UNAMET offices in Maliana, Bobonaro district, and Viqueque in late June resulted in UN personnel from both offices being withdrawn. The Maliana office was attacked by about one hundred members of the *Dadurus* militia gang armed with sticks and rocks. The building was badly damaged, a UN officer was wounded and several East Timorese who were taking shelter in the building were taken to hospital with serious injuries. The militias also attacked three nearby houses and two UN vehicles. [*Jakarta Post*, 30 June] The response from UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan was swift. He said he 'holds the Indonesian government accountable for allowing such an attack to occur', adding that any attack on UN personnel and property was 'unacceptable'. UNAMET vigorously rejected Indonesian claims that this was a 'minor affair' and amounted only to a 'brawl' between pro-integration and pro-independence groups.

The local police force whose duty it is to protect UN offices and personnel failed to appear until well after the attack had ended, even though there was a police post in the same street and the Maliana police headquarters was only a short distance away. Signs that an attack was in the offing had been reported to the police the night before.

The assault on the Viqueque UN office occurred the following day. The office was surrounded by armed militias, shouting abuse at the UN personnel inside and threatening to kill them if they remained. Seven UN officers were withdrawn from the town, leaving a skeleton staff of whom three were UN 'police advisers'. [*Jakarta Post*, 2 July]

One week later, a convoy of trucks carrying relief and medical personnel to thousands of internally displaced persons being held in sub-districts in Liquisa district, west of Dili, by *Bési Merah-Putih* militia was attacked on its way back to Dili. The convoy was accompanied by two UN vehicles with UN personnel whose objective was to check on the circumstances of these people. The day before the convoy went on its mission, the Dili chief of police turned down a request from the organisers (a joint committee of locally-based humanitarian NGOs) to provide police protection on the spurious grounds that this would not be in keeping with its 'neutrality' as those to whom relief was being taken were deemed to be pro-independence.

When the convoy was halted in Liquica, three of the trucks were commandeered by Brimob troops and the drivers were ordered to drive them to a place in readiness for an attack on Falintil. On the way, the trucks were halted by militia travelling in two vehicles. The truck drivers were then beaten up by the militia while the Brimob troops stood by, doing nothing to stop the attack.

The attack was strongly denounced by UNAMET and led to top-level discussions in Jakarta on the security situation between Ian Martin and Foreign Minister Ali Alatas and armed forces commander-in-chief, General Wiranto. In an undisguised attempt to discredit the UN mission, allega-

tions were made by Indonesian officials in Dili that weapons were being carried in one of the UN vehicles.

## Indonesia's counter-weight to UNAMET

To act as a powerful counterweight to UNAMET, the Indonesian government has set up a Task Force for the Implementation of the Popular Consultation in East Timor, known by its Indonesian initials as P3TT. It quickly became apparent that the Task Force is acting as the political wing of the army's fiercely pro-integration campaign. The key figures in the Task Force are men who are clearly part of the dirty war being waged by Indonesia's military intelligence. Its senior security adviser is Major General Zacky Anwar Makarim, who until recently headed the army's intelligence agency, BIA, and has served for many years as an intelligence office in East Timor. Zacky Anwar was in overall charge of the militia campaign earlier this year but kept a low profile in those days. His position has now been formalised in the Task Force and he also acts as Indonesia's chief liaison officer with UNAMET. This gives him the key role in liaising with the UN military liaison officers who are supposed to be 'keeping an eye' on the activities of the TNI. The other top-ranking army officer in the Task Force, almost certainly like Zacky Anwar, a *Kopassus* man, is Brig-General Glenny Kairupan who has also served in East Timor.

The man who takes the lead in the Task Force's political initiatives is Dino Patti Djalal from the Indonesian foreign ministry who has long been promoted as Indonesia's leading 'expert' on East Timor. Djalal is also believed to have close links with the army's intelligence agency, BIA. As Task Force spokesman, Djalal quickly emerged as its leading political heavyweight, taking the lead in levelling accusations against UNAMET, giving public support to the militia and even taking part in talks with guerrilla leaders in an attempt to sideline the supposedly neutral body officially set up to handle the question of disarmament.

As the Referendum fast approaches, it is the Task Force that is in the forefront in Indonesia's strategy of discrediting UNAMET and challenging at every turn the UN's well-founded doubts about Indonesia's willingness to ensure security for the Referendum.

## International pressure critical

The only force that can really compel Jakarta to change its strategy is international pressure which must come from the major powers. The government in the best position to do this is the US administration where both houses of Congress have been under tremendous pressure from the grassroots. The most stunning decision was a resolution adopted on 30 June by the US Senate and adopted by 98 - 0 calling for a tougher policy in support of a free and fair ballot in East Timor and saying it would influence future decisions on loans and financial assistance to Indonesia. Within days, the US vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was on the phone to Wiranto warning him of the consequences of failure. [*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 15 July]

A week later, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Stanley Roth was in Jakarta warning people from Wiranto down that US-Indonesia relations could suffer if the violence did not end in East Timor. 'If the agreement falls apart, that obviously will have consequences and affect relations with a number of

# The army's dirty war in East Timor

*President Habibie's decision in January this year to allow the East Timorese to choose between autonomy and independence prompted feverish hostility within the armed forces. A Crisis Team was set up under a top-ranking intelligence officer leading to the creation of well-armed militia gangs throughout the territory in an attempt to halt the process set in train by Habibie's decision and either sabotage the UN-supervised referendum or terrorise the population into accepting autonomy.*

In its initial stages, the operation was code-named *Operasi Sapu Jagad* (Global Clean-Sweep) though the name has fallen into disuse perhaps because it sounds too inflammatory. It led to the murders of CNRT (Timorese National Resistance Council) leaders and the enforced dissolution of local CNRT offices. The objectives of operation were:

To obliterate the CNRT.

To destroy the peace process and render a UN-conducted consultation impossible.

To render the population defenceless and demoralised by eliminating the organised resistance.

## Udayana commander takes the lead

The operation is under the supervision of Udayana IX Military Command based in Denpasar, Bali (which covers East Timor) whose commander and chief-of-staff have been involved in organising and training the militia death squads. In February, Udayana commander Major-General Adam Damiri held a meeting in Bali of militia leaders and promised logistical support, including weapons for 2,000 men. In July, Damiri convened another meeting, this time in Dili, to instruct those involved on the latest focus of the operation. Those present included Zacky Anwar, East Timor commander, Colonel Tono Suratman, militia leaders and foreign ministry officials. [*The Australian*, 10 July] All these generals have one thing in common, they are from the elite commandos, *Kopassus*, which is playing a critical role in the dirty war against East Timor.

Damiri's chief-of-staff, Brigadier-General Mahidin Simbolon, a former military commander in East Timor, has a reputation for using Timorese to terrorise Timorese. As long as these two men, both committed to destroying the resistance, remain in their present posts, peace will not return to East Timor.

The intelligence operation was made easier because of the euphoria which followed Suharto's downfall in May 1998, when CNRT branches appeared everywhere, students waged a campaign to popularise the idea of independence and many East Timorese working for the administration felt emboldened to express their true feelings in public. The operations leading up to the killings in Liquisa on 6 April, and the killings in Dili on 17 April were targeted on these people and on Timorese who in the past few years have switched allegiances, and now support independence.



Following Habibie's 27 January decision, the CNRT leadership, in an effort to avoid provocation and prevent bloodshed, called a halt to military operations in the bush and to demonstrations in the cities. But this did not deter the militia death squads and their ABRI backers from persisting in their wave of terror. Since late January, several hundred Timorese have been killed and more than 50,000 people have fled their villages and are now living as refugees or 'internally displaced persons' under the control of the militia with the connivance of the local military. This does not include the death toll in places like Suai, now sealed off to outside observers, where up to two hundred people are thought to have been killed since April. The situation in Suai has only worsened ever since.



## Insubordination from the top

Following Suharto's downfall, Habibie became ABRI (now TNI) supreme commander, but being a civilian, he exerts no authority over the armed forces. Although General Wiranto, as Defence Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the TNI, expressed support for Habibie's January initiative, his views were soon overwhelmed by a powerful faction within the army composed of Timor veterans and people with vested interests in hanging on to East Timor.

According to intelligence sources in Australia and the US, the backing for these operations goes right to the top. They assert that 'the high command of the Indonesian army and a group of Indonesian ministers are complicit in the violence'. This source confirms 'beyond doubt that some of the most powerful elements in the Indonesian government are determined to covertly subvert the President's policy'. [*Australian Financial Review*, 8 July]

A number of influential retired officers like Benny Murdani and Prabowo, Suharto's son-in-law have also joined forces to defy Habibie, contributing money to finance the terror campaign in East Timor. In March, there were reports that US\$2 million (around 17 billion rupiah) had been supplied to finance the operations and more recently, counterfeit money has been circulating in East Timor to pay the militias.

No one wants to point the finger directly at General Wiranto but the fact is that he has done nothing to stop the operation and rein in the hardliners, if indeed he is minded to do so. Indeed, despite irrefutable evidence of the army's role in arming the militias, he has repeatedly denied this. Wiranto is currently pre-occupied with securing the TNI's future role in Indonesian political affairs and seems to be leaving the cataclysmic developments in East Timor (as well as in Aceh) to the hardliners. Be that as it may, he is accountable as commander-in-chief for what is happening; he must take responsibility for the failure to dismiss officers in East Timor who have supported and taken part in atrocities and stands condemned for his attempt, in light of all the evidence to the contrary, to absolve the TNI from responsibility for arming and training the militias.

## Kopassus and the intelligence

The militias who are spearheading the dirty war operation are under the overall command of Major-General Zacky Anwar and operating with the support and guidance of hundreds of army intelligence officers. Although SGI (*Satuan Tugas Inteligen*), the force through which *Kopassus* has operated in East Timor for many years, is said to have been formally dissolved, it is still present in the territory. Soldiers recognised locally as SGI operators are still functioning everywhere. On 10 November 1998, 400 *Kopassus* Group 4 troops arrived in Kupang, West Timor. Group 4 is especially trained to track down and eliminate opponents; it was responsible for the abduction and disappearance of dozens of pro-democracy activists in Indonesia last year. Press reports in Australia in June referred to a 'top-secret memo from Indonesian military intelligence, BIA, to the militia saying that all supporters of independence should be eliminated after the vote'. [*Guardian Weekly*, 6 June 1999] In a statement on 31 May, Bishop Belo said that one thousand intelligence officers are now operating in East Timor.

As one commentator points out, *Kopassus* has an unbroken connection with East Timor stretching back to 1975 and the invasion. The key *Kopassus* figures include Brig-

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General Mahidin Simbolon, chief of staff of Udayana military command, Colonel Tono Suratman, military commander of East Timor and Major-General Zacky Anwar who until recently headed the army's intelligence agency, BIA. Zacky Anwar is the security adviser to the Indonesian government's Task Force (see separate item) and heads the team of military liaison officers to deal with the UN's team of military liaison officers. These positions put his presence in East Timor on an official footing; in the initial phase of the terror campaign, his visits to East Timor were under-cover. Another key figure is Lieut-Colonel W. Nugroho, the *Kopassus* intelligence chief who according to the same source, has been setting up the whole operation.

The dirty war in East Timor follows in the pattern of the CIA's Phoenix programme in Vietnam, aimed at eliminating not only opponents but also people who provide leadership in the community. [See David Jenkins in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 July]

## The militias

Prior to the dirty war campaign launched early this year, at least a dozen para-military groups existed in East Timor, attached to local garrisons. Some function as auxiliaries while others have long had a reputation for brutality. *Halilintar*, led by Joao Tavares (who is now known as the war commander of the militia), Makikit and *Gada Paksi* (a creation of Prabowo) have liaised closely with SGI. Other older militia groups have been given front-line roles in operations against *Falintil*, the armed wing of the resistance.



Weapons for the militia groups

The new militia death squads have brought the level of violence, terror and intimidation to a level unparalleled since the early years of the invasion. They include *Besi Merah Putih* in Liquisa, *Aitarak* in Dili, *Dadurus* in Maliana, *Mahidi* in Ainaro, etc, etc

The militias have banded together in a war command called *Militia Pro-Otonomi*, whose 'war commander' is Jose Tavares, leader of *Halilintar*, and 'deputy war commander' is Eurico Guterres, leader of *Aitarak*.

There have been skirmishes and clashes between the para-militaries and the militias and in one case, even a clash involving *Kopassus* operators, suggesting a degree of hostility among militia gangs, possibly provoked by col-



ling interests and jealousies. Most rank-and-file members are unwilling recruits whose loyalty is shaky to say the least. There have been signs of dissent and even reports of assassination attempts, reflecting a level of discontent with the virulent nature of the militia activities. Even the most dedicated leaders are nothing more than proxies, acting at the behest of their Indonesian/TNI paymasters and could disintegrate if support from the top vanishes.

## Fear of a pro-independence vote

A major thrust of the TNI's dirty war is to terrorise the population with warnings of dire consequences should the consultation result in a vote in favour of independence. Documents are circulating in East Timor warning that a bloodbath will occur in the immediate aftermath of such a vote. The aim is clear - to terrify the population into believing that by voting for independence, they will be condemning East Timor to yet more horrors. One document warns that death-lists have been drawn up, that death squads will go from village to village eliminating pro-independence activists, and that vast sums of money and thousands of weapons have been made available for the terror campaign. It is more than likely that military intelligence have drawn up death lists and that they are already being put to use.

Such threats should not be taken lightly. Nor should the possibility be overlooked of a pro-autonomy vote also leading to a reign of terror against pro-independence activists. In any event, it is clear that an international presence in East Timor to safeguard security will be just as important after the vote as it is before.

For 32 years, the Suharto regime refined methods to secure the desired voting patterns in general elections, using bribery, empty promises by its party, GOLKAR supported to the hilt by ABRI, heavy-handed pressure on local government officials, and the prohibition of all political activity. But nothing matches the operation currently underway in East Timor. Twenty-three years of brutal occupation have convinced the East Timorese that their future does not lie within the Republic and they are fiercely and almost unanimously pro-independence. This is why the TNI intelligence operation has had to resort to such a level of brutality in its dirty war. Five districts in the western part of East Timor are virtually under militia control making it difficult to see how UNAMET will be able to conduct the referendum there in free and fair conditions. Elsewhere, the killings continue and terror prevails. The aim is clear, to terrify the demoralised and traumatised population into voting against their consciences and prevent them from travelling to the registration centres and later to the polling booths to cast their votes.

## Local commanders who must be indicted

There are a number of local commanders whose complicity in this operation is well documented and who should be sacked and indicted:

*Lt Colonel Asep Kuswani, commander of Kodim 1638/Liquisa (District Military Command 1638/Liquisa). Military registration number, NRP 29468*

The reign of terror in the district of Liquisa district has been monitored by church and human rights sources. Liquisa lies 50 kms west of Dili. Disturbing reports about

army and militia violence there were circulating in January 1999. The violence culminated in a bloodbath on 6 April on the grounds of Liquisa Church. Lt Colonel Asep Kuswani and his territorial troops were directly involved in the killings. (A detailed account of the atrocity by the human rights group, *Yayasan HAK* is available in English translation from TAPOL.)



Lt. Colonel Asep Kuswani, an infantry officer, was appointed Dandim 1638/Liquisa (Military Commander 1638/Liquisa) on 1 October 1997. The territorial structure under his command includes three Koramil (military sub-district commands).

The militia gang operating in the district for which he is responsible has a reputation for extreme brutality. Set up in January this year, *Besi Merah Putih* (Red-and-White Steel) has been involved in numerous acts of violence, terror and intimidation against the population throughout the district of Liquisa. The attack on 6 April was directed against two thousand evacuees from Maubara, a sub-district of Liquisa, who had fled the day before, following assaults on their villages by *Besi Merah-Putih* militia in a joint operation with local troops. The attack on the Church involved troops from Battalion 143 stationed in Kodim 1638, from Koramil Liquisa (Military Sub District Liquisa), the police, Brimob (police commandos) and the *BMP* militia. The identities of 59 people who died during this attack have been established while many more disappeared. This attack was clearly the responsibility of Lt. Colonel Asep Kuswani, the highest military authority in the district, without whose help and supervision it could never have occurred.

With the militia firmly entrenched, Liquisa is by far the worst area for human rights violations in East Timor at present. Many thousands of East Timorese villagers are being held captive by the military/militia and the atmosphere is one of widespread fear, far removed from the calm environment needed to conduct the ballot on 8 August.

Lt. Colonel Asep Kuswani should be held responsible for the atrocities in Liquisa, discharged from the army and brought to justice for his involvement in killings and the holding captive of thousands of Timorese.

*Lt. Colonel Burhanuddin Siagian, commander of Kodim 1636/Maliana (Military District Command 1636/Maliana), Military registration number, NRP 29334*

The Maliana district on the border with West Timor is another area where violations have been grave. The commander, Lt. Colonel Burhanuddin Siagian, hails from the cavalry and was appointed Dandim 1636/Maliana (Military

Commander 1636/Maliana) on 1 October 1997. There are six Koramil (military sub-district commands) under his command. *Halilintar* ('thunderbolt') the militia gang which is operating in this area, is known to carry standard army weaponry such as semi-automatic M16s and FCNs.

The acts of violence against the people in Maliana are mostly conducted by joint forces including Kodim troops, the police and *Halilintar* militia. *Kopassus* (elite army commandos) have also infiltrated from West Timor and are part of the joint operations. There have been reports of random shootings at houses in the Maliana district, resulting in deaths and injuries among the villagers. On 21 March, a joint action was carried out by the three forces to seal off the entire area, setting up road blocks around the town and on the Atabae-Maliana and Kailaku-Maliana roads.



#### **'Autonomy or Death !'**

In the second week of April, actions by the *Halilintar* militia reportedly led to the deaths or disappearance of seventy villagers, following which, on 13 April, the car in which a militia leader and members were travelling, was attacked by members of the *Falintil* armed resistance. A militia leader named Manuel Soares Gama was killed in the attack. Others in the car may also have been killed. In reprisal, Lt Colonel Burhanuddin Siagian selected five villagers at random and ordered their execution which took place in the home of Manuel Soares Gama.. [See report by *Fortilos*, an Indonesian support NGO, quoting *Yayasan HAK*, dated 18 April 1999.]

Lt. Colonel Burhanuddin Siagian has been quoted by a source close to TAPOL as openly defying President Habibie's policy to allow the people of East Timor to choose their future status in a ballot. He told this source that Habibie would not remain president after Indonesian elections in June. If he had his way, there would be no change in the status of East Timor.

The situation in the Maliana district remains extremely grave. According to a report from senior church sources in Dili on 13 June, there have been persistent human rights violations in Lolotoi, Bobonaro. The militias are reported to have cut off people's ears and forced the people to eat them, as well as putting people live into sacks and throwing them into the ocean.

A more recently established militia called *Dadurus* was involved in an attack on the Maliana UNAMET office at

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the beginning of July, which led to strong protests from the UN in New York.

This officer should be removed from his post, arrested and prosecuted for his many acts of violence against the people of the district of Maliana.

*Lt. Colonel Muhamad Nur, military commander Kodim 1637/Ermera (Military District Command 1637/Ermera). Military registration number NRP 29478*

Ermera is a prosperous coffee-growing area, as a result of which it has been difficult for the military to recruit local people to join the militia. Hence, all the violence in this district has been perpetrated by Lt. Colonel Muhamad Nur's troops. Lt. Colonel Muhamad Nur, an infantry officer, has been Dandim 1637/Ermera (Military Commander Ermera/1637) since 15 December 1997. His area of command includes three *Koramil*.

According to press reports, a two-pronged strategy was adopted, to create an atmosphere of fear among the population and then to target the local CNRT (the pro-independence resistance umbrella) leaders. In the middle of April, a wave of terror was launched by the local military. There was a massacre in the remote village of Talimoro, when at least six people were killed. The exact death toll could not be established as people in Ermera were too afraid to go and find out.

Then, in the third week of April, at least seven CNRT leaders were killed, including local councillor Antonio da Lima. They were shot in cold blood by soldiers from Kodim 1637/Ermera, according to local church sources. Among the victims was village head Bartholo Borromeu who was held, tortured, allowed to go home, then re-arrested three days later. He died on 21 April after being systematically tortured. According to the local priest, 'His skull was completely smashed'. The priest, Sancho Amaral, appealed in vain to Lt. Colonel Muhamad Nur to stop the atrocities. [*The Observer*, 25 April 1999]

The murders in Ermera are the direct responsibility of Lt. Colonel Muhamad Nur and the soldiers acting on his orders. Lt Colonel Muhamad Nur is typical of the majority of Indonesian officers who are actively or passively involved in the campaign of terror that is now obstructing the UN-sponsored peace process. He should be dismissed from his post, placed under arrest and brought to justice. ★



## Indonesian Police, the prodigal son

*POLRI, the Indonesian police force, has been much in the news lately. On 1 April the force was separated from the Indonesian armed forces (previously ABRI, now called TNI). One month later it was decided in New York that POLRI would be the body responsible for the security situation before and during the ballot in East Timor. It is worth having a closer look at POLRI.*

On 8 July POLRI celebrated its 53rd birthday, the same day that anti-riot police used excessive force against demonstrators outside the building of the Election Commission. Twelve members of the PRD, a left-wing party, were injured by rubber bullets and dozens more were beaten up with anti-riot gear. This is how POLRI is seen these days by most Indonesians.



*New Brimob troops arriving in East Timor*

In the wave of unrest and demonstrations before and after the fall of Suharto, it was POLRI that increasingly undertook the role as the force responsible for law and order. This is relatively new because until recently, the force played second fiddle to the army on matters of law and order.

The day before the anniversary, Ian Martin, the head of UNAMET [see separate article], flew from Dili to Jakarta to seek assurances from the Jakarta authorities that there would be drastic improvements in the security situation. So far, POLRI has been unable (or unwilling) to put a stop to the violence of the militia groups against UN staff and relief workers.

### The prodigal son

There is not much to celebrate as POLRI's reaches its 54th birthday. POLRI's public image is one of a corrupt,

ill-trained and undisciplined force. Back in the Sukarno days, POLRI was already losing its independence, but when General Suharto seized power in 1965, POLRI was fully integrated into the armed forces. Being a police officer was comparable to being virtually impotent. In small cases as well as big ones, the average POLRI officer was powerless. When soldiers broke traffic regulations, no police officer would dare to give him a ticket, or if he tried, he would be beaten up in public.

In the early seventies, the national chief of police Hoegeng tried unsuccessfully to assert the independence of the police by initiating a corruption case against Madam Suharto and was unceremoniously given the sack which was very damaging to the prestige of the force.

But in last decade, the image of POLRI has been given a face-lift. Facing growing dissent in the army, the ageing Suharto decided to boost the responsibilities of the force. It was argued that in a modern democratic state, the police should be responsible for security (sic). This is what led ultimately to the separation of POLRI from TNI, with Suharto watching from the sidelines.

In preparation for the separation, many POLRI officers were trained abroad and *BRIMOB*, the police special commandos, was greatly expanded and given tougher training and more advanced equipment to fit it for riot control or even for combat. With the exception of war zones like Aceh and East Timor, POLRI is now in the front line against demonstrators, usually tackling the situation with a combination of anti-riot police and *BRIMOB* units.

### Heavily militarised

Immediately after the separation, the POLRI top decided to change the uniform, to make the force look less militaristic. But separating POLRI and turning it into a different body of men is not as easy as changing the uniform. Both *POLRI* and the *TNI* still fall under the Department of Defence and Security with General Wiranto, the *TNI* commander, also holding the post of Minister of Defence.



Since POLRI has for so long been fully integrated into the armed forces, chief of police Roesmanhadi acknowledges that 'militarism and arrogance will need to be phased out'. Senior police officers also acknowledge that there is no tradition of community policing in the force. Only when the curriculum of the police schools is drastically changed can such a tradition begin to emerge.

A new curriculum has been drawn up for this year and will be used in the seventeen police colleges and the Police Academy in Semarang. In the old curriculum, 60 per cent of the course was the same as in the military academy, but this has been cut back to 10 per cent. The force will be increased in size and the seventeen colleges will open their doors to 11,000 new recruits while the Academy will train three hundred POLRI officers.

However, Police Chief Roesmanhadi admits that it will take thirty years before the police force is transformed. Police lecturers make no secret of the difficulty of designing a new curriculum. 'It is still experimental and we can make changes any time,' they say.

The other dilemma is the relatively small size of the police. The present military-contaminated POLRI has a compliment of 180,000 members to serve a population of 210 million. Neighbouring countries all have much larger police forces, relatively speaking. This fact is been used by the TNI leadership to justify continuing the active role of the army in matters of law and order.

## POLRI in East Timor

To meet the requirements of security for the UN ballot, the police force in East Timor is being increased from 3,900 to 8,000 men, and more than half the additional men are BRIMOB troops, drawn from different parts of Indonesia. As the most militarised section of the police, its rough handling of the public is often compared with KOPASSUS, the red berets of the army. Several thousand of these police commandos have arrived in the last few weeks, all ready for action, complete with assault rifles, riot shields and batons. Some observers in East Timor have noticed that there are KOPASSUS men re-emerging as BRIMOB. But so far, there has been no improvement in the security situation.

As the authority charged with safeguarding security in East Timor, POLRI has as yet done virtually nothing to curb the militia groups. While they are the ones who have committed so many terrible abuses, not one of the militia leaders has been arrested. According to Indonesian law it is unlawful for civilians to possess or carry weapons but the militia are openly carrying weapons, including firearms, without anything being done to stop this.

Even the East Timor police chief, Colonel Timbul Silaen, admits that law and order has broken down in some parts of East Timor. This police colonel is a typical hard-liner, in the habit of making controversial statements. He took the initiative to set up a civil defence corps along the lines of the civil defence corps called Pam Swakarsa which was set up in Jakarta last year. Some analysts say that this is a way of giving the militia groups a quasi official persona. According to the interpretation of the colonel, Pam Swakarsa units can function as auxiliary troops for the police; in other words, they can assist the police in maintaining law and order. This might be taken one step further by allowing them to carry weapons in the performance of their police duties.

But UNAMET officials have rejected the scheme and refuse to accept the Pam Swakarsa units as police auxiliaries.

On paper, TNI troops will be confined to barracks, or as the 5 May documents require, 'redeployed', but police and BRIMOB officers openly admit that they will liaise closely with army intelligence.

It can be argued that in many places in Indonesia, POLRI is genuinely trying to find its own place outside the TNI but in war zones like East Timor and Aceh, POLRI remains subservient to the military. \*

*continued from back page*

Although Dita Sari is now free, several of her PRD comrades are still being held, including the party's president, Budiman Sudjatmiko, and several key members of PRD.

## Police still as repressive as ever

A group of human rights NGOs has accused the Indonesian police force, *POLRI*, of being as repressive as ever even though it was separated from the armed forces on 1 April. The group of seven organisations, including the YLBHI, the Legal Aid Foundation, ELSAM, the Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy, and KONTRAS, the Commission for Missing People and Victims of Violence, said in a joint statement made public in Jakarta on 1 July 1999, that nothing had changed, especially the force's treatment of farmers and indigenous people in land disputes in rural areas.

The NGOs said that *POLRI* had handled more than fifty disputes in the past few months, in many parts of the country, adding: 'A number of people were killed, injured or arbitrarily arrested.' At least one person was killed and eleven injured when police opened fire on hundreds of protesting farmers in Jember, East Java in April. A month later, eleven people were injured when police shot into a crowd of about 5,000 workers and students during a land dispute in Medan, North Sumatra. [*Jakarta Post*, 2 July]

[The thrust of the joint statement was reinforced by the fact that it was issued on the very day that police opened fire on a demonstration in Jakarta, as reported above.]

Although it was announced on 1 April this year that *POLRI* had been officially separated from the Indonesian armed forces, formerly known as *ABRI* but now called *TNI*, the force continues to be under the overall command of General Wiranto in his capacity as Minister of Defence and Security; Wiranto is concurrently commander-in-chief of the *TNI*.

The NGOs joint statement was issued to coincide with the anniversary of the police force. The ceremony marking the anniversary was presided over by General Wiranto and held at the headquarters of the Police Mobile Brigade, *BRIMOB*, the unit which engages in combat operations, usually known as 'police commandos', the most heavily militarised of all the units that make up *POLRI*. It is *BRIMOB* which is playing such a prominent role in operations against people, not only in Indonesia generally but also in East Timor and Aceh. \*



# Free elections after 44 years

*For the second time since the birth of the Indonesian Republic in 1945, free elections were held on 7 June. With few exceptions, they took place in relative peace and calm. Forty-eight political parties contested the elections, but only a dozen parties won seats in parliament. At the moment of writing the final results are still awaited but they reflect more or less predictions based on opinion polls. No party will achieve a majority, which means there will be a coalition government. There are several scenarios regarding the composition of the country's future government.*

Organising general elections in the world's largest archipelago is not an easy task, especially if the local election committees consist of representatives from all the contesting parties. Many flaws and irregularities were recorded by election watchdogs but none of them can be said to have affected the outcome. The long delay in announcing the results is more to do with amateurism than deliberate tampering. Money politics certainly played a role in some places but not unlike what happens in Thailand, Philippines or Japan with long parliamentary traditions.

## Huge enthusiasm

As expected, people participated in the elections with great enthusiasm. For the majority of people, it was the first time they had participated in free elections. Long before polling booths opened, people were queuing to vote.

The short period allowed for campaigning was a major flaw. With the exception of the major parties that could be sure of getting onto the front pages, the smaller parties remained unknown with no chance of making an impact. Party programmes were hardly discussed and only on a few occasions did television and radio organise debates between party leaders. The voters had to cast three votes, for the national parliament, for the provincial assembly and for the district assembly.

## Comparisons with 1955

A comparison with the elections of 1955 shows that the political and ideological strands that existed in 1955 are still alive and well despite 32 years of authoritarian rule under Suharto. This year's elections signalled a return to a plural party system but they were held under a different constitution. The 1950 constitution provided for a figure-head president and a prime minister as head of government but the present elections were held under the authoritarian 1945 constitution, under which the president exercises vast powers as well as being the head of government.

In 1955, Indonesia was still a parliamentary democracy and the elections were orderly and aroused great expecta-



*Megawati, the most likely new President*

tions. More than a hundred parties participated, with four emerging as victors. The 1999 elections were also orderly on the whole, with five parties winning substantial votes. A total of 462 seats were available. The PDI-P emerged as biggest party with 154 seats, Golkar came second with 120 seats, while the PPP, PKB and PAN respectively gained 59, 51 and 35 seats. Two new Muslim parties, the PBB and the PK, won 13 and 6 seats. In total 19 parties achieved seats, 7 parties will sit with a sole member in parliament. Continuing the tradition of the New Order, 38 seats in parliament are allocated to the armed forces (TNI), making it the fifth largest fraction in parliament.

## A new government in five months' time

The next president will be elected by the MPR, the People's Assembly, which is not due to meet until November at the earliest. The delayed election results means that the new government may not emerge until the next century.

The MPR is a strange body, comparable perhaps only to China. It meets every five years to choose a president and determine the broad outlines of state policy for the coming five years. In the Suharto days, both DPR (the Parliament)



and the MPR were rubber stamps, but the new DPR and MPR will express the results of the elections. The MPR's 700 members will include the 500 MPs plus 200 representatives from the regions and functional organisations. Each province is entitled to five or more seats in the MPR. The parties that scored well in the provincial elections will obtain extra MPR seats, with the military also getting a share as they have seats allotted to them in the provincial assemblies.

The share of seats is weighted in favour of parties with bigger support in less densely populated regions. Each province (which still includes East Timor!) has been given a set number of votes per seat, with the number of votes being divided by the number of seats allocated. As a result, a seat in East Java will represent 320,000 votes while in West Papua for instance, 77,000 votes will suffice. This places Java-based parties like the PDI-P and PKB at a disadvantage. At the completion of the count PDI-P achieved 34 per cent of the votes and Golkar 22 per cent. But the seat count gives PDI-P only 154 seats while Golkar gets 120 seats.

## Different scenarios

The most likely coalition will be under the PDI-P's Megawati as president with the support of Abdurrahman Wahid's PKB. There has been opposition among some Muslim parties to a woman being president but this appears to be fading. Some commentators predict that PAN will join the coalition although its political programme differs on many critical issues. Such a coalition would be Java-based and accommodative towards the military. The two main parties have very mainstream agendas, unwilling to make major changes in the near future. The dark horse is the TNI whose 38 seats could tip the balance, together with some of the 200 non-parliamentary MPR members. Under this scenario, GOLKAR, PAN, the PPP and the smaller Muslim parties would emerge as a strong parliamentary opposition, a new experience for Indonesia.

A second possibility is that Habibie will cling on as GOLKAR's choice for president, with support from the PPP and smaller parties. This is less likely because so many Indonesians in the cities see GOLKAR as a remnant of the *Orde Baru*. Although PAN leaders say they would never enter a coalition with Golkar, the door is not entirely closed. This coalition would be geographically more representative and it would have a stronger Muslim identity. Golkar's chances of succeeding will increase if a large number of the 200 appointees are sympathetic.

## A closer look at the parties

After the downfall of Suharto, scores of political parties emerged but in the selection process only 48 parties claiming a following in the different parts of the archipelago survived. There are several ways of categorising the parties. One is as between the old *Orde Baru* parties and the new ones and the other is to look at their political and ideological background, as in 1955.

Using the first method one can distinguish between the three parties that existed in the Suharto period: GOLKAR, the ruling party often also defined as the party of the ruler

and the two parties that functioned more or less as decoration: the PDI, the nationalist federation and the PPP, the Muslim federation. These parties had the advantage of existing infrastructures, particularly GOLKAR.

## The PDI-P

Megawati's PDI-P reaped the political harvest in the post-Suharto period as it was seen by the voters as the victim and opponent of Suharto. Megawati enjoys support from many social strata. Traditional support for Sukarno, Megawati's father, secured it a huge majority in most parts



PEMILU = General Elections

Merdeka, 12 April 1999

of Java and Bali. But large sections of the urban poor in the big cities, including Jakarta and Yogya, gave her strong backing. It was clear from the opinion polls and the huge election rallies that the PDI-P was bound to be the largest party.

Before the tragic events of 27 July 1996 when the authorities attacked the PDI headquarters, Megawati and the PDI was much closer to the pro-democracy movement. But after the crackdown, they shifted in the direction of mainstream politics; long before the elections the PDI-P had become a party of the status-quo. She surrounded herself with conservative advisors, while more radical advisors were pushed aside.

Megawati was groomed as the future president in the same tradition as in other parts of the world: creating a cult figure and avoiding difficult issues. Insofar as it touched on burning issues like amending the authoritarian constitution, federalism or the future of East Timor, it adopted a status quo position. Her campaign speeches were hollow, always ending with a nursery song. Many analysts fear she will go down in history alongside other women from Asian political dynasties like India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh or the Philippines, lacking a good track record.

PDI-P stands for *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia - Perjuangan* (Democratic Party of Indonesia - Struggle) in contrast with PDI, the original party that was endorsed by Suharto. The PDI which contested the elections but won hardly any votes was a creation of Suharto in 1973 when he forced the nationalist and Christian parties to fuse.

The PDI-P is the leading, arguably the sole, secular-nationalist party of the top five. In the eastern part of the



archipelago, North Sulawesi, Maluku, West Papua and West and East Nusa Tenggara, many non-Muslim votes went to the PDI-P. In 1998 a dozen top-ranking Christian military joined the party and Major-General Theo Syafei (former military commander of East Timor and former MP) is its vice-chair. Many political analysts have doubts about Megawati's political qualities. She will need to use all her skills to achieve a majority in the MPR. None of the major parties can be regarded as solidly united. If MPs vote for the president in a secret ballot, it will be each one for him/herself, a situation in which she could gain or lose, depending on political wheeling and dealing.

## Golkar

GOLKAR, a strange political animal, is a good topic for a PhD thesis. It used to be the political vehicle of the military, then Suharto and his cronies decided to jump on the bandwagon. In the eighties it became Suharto's sole political vehicle while senior officers were frequently sidelined. In the old days, GOLKAR won a 75 per cent majority through rigging, money politics, and last but not least because of the support of KORPRI, the organisation to which all civil servants were obliged to belong. It was compulsory for KORPRI members to join GOLKAR and elections became a stage-managed affair.

The post-Suharto period brought drastic changes. KORPRI no longer plays a role. Suharto remnants now play only a marginal role while the TNI said 'goodbye' ('equal distance' from political parties is the dictum). Many retired officers decided to quit the party, and one wing of the military set up its own political party, the PKP (which did appallingly in the elections). Two other important sections, MKGR and Kosgoro, also quit, with the former becoming one of the many obscure political parties.

The new GOLKAR has a Muslim wing and a secular wing, a pro-Habibie wing and an anti-Habibie wing. The pro-Habibie wing is more or less Muslim with a stronghold in parts of Sumatra and Sulawesi. In South Sulawesi, Habibie's birthplace, GOLKAR emerged as the strongest party. GOLKAR is arguably now the largest Muslim party, with many votes from the two major Muslim organisations: Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU).

In its early days GOLKAR had difficulties winning votes from Muslim voters. In the eighties, it bribed its way with Muslim voters, financing mosques and Muslim schools with government money. In the nineties this became more structural, in conformity with Suharto's policy of endearing himself to some wings of political Islam. The Muslim component in the party became quite strong, right up to the top. The secular wing consists partly of leftovers from the military and some sections of the bureaucracy. The old GOLKAR was corporatist, even refused to call itself a party but the new GOLKAR remodelled itself into a political party.

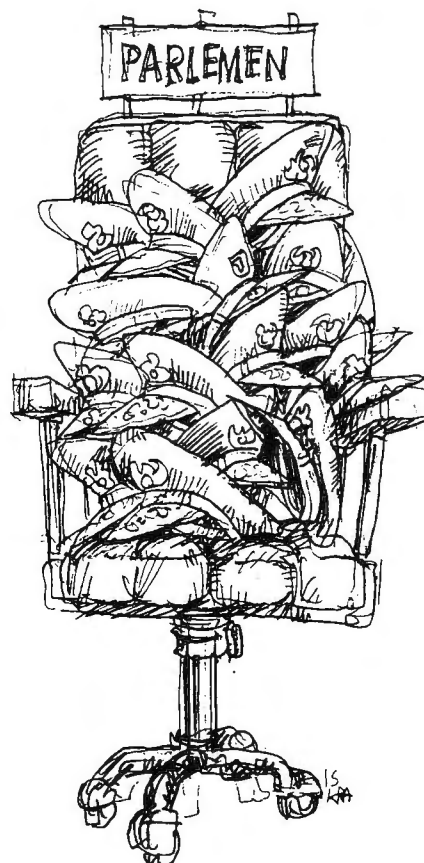
The general public still see GOLKAR as the political vehicle of the *Orde Baru*, but in many ways its leaders are more reform-minded than the PDI-P. It was practically impossible for the party to campaign in the urban areas of Java as its rallies were met with hostility.

The best way to describe GOLKAR now is as a party based largely on patronage. Groups or individuals who backed it have done so primarily to safeguard their careers,

down to the village. Its large share of the vote can be explained by the fact that many people voted out of habit, tradition or a vague loyalty.

## The PPP

The Muslim federation PPP was a fusion of four very different Muslim parties. In the early seventies Suharto sought to emasculate political Islam through this merger. This remedy worked at first but in the course of time, it often became the only platform through which to show defiance towards Suharto. Till the mid-eighties, it was not easy for GOLKAR to defeat the PPP in Aceh, Madura or in big cities like Jakarta. People saw it as their only outlet.



### *The military gets automatically 38 seats in Parliament*

The emergence of new political parties created the impression at first that the PPP was on the brink of collapse but in the event, with its nationwide spread, it managed to do very well. It retained, even strengthened, its Muslim identity. Like GOLKAR, it attracted a number of votes from Muhammadiyah and the NU. The strong PPP vote only confirms that political Islam in Indonesia is doing well and growing.

## Political Islam

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world and it is more than logical that Islam will play an important role in politics. In the 1955 elections, four Muslim parties contested the elections, Masyumi, NU, PSII and Perti, gaining between them 44 per cent of the votes. The majority vote went to secular parties, in particular to the nationalist PNI and the PKI, the (still banned) Communist Party. By contrast, in the present elections the majority of votes went to political Islam. While political Islam has grown stronger, it has become more pluralistic and diverse. At least nineteen parties in the recent elections had a Muslim base. Some are 'open' or inclusive, like the larger PAN and PKB and the smaller PID, PIB, PCD, PAY, PUMI and

PP. With a bit of imagination, GOLKAR can also be identified as an inclusive Muslim party.

Others have an exclusive Muslim identity like PPP, PBB, PK (the larger ones) and the small PUI, Masyumi, PKU, PNU, PSII 1905, Masyumi Baru, PSII and KAMI

Most Muslim votes originate from the two major social-religious organisations, Muhammadiyah and the NU, Nahdlatul Ulama, the modernist and traditionalist wings of Indonesian Islam. In the 1955 elections, the NU was a political party while Masyumi was seen as the political face of Muhammadiyah. NU became the largest Muslim party with Masyumi a close second. The NU base is still largely Javanese rural while Muhammadiyah is more urban and nation-wide.

The situation is more complex nowadays. The PPP still gets votes from both wings plus from the smaller factions (PSII and Perti). The NU vote is now divided between GOLKAR, PPP, PKB, PNU and PKU. The Muhammadiyah vote is also spread. Election accords were concluded between eight Muslim parties, given them an extra number of seats.

None of the Muslim parties support a Muslim state but there are differences between them. Before the elections, the official religious body MUI, *Majelis Umat Islam* (Council of Islam) called on Muslims to vote Muslim, creating quite a stir, particularly among the 'open' Muslim parties which criticised the statement strongly.

Some parties have played an important role in the reform period since Suharto's overthrow. This includes the PUI (*Partai Umat Islam*) of Deliar Noer, a well known opposition leader for many years. He is inspired by the way the Prophet Muhammad ruled Medinah in an atmosphere

of tolerance and plurality. Other parties represent tiny segments of the two major strands, the NU and Muhammadiyah, and are expected to disappear.

PBB, *Partai Bulan Bintang* (Crescent and Star Party) is also in the Muhammadiyah mould, and is more orthodox. It is run by well-known academics, most of them the offspring of the Masyumi. With a number of votes in the major cities, PBB won several seats in Parliament.

Another interesting party is *Partai Keadilan* (Justice Party) run by Muslim intellectuals most of whom have PhDs from the US. It projects a strong Muslim morale based on the Qu'ran while being very open to non-Muslims. It has developed a strong base in many Muslim universities in Java. PK's popularity among the students was solid enough for it to win some seats in Parliament.

To conclude as some analysts do, that the elections were a heavy defeat for political Islam is highly debatable. The only secular party, PDI-P, won 35 percent, while the rest went to a broad variety of Muslim parties. In 1955 there was diversity within Muslim politics, but there is greater diversity today. The open Muslim parties have emerged strongly while the exclusive Muslim parties are rather marginal.

## The PKB

The PKB, *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (National Awakening Party) won most NU votes. In the early eighties, NU politicians became frustrated with the PPP federation and abandoned practical politics, to function outside the system. The NU gained a lot of respect and under the leadership of Abdurrahman Wahid, better known as Gus Dur and many bright, young Muslim intellectuals

## POLITICS

emerged. The emergence of political parties prompted the NU leadership to re-emerge on the political scene. Over the years, the NU's rural followers have remained loyal, securing it a large number of seats. The PKB is not exactly like the old NU party which represented traditional Muslims in Java and South Kalimantan.



The PKB was the creation of Gus Dur, while some NU factions decided to set up other parties. As the PKB's name shows, despite its solid Muslim background, it deliberately avoided assuming a Muslim profile. It is an open party and enjoys support from non-Muslims, including Indonesian Chinese.

Most PKB leaders are well known Muslim scholars with a strong secular outlook, in the sense of openness towards other beliefs and opinions. Gus Dur is an international figure, at ease in non-Muslim circles, including Christianity, Buddhism and Judaism. His openness has given him the image of an open, dynamic figure.

But in domestic politics Gus Dur is often controversial. In the old days, he was a man of compromise, over and over again making overtures to those in power, including Suharto and the military, in the name of creating harmony. This disappointed many of his followers including those in *Forum Demokrasi*, a loose group of pro-democracy activists. Gus Dur's brand of pluralism also created problems. Some of the more traditional and rural ulamas in the NU's heartland thought this was going too far and voted for the PPP.

PKB is a natural ally of the PDI-P. Java-based, mainstream politically and accommodative towards the military.

## PAN

PAN, *Partai Amanah Nasional* (National Mandate Party) is the only new party of the four big ones. The chairman of PAN, Amien Rais, a PhD graduate from the US, is like Megawati and Gus Dur in many ways. Although there are many talented people in PAN, the focus is mainly on Amien Rais. It is the only party of the big five



with a clear reform programme. Amien Rais was chair of Muhammadiyah which made him a well-known figure in mainstream politics. But he gradually developed a position of defiance to Suharto and he can be said to be the first mainstream politician to become an oppositionist.

It took quite a while before the political format of PAN was formulated. Amien Rais was a top Muslim leader and the choice of a Muslim party would have been obvious but it became an open party with support from many non-Muslims. PAN had a huge impact on the middle class in the big cities and opinion polls gave PAN a higher percentage than it achieved. It scored badly in rural areas where traditional parties managed to maintain their support.

Most political analysts are expecting (or hoping) that PAN will join a coalition with PDI-P and PKB, the so-called anti-GOLKAR coalition. But others know that Amien Rais will not be able to function in a government with Megawati and Gus Dur. PAN is strongly against *Dwi Fungsi*, the dual function of the military, he wants the 1945 constitution to be amended and is in favour of far-reaching autonomy - delicate issues for the other two parties..

## The TNI

TNI, *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian National Armed Forces) is not a political party but remains a formidable political force. In April its name reverted from ABRI to the TNI, its original name. Discussing Indonesian politics without talking about the TNI is like ignoring realities. General Wiranto, the TNI commander and concurrently Minister of Defence cannot be ignored. Most analysts know that reform and democratisation can never succeed unless the military give up their political powers.

Prior to Suharto's downfall, TNI's popularity was at its lowest. TNI officers were involved in kidnapping and killing activists while nothing was done to prevent the looting of shops and the raping of women. TNI was unfit, its troops were poorly paid, undisciplined and demoralised and its officers were caught up in web of patronage around Suharto. The time had come to push TNI back to the barracks and the top brass expressed a willingness to reconsider several of its doctrines and policies.

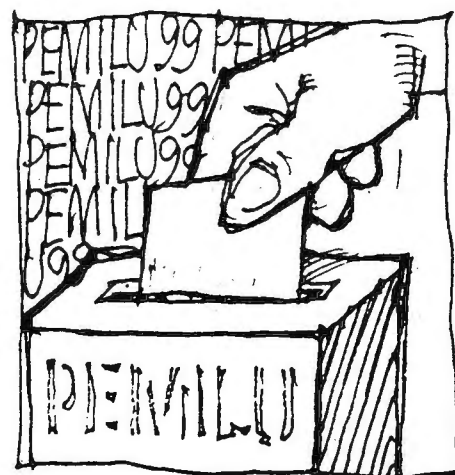
There are many dimensions to TNI in politics. In general, TNI's involvement in politics is called *Dwi Fungsi*, which justifies the military's role in society. One aspect is *fungsi kekaryaan*, functional duty or in plain English, the thousands of active duty officers holding jobs in the civilian administration. This goes from top (cabinet ministers) to bottom (village heads). In the recent *reformasi*, the TNI top decided to cut back the *kekaryaan* jobs and 3,000 active military had to choose between holding their civilian jobs or remaining in the TNI. This was an important step towards strengthening civil society.

Another more difficult angle of *Dwi Fungsi* is the territorial structure of the army which also goes from top to bottom. This structure is often described as a shadow government and it is a fact that local district chiefs or village heads have less political clout than the territorial officer. Still worse, the territorial officer often becomes so powerful that he becomes the successor of the civilian administrator. So far, this military stranglehold is untouched although grassroots actions in 1998 forced dozens of military district chiefs and village heads to quit..

At the top, the military are still the determining factor. In the old Parliament, there was a fierce battle, which resulted in the TNI retaining 38 seats, which is as large as the third largest party, the PPP, which won millions of votes. But the TNI's role in Jakarta politics goes much deeper than this. Some politicians seek to curry favour with the TNI by proposing that General Wiranto should become president or vice-president. Should there be deadlock over who wins the presidency, the likelihood of Wiranto becoming president is being widely discussed.

The TNI has announced that it will abandon practical politics, and ties this with its decision to leave GOLKAR. This step has obvious consequences but it is too early to say how far reaching the effects will be. The TNI is looking for a new political format and the model of Israel or Thailand are among the possibilities. In these countries ex top army officers automatically play an important role in political entities and also go into business.

The change from Suharto to Habibie went relatively smoothly for the simple reason that General Wiranto was in charge of the process. He out-manoeuvred army hardliners, including Lt General Prabowo, Suharto's son-in-law, proving to be a skilful operator. He has since moved cautiously, making him acceptable to most of the TNI rank-and-file while at the same time showing a moderate image of reform, to nurture his relationship with the mainstream political parties.



Habibie is more dependent on Wiranto than the other way round. Habibie's transitional presidency could only have functioned with the consent of Wiranto and the TNI top. Habibie has not got the political clout to dismiss Wiranto or even curb his authority. It is clear that the TNI top will play a crucial role in determining the future political course, including who will be the next president.

The president is concurrently the TNI Supreme Commander. In the *New Order* days, Suharto fulfilled that role to excess. In considering the two most likely options, Megawati and Habibie, the TNI top would have less to worry about with Megawati who enjoys a strong popular base but is very TNI-friendly. But Habibie has a proven working-relationship with the TNI so it could go either way. If either bloc can secure only a marginal edge over the other, the TNI vote will be decisive, making the future president a virtual captive of the TNI.

# Turmoil in Aceh escalates

*Following a major atrocity in which more than forty people were killed, political turmoil in Aceh has continued to escalate. More than a thousand crack troops have been sent in to quell the growing movement in support of a referendum and against the 7 June election. Numerous arson attacks have been blamed on provocateurs and a number of soldiers have been killed. The heightened military presence has caused tens of thousands to flee. Aceh is fast descending into a virtual state of war.*

Since August last year, when the Indonesian armed forces (formerly called ABRI but now known as the TNI) announced the lifting of DOM, the designation of Aceh as a *military operational zone*, there has been a series of atrocities and massacres, each one exceeding the previous one in brutality and casualties. Unable to quell the growing alienation from Indonesian rule, the TNI is using brute force on an unprecedented scale.

## More than forty shot dead in cold blood

The latest atrocity occurred on 3 May when scores of troops opened fire on thousands of people in an unprovoked attack. Live bullets were used, injuring hundreds more. The army's claim that 'only 19' people died and that the troops were 'defending themselves' has been debunked by a video film showing the massacre in progress.

The events leading up to the 3 May massacre began with a peaceful open-air religious gathering to celebrate the Muslim new year, *Muharram* on 30 April in Cut Murong, a village in Dewantara sub-district, twelve kilometres west of Lhokseumawe, an industrial city which is the capital of North Aceh. Thousands had assembled under the 'Aceh Merdeka' slogan in what is known as a *Dakwah GAM* (the initials GAM stand for 'Aceh Freedom Movement'). An army sergeant using a walkie-talkie and armed with a pistol was spotted in the crowd and challenged. He was later identified as coming from a nearby Guided Missiles Detachment, *Denrudal*, and was almost certainly an intelligence officer. After being questioned by angry villagers, he was ordered to leave. The army alleged that he had gone missing and launched a huge manhunt, involving hundreds of troops including the much-feared mobile police brigade, *Brimob*.



## Refugees from Aceh begging for money and food

During the two-day search, villages were combed and at least twelve civilians were beaten up, requiring medical treatment. Angry villagers sought and obtained assurances from local civilian and military authorities that the harassment would stop but in fact they intensified. [See for instance the morning edition of the local paper, *Waspada*, on 3 May, which described the atmosphere as 'extremely tense' with truckloads of troops patrolling the area.]

Suspecting that intruders were lurking in the area, many villages in the area went on high alert on Sunday evening and set up night patrols, fearing that the army would take people away in the middle of the night as they had done during the dreaded DOM period.

Early on Monday morning, 3 May, two truckloads of troops turned up at the villages of Cut Murong and the nearby Lancang Barat but were chased away. Villagers in their thousands then started to march towards the military headquarters, *Korem 011*, to express their disappointment



that earlier assurances to stop military actions had been violated.

By midday, the crowd had reached an intersection in front of a factory, *Kertas Kraft Aceh*, close to the military office. Talks were held between leaders of the marchers and civilian and military chiefs but as this was in progress, more troops arrived. With tempers rising, some people in the crowd started throwing stones at the military headquarters and two motorbikes were set on fire. Then, two truckloads of troops turned up from the Guided Missile (*Arhanud*) detachment. 'I saw two Arhanud trucks heavily packed with the unit's uniformed personnel speeding from behind the army battalion and blindly firing their guns in our direction,' said one eye witness who was recovering in hospital from a gunshot wound to the back. [*Jakarta Post*, 11 May] Troops squatting and firing indiscriminately at people fleeing are clearly visible on the film taken by a cameraman who happened to be in the vicinity when the atrocity occurred.

The army later claimed that they were returning fire from the crowd, but eye witnesses strongly deny this. Seven injured victims interviewed by the press in hospital described the army's claim as 'nothing but a lie'. 'In the name of Allah, we were not there to attack anyone but to protect our area and our neighbours from any possible attack by the military,' said one victim whose kidney was perforated by a bullet. [*Jakarta Post*, 11 May] Residents nearby say that the firing went on intermittently for about half an hour. The army claimed, without producing a shred of evidence, that the *Arhanud* base was under threat which could have caused devastation in nearby build-up areas, had the base been blown up.

## Casualties

By late afternoon, scores of people, many already dead, had been taken to several hospitals and clinics; medical personnel were overwhelmed and essential medical supplies including blood soon ran out as so many of the wounded needed surgery and blood transfusions.

Surgeons have confirmed that all the dead died from gunshot wounds and that live bullets were used, refuting army claims about rubber bullets being used. Some bullets have been kept as evidence, while local groups have collected empty bullet shells found at the site of the massacre. Many of the dead and injured had multiple gunshot wounds. Medical evidence confirmed that many were shot in the back, corroborating eye-witness reports that people were shot as they fled.

Among the dead and wounded were young boys and girls and a number of women. For weeks afterwards, local newspapers reported the mounting death toll, as the seriously wounded succumbed. At the last count, forty-one had died.

Calls for an independent investigation into this, Aceh's worst ever massacre, have gone unheeded. The army has not even set up a military honour council. Yet again, army officers have acted with impunity while yet another gross human rights violation is added to the never-ending list of crimes in Aceh for which the Indonesian army must be called to account. In the words of *The Jakarta Post*, Indonesia's leading English-language daily, 'Killing in Aceh, it appears, is still the order of the day.... The promise of a

full investigation from TNI chief/Minister of Defence and Security, General Wiranto somehow rings hollow, since previous fatal incidents have never been satisfactorily explained.' [*Jakarta Post*, 6 May]



Following the massacre, thousands of villagers, feeling very insecure and afraid of what might happen next, left home to seek protection elsewhere.

On 6 May, the security forces shut down eight support posts (*posko*) set up by students near the site of the massacre to monitor the casualties and support the heavily-traumatised victims and their families. The district military commander, Colonel Johnny Wahab, issued an order for all *poskos* to be shut, describing them as 'centres for provocateurs to meet'. [*Suara Pembaruan*, 6 May] Students said they would ignore the order as there was no one caring for the stricken families.

## Wiranto: No DOM investigations

TNI Commander-in-Chief General Wiranto has announced that investigations into the appalling human rights abuses that occurred during the period from 1989 till 1998 when Aceh was treated as a 'military operational zone' are 'unnecessary' and could 'open the floodgates for similar grievances left over from the Suharto era.'

This betrays a pledge made by President Habibie during a visit to Aceh in March this year when he promised that these abuses would be investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice. Two months later, Justice Minister Muladi follow this up by saying the President had agreed to set up an independent committee to investigate human rights violations in Aceh.

Speaking at a meeting of a parliamentary commission, Wiranto said that it was 'the consensus of the government and the National Commission of Human Rights that the teams' subjects of investigation would only be right violation cases that occurred over the past year'.

But this was denied by Commission's chairman Marzuki Darusman, who said the Commission's position was that alleged abuses committed in the past year should be

investigated first but 'there is no limitation whatsoever in the (proposed) investigation'.

Acehnese leaders have said that mounting calls for a referendum to determine whether Acehnese want to remain part of Indonesia stem from the government's failure to settle injustices committed during those military operations.

Wiranto also said it would be 'unfair' to investigate only those cases in which civilians were killed during the Suharto period when numerous servicemen also lost their lives. 'Technically, it would be quite difficult to prove the alleged killings and seek those involved,' according to Wiranto.

## More troops pour in

With anti-military sentiments reaching new heights, Jakarta's answer to the crisis has not been to scale down the military presence. On the contrary, five days after the tragedy, the TNI commander-in-chief, General Wiranto announced that crack units composed largely of *Brimob* troops would be sent to Aceh 'to safeguard the general election'. A new force of combined, crack anti-disorder troops called *Pasukan Penindak Rusuh Massa (PPRM)*, Operational Troops for Mass Revolt, composed of *Brimob*, (police commandos) and army special troops have been sent to Aceh. Four hundred and fifty *PPRM* troops arrived within a week of the tragedy but today, more than 1,200 of these special forces are terrorising the population with their continual operations. The task of the *PPRM* forces in Aceh is to cope with a population in open peaceful revolt against rule from Jakarta; this involved doing everything to force people to vote, dealing with peaceful demonstrations, using provocateurs to stir up trouble, as well as engaging in armed conflict with GAM guerrillas who are operating again in Aceh.

Security in Aceh is now fully in the hands of the military with special forces playing the dominant role, as they did for ten years starting 1989 during the period known as DOM. The TNI chief of general staff, General Sugiono, made the aim clear when he said: 'We will hang on to Aceh, come what may'. [*Waspada*, 3 June] He also admitted that the resumption of DOM was under consideration.

As a sign of further possible troop reinforcements being sent to Aceh, the chief of staff of the Army Strategic Command, *KOSTRAD*, Major-General Williem da Costa announced that two rapid deployment battalions were on call, ready to be deployed in Aceh where, he admitted, the situation was now very serious. [*Jawa Pos*, 12 June]

## No interest in the elections

In at least two districts of Aceh, Pidie and North Aceh, the 7 June general election was a complete flop as so few people turned up to vote. Plans to hold the election after a delay of a few weeks had to be abandoned.

## Tens of thousands flee their homes

For months now, tens of thousands of Acehnese villagers have been fleeing their homes and seeking sanctuary in mosques, schools and other public buildings. These mass exoduses occur every time *PPRM* troops go out on operations in any region of the province. This has created a major humanitarian problem in Aceh as locations where they seek refuge lack all the basic facilities, clean water, food, medical facilities and proper sanitation.

In every case, the villagers say that the very appearance of soldiers strikes fear, especially if, as always happens, the troops start carrying out house to house searches. They frequently loot people's belongings and manhandle anyone who offers the least resistance.

Acehnese people have still not got over the trauma through which they lived for a decade up to 1998 when the region was treated as a 'military operational zone' or DOM. This resulted in thousands of deaths and disappearances, torture and rape. During the latter months of 1998, Aceh was overwhelmed by the discovery of mass graves and hundreds of people came forward to describe the terror to which they were subjected under DOM. Although DOM was lifted in August last year, no one has been brought to justice for the crimes committed. Worse still, new atrocities have been perpetrated, such as the one reported above. All this has left a residue of profound hatred for the Indonesian armed forces and the very appearance of troops sends villagers fleeing. In many cases, they abandon coffee and rice crops ready to harvest and leave their cattle unattended.

There have been reports of people who are fleeing being set upon by troops obstructing their passage, commandeering their vehicles and trying to force them to return home.

In early July, military operations in the sub-district of Tangse in Pidie resulted in the villagers from all the 29 villages fleeing their homes and leaving the district entirely deserted.

## Wiranto hides the truth

In an attempt to smother the truth about the new wave of terror engulfing Aceh, armed forces commander in chief, General Wiranto claimed that it was untrue to say that it was the presence of troops that was causing people to flee in Aceh. 'The TNI has never oppressed the Acehnese. All the pressure comes from the rebel gangs,' he alleged. 'The army never harms people or loots their property.' [*Media Indonesia*, 30 June]

The armed forces chief was clearly stung by reports in the press that the governor of Aceh, Syamsuddin Mahmud, had warned told President Habibie that 'the trauma of a decade-long military operation in Aceh was so deep that many Acehnese fled the presence of security forces' [*Jakarta Post*, 30 June]

The only person to challenge Wiranto's perversion of the truth was Munir, head of *KONTRAS*, the Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence, who wrote in protest to Wiranto, saying: 'It is absolutely clear that the TNI is using violence. This is what is causing the Acehnese people to flee. As long as things go on like this, the problems in Aceh will never be solved,' said Munir. He called on the TNI and the government to withdraw all the troop reinforcements sent to Aceh and for an end to all military operations in the province. [*Jawa Pos*, 2 July] \*



# Truth about Biak atrocity revealed

*The truth about the atrocity perpetrated by the Indonesian security forces when they attacked a peaceful crowd which had unfurled the West Papuan flag in Biak in July last year has now been revealed in a report published by a human rights organisation in Jayapura in July 1999. The report was prepared in collaboration with three Churches - two Protestant and one Catholic - which have large congregations in West Papua.*

The report, entitled 'Graves without Names, Names Without Graves: Report on Human Rights Abuses in Biak, Irian Jaya' stresses that human rights abuses have continued into the era of 'reformasi', following the downfall of Suharto in May last year.



The armed attack on unarmed civilians in Biak in July last year was in violation of the Right to Free Expression and the Right to Self-Determination as established in the UN Charter and various UN covenants. From July till October 1998, the Morning Star Flag (*Bintang Kejora*) was unfurled in several places to protest at the way West Papua had been incorporated into Indonesia in the 1960s. The actions were also in protest at numerous abuses over the past thirty years which were clearly fall into the category of crimes against humanity.

In a Summary of the Report made available at a press conference in Jayapura, it was stated that the 'Morning Star' Flag was unfurled atop a 35-metre tall water-tower in Biak harbour, supported by a crowd of between 500 and 1,000 people. However, the Indonesian authorities branded this as a separatist action, warranting a violent response. The hundreds of demonstrators were encircled and fired on early on the morning of 6 July. Residents in the neighbourhoods of Pnas, Wapnor and Saramon, in Biak City District were rounded up and driven to the harbour area where they

were ill-treated and tortured. Hundreds of people were arrested and ill-treated, dozens sustained gunshot wounds and were driven by military trucks to two hospitals where they received inadequate medical care.

The bodies of six of those who died have still not been returned to their families; the authorities say they were 'dispensed of' in the sea. Given the intimidation to which the local population was subjected, it has been extremely difficult for concerned groups to conduct thorough investigations.

The atmosphere worsened when dozens of 'mysterious corpses' were washed ashore in Biak shortly after the Biak tragedy. Without permitted autopsies, the government and the armed forces claimed that they were victims of the tsunami disaster that struck Aitape in Papua New Guinea on 17 July.

But Johanes Bonay of ELS-HAM, speaking at the press conference, said signs of torture were found on the bodies. One body was clad in the uniform of an Indonesian high school association and another in a Golkar shirt. This made a nonsense of the army's claim that the corpses were victims of the tsunami which happened on 17 July, eight days after the bodies were washed ashore. And anyway, he asked, 'do Papua New Guineans wear Golkar or Indonesian student group T-shirts?'

According to ELS-HAM IRJA, the Human Rights Study and Advocacy Institute of Irian Jaya which published the report, the casualties of the Biak tragedy were:

- Eight dead. Six of the bodies have never been recovered while the other two were not given proper medical care.
- Three people disappeared.
- Four people who suffered gunshot wounds have been crippled for life.
- Thirty-three persons were wounded and not given proper medical care.
- Hundred of local residents were driven from their homes at crack of dawn, forced to stand in the sun for hours, kicked and beaten by troops, photographed, finger-printed and interrogated at the local police station.
- 150 people were taken into custody; nineteen were tried and sentenced. Fifteen have since been released after serving sentences while three are still serving sentences in Biak Prison.

- Filep Jacob Samuel Karma who was accused of being the ring-leader of the flag incident is in Adepura Prison with an appeal to the Supreme Court against his sentence still pending.

Meanwhile, one student, Steven Suripati, was fatally wounded when security forces violently broke up a student protest in Jayapura on 3 July 1998. A schoolgirl had her legs smashed and is now paralysed. There were also arrests in Wamena and Manokwari following flag-raising protests.

Bonay warned that more Papuans would raise independence flag to express their disappointment with the central government and their powerlessness to cope with suffering and the resolution of their grievances.

'The move reflects the people's protest against the government, which they said has never heeded their aspirations.'

## Redress demanded

ELS-HAM and the three Churches called for an independent, international investigation into the Biak tragedy which should include the Indonesian, Australian, and Papua New Guinea governments, as well as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Robery F. Kennedy Memorial Centre for Human Rights.

They also called for a transparent and independent investigations of the numerous abuses that have occurred in Irian Jaya over the past 36 years of integration with Indonesia and for the findings to be made public. They called for a reversal of the decision to place troops in Irian Jaya as a so-called 'politically volatile region'. All political detainees and convicted political prisoners held in connection with

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incidents in Biak, Wamena, Manokwari, Sorong, Jayapura and elsewhere should be released. There should be an end to acts of violence which tend to be racist as well. A second national dialogue about the future status of Irian Jaya, following talks earlier this year with President Habibie, should be held so as to find a solution to many problems and ensure a more just and humane future for the people. They also called on the government to abandon plans to split Irian Jaya into three provinces, saying that there should first be a dialogue with the people on the matter.

## Flag-raising in Sorong

A crowd of about several hundred people unfurled the West Papuan flag in the town of Sorong on 6 July this year. Police quickly appeared, pulled the flag down and opened fire causing the people to disperse. One man was seriously injured and others were wounded. The man was later said to be under intensive care in hospital. Over forty people were rounded up and taken into custody.

Following the gunfire, many people, angered at the way the police had desecrated their flag, went on the rampage. One man driving a local taxi was killed. The incident caused tension in the city, with many shops closing down.

The following day, a woman named Yacomina Isir, was arrested by the police and accused of organising the flag-raising. Yacomina is the head of the Irian Jaya students' association. She is one of seventeen people being held by the police in connection with the incident. [AFP, 8 July] \*

# Joint SAS-Kopassus hostage operation

*Revelations that SAS officers from Britain and mercenaries from South Africa were involved in an operation to rescue foreign scientists taken hostage by the OPM in 1996 are contained in a documentary shown on Australian television on 12 July. The film also revealed that villagers were shot dead by white men transported by a helicopter with International Red Cross markings. Reports that SAS officers were involved were vehemently denied at the time by the British Foreign Office.*

The hostages were taken captive by the *Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM)* in January 1996 and held until their rescue on 21 May. The OPM were trying to draw international attention to their much-neglected struggle for independence. The hostages included four British scientists from Cambridge University, a Dutch couple and four Indonesian scientists. As the group were being rescued, two Indonesian hostages were hacked to death. This has always been blamed on members of the OPM, but the documentary presents a very different account.

## Blood on the Cross

The events surrounding the rescue and the killing of villagers occurred as negotiations between the hostage-takers and the International Red Cross (ICRC) broke down on 8 May. OPM leader Kelly Kwalik changed his mind about releasing the hostages for reasons that are still unclear. The ICRC which had been making frequent heli-

copter flights bringing supplies to the hostages and to meet their captors, decided to discontinue its efforts and its chief of mission returned to Jakarta. Reports that a plane with ICRC markings landed in the village of Geselama, and that white soldiers opened fire on unsuspecting villagers, killing many people, are now confirmed.

The documentary, entitled *Blood on the Cross*, was broadcast by *Four Corners*. It reveals that the rescue operation involved members of the British crack regiment, SAS and mercenaries from the South Africa-based company, Executive Outcomes. The SAS officers were hostage-rescue experts who trained Indonesian commandos in the use of high-tech equipment to track down the hostages. This equipment which was said, at the time, to have come from Singapore, consisted of a 'drone', a small unmanned aircraft with heat-sensory devices.

Most of the mercenaries employed by EO and the other well-known mercenary company, Sandline, whose



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operations in Papua New Guinea caused such a scandal that the Julius Chan government was forced to resign, are former SAS soldiers. Their inclusion in an SAS operation is almost automatic. Their main role would probably be to handle 'front line' duties, such as gunning down villagers in Geselama. Had an SAS soldier been caught doing such a thing, it would have been disastrous for the British government.



**Major General Prabowo (left) in better days, here with General Wiranto. At present Prabowo lives in exile in Jordan.**

Following the screening of the film, the Foreign Office again denied SAS involvement in the operation, but the London *Times* was told by authoritative sources close to the regiment that four to six of its members had indeed participated. [*The Times*, 13 July 1999]

The British embassy in Jakarta appointed its military attaché, Ivor Helberg, a former SAS colonel, to provide specialised assistance and advice to Major-General Prabowo, then commander of *Kopassus*, the Indonesian elite commandos who got all the credit for the rescue operation. At the time, the British Government insisted that only Scotland Yard detectives were sent to Irian Jaya to give advice on how to negotiate with the kidnappers. TAPOL's Carmel Budiardjo was repeatedly told by Foreign Office officials that the British Government was urging the Indonesians not to mount a military operation to rescue the hostages, for fear of endangering their lives. It now emerges that this is precisely what the British Government itself was doing, placing their own citizens at risk.

### Villagers gunned down

On the day that the hostages were taken away from Geselama village where they were supposed to have been released, a helicopter with ICRC markings landed on a clearing in the village. Thinking this was the ICRC, villagers approached the heli and were gunned down by men who alighted; number of villagers were killed. At the time, TAPOL received several reports about these killings: one gave the names of seven villagers who were killed, while another gave a much higher death toll.

Some of the hostages later said that after leaving their camp in Geselama, they heard shooting, explosions,

(possibly hand-grenades) and saw a great deal of gunfire smoke. [See *TAPOL Bulletin*, No. 135, June 1996. Much of what we reported in that issue is now confirmed by the *Four Corners* documentary.]

One of the hostages, Daniel Start, interviewed by Mark Davis who made the documentary, said that the murdered villagers had been lured to their deaths by the ICRC flag and gunned down by four or five white people, with Indonesians behind them. He said that eight people were killed and many wounded. He also said that the two Indonesians hacked to death were killed by the grieving civilian friends and relatives of innocent people 'murdered days before under extraordinary circumstances'. [See *AFP's* account of the documentary, 13 July]

The ICRC denied that it had authorised the use of one of its helicopters but failed to investigate reports which were circulating widely at the time that its helicopter had been used in this way. TAPOL which monitored the events surrounding the hostage crisis almost daily, warned at the time that the ICRC was becoming too closely associated with the Indonesian military, compromising its neutral stance.

### Crackdown follows hostage crisis

Once the hostages had been released and had flown home, the British government lost interest in the area and in the fate of the local people who became the victims of the crackdown that followed in the wake of the hostages' release. The hostage crisis and the combined SAS-*Kopassus* military operation left the area in the grip of military control, forcing villagers to flee their homes and gardens. A wave of killings took place as revealed several years later in a report published by the Catholic and Protestant Churches in Mimika. The atrocities were concentrated in the villages of Bela, Alama, Jila, Mapnduma and Geselama, the region where the hostage crisis unfolded. As a result of military operations which continued for several years, eleven people were killed and many more wounded, while scores of people died from hunger and disease, because they lost control of their gardens and hunting grounds. [See *TAPOL Bulletin*, No 147, July 1998] \*

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#### *continued from page 3*

countries around the world, including my own.' A State Department official, James Foley said they had made it 'unmistakably clear' that 'the actions of the militias ... are unacceptable'.

Other governments have been less forthcoming. The British Foreign Office did summon the Indonesian ambassador to deliver a reprimand but public statements are not the British style, nor has the European Union made its views known on the latest developments.

As we go to press, it remains to be seen whether the hardliners backing the militia and the violence-related strategy in East Timor will be forced into a climbdown, whether the militias will be disarmed and disbanded, the tens of thousands of refugees will be free to return home, in short whether the secure environment necessary for the Referendum will be created. \*



# Pramoedya warmly welcomed everywhere

*Indonesia's most celebrated writer, Pramoedya Ananta Toer who spent 14 years in detention has just completed a visit to the US, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany and France. He received several awards, including a doctorate from the University in Michigan, Ann Arbor and the Chevalier d'Ordre des Arts des Lettres from the French Government. Pram was accompanied by his wife Maemunah and his publisher and friend Joesoef Isak, like Pram an ex-prisoner of the Suharto era.*

Pram's works which have been translated in all the major languages are read in all the corners of the earth. The 74-year-old author has a powerful personality and holds strong political views which is what made him such a thorn in the flesh for the Suharto regime.

He was arrested within days of Suharto's seizure of power. His huge collection of documents was confiscated, a major tragedy not only for him personally but for anyone interested in Indonesian history, and his house was seized. He was among the first batch of untried political prisoners to be sent to the notorious prison island of Buru in 1969. He became Indonesia's best known political prisoner, a constant embarrassment for the military. Among the last to be released, he returned to Jakarta in 1979, but like all the hundreds of thousands of ex-political prisoners, he remained a virtual prisoner in the big jail called Indonesia.

The ex-political prisoners were stripped of their basic civil rights. Restrictions were imposed; they were required to report regularly and were banned from leaving the places where they lived without special permission.

## He continued to write on Buru

Long before Suharto took power, Pram was one of Indonesia's most celebrated writers. He had the tenacity, under appalling conditions in Buru to write a tetralogy. The first volume called *Bumi Manusia* (This Earth of Mankind) became a blockbuster and brought Pram international recognition and nomination for the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Pram's works are widely available abroad but are still banned in Indonesia. However, one of the best-known book shops in Jakarta, close to the National Parliament, has his works prominently displayed on their bookshelves. It is surely only a matter of time before the post-Suharto authorities will decide to lift this ridiculous ban.

Pram has been invited to travel abroad many times but until now, he always refused. He was afraid that he would end up like Solzhenitsjin, who was not allowed to return home by the Soviet authorities. But the invitation this time came from his US publisher, for a nation-wide launch of his Buru island memoirs, *The Mute's Soliloquy*. This was also an opportunity for several universities in the US to give him awards, including the University of California in Los Angeles.

Everywhere, Pram addressed packed halls. Hundreds of people turned up to listen to Pram, novelist, political activ-

ist and ex-political prisoner. For the first time, Pram met his international readership and he was very moved by the enthusiasm he experienced in all the countries he visited. More invitations are likely, from Germany to attend the Frankfurt Book Fair, for a book launch in Norway, and a visit to the UK.



## Pramoedya in the Netherlands

Pram really deserves this kind of international acclaim. His consistent opposition to the Suharto dictatorship has inspired many of the young generation in Indonesia. But many Indonesian intellectuals dislike Pram because his strong views reflect their own cowardice. During the Suharto years, very few intellectuals dared to speak out. Pram often uses the term *tiarap* (face flat on the ground) to describe the mentality of most Indonesians during the New Order dictatorship.



## Putting Suharto on trial

Pram gave a short interview to TAPOL in Holland, the day before he left for Indonesia.

*You are now reaching the end of a 3-month trip abroad, when you visited the US, Canada, Holland, Germany and France. This was your first trip abroad since you were released from prison in the late seventies. What are your first impressions, having met so many fans and readers from different parts of the world?*

I was really surprised to receive such a warm and enthusiastic welcome during this entire trip. I never expected that my works had such a large audience.

*During your travels did you ever face problems with the Indonesian authorities or did you feel at ease?*

As far as I could see, there was no hassle at all from the authorities. That's why I see my journey abroad as a victory for me against Indonesian fascism and militarism. As you know, in my case, the ban on my going abroad has not yet been lifted. And my books are still officially black-listed.

This victory was also thanks to the achievements of the younger generation who overthrew Suharto. The fact that the invitation came from the US was important because the US authorities gave me a five-year multiple entry visa without any fuss.

*Bung Pram, I want to raise with you one stumbling block in history. We are approaching a new millennium. During the present century, we have faced huge human tragedies, two world wars, the Holocaust and so many other horrors. It is a bitter fact that the international community has taken no moves to place Suharto in the same category as Hitler, Pol Pot and other gross perpetrators of crimes against humanity. Can you comment on this?*

Yes, it is indeed bitter. When human tragedies occur, causing many victims, an international commission is immediately set up to start an inquiry. But it is different with Indonesia. The overthrow fall of Sukarno was the result of a conspiracy between multinational capital and a wing within the Indonesian army. The aim of the conspiracy was to seize control of Indonesia's abundant riches, including the use of its cheap labour force. These economic interests created a political atmosphere in which mass killings and gross human rights violations were completely ignored.

This had huge consequences for Indonesia. A power was erected based on fear and terror. The Indonesian mentality became one of *tiarap* (lying flat on the floor) to the extent that many Indonesians became hypocritical, in particular people within the bureaucracy, whose duty it was to obey and serve the wishes of Suharto. This kind of mentality continues to this very day. Even in this post-Suharto era, there has been no official pressure to put him on trial because all those who are in charge of the legal procedures are his cronies. They have all been involved in the crimes against humanity for which Suharto is guilty, including killing, violation of human rights, the looting of Indonesia's resources and the exploitation of cheap Indonesian labour. It is difficult to imagine that a trial against Suharto could take place in Indonesia.

*Let's hope it's a case of better late than never. Suharto is still alive and the international community is finding legal means to pursue people like Suharto. What are your concrete suggestions for people at home and abroad to make sure that a trial of Suharto actually happens?*

I believe there are major obstacles. He still enjoys protection from multinational capital. In this period of history, victory is in the hands of capitalism to such an extent that capitalism has created the term globalisation. This is a major problem. Multinational capital is protecting their partner in the conspiracy. It is indeed paramount for international public opinion to step up pressure - even though there are limits to what can be achieved.

During my visit to Washington D.C. I said that conditions inside Indonesia make it impossible to put Suharto on trial there because all his cronies are still in power. The only possibility would be to take him abroad by force and put him on trial in another country but it is difficult to imagine which country would be willing to do this. Who knows, when East Timor becomes independent, he can be taken to East Timor. That would be the simplest way.

*The international human rights community had made an unprecedented leap forward with the Pinochet affair. We need to find international legal loopholes to prosecute Suharto. It is really terrible to think that one of the twentieth century's worst human rights perpetrators can still walk freely on this earth.*

That's the whole point. The killings that started with Suharto's *Orde Baru* are being continued by the *OrBaba* (the new *Orde Baru*). And the tools being used to carry out these killings still originate from the North. They have become accomplices in the killings. Practically all the countries in the North are involved in weapon deliveries for the mass killings and human rights violations, and peaceful demonstrators being beaten up by security officers. The solution still seems to be far off. The best solution would be for East Timor to become independent and grab hold of Suharto. I don't know what means we can use. The people of East Timor are the ones to have been the worst affected by Suharto's crimes.

*Yes, that's true. Every Timorese family has lost loved ones during the Indonesian occupation, victims of the Suharto regime.*

I have often quoted Sukarno as saying that humanity is universal. This means that everybody on this globe has the right to indict Suharto because of his crimes against humanity. But does the international community care enough to start investigating him?. That's the problem.

*Bung Pram, thank you so much !*

★

# 1965 massacre: Suharto must be indicted

*A former political prisoner who spent 20 years in prison is spearheading investigations into the massacre of hundreds of thousands of people in 1965/1966 after Suharto seized power. The massacres were directed against the Indonesian Communist Party and led to its physical and political annihilation. In Australia, new evidence has come to light showing that the government there received detailed, up-to-date reports as the massacre proceeded, but did nothing to stop the killings.*

A woman now in her seventies is devoting the remaining years of her life to investigating the massacres that swept across Indonesia within days of General Suharto seizing power in October 1965. Sulami was deputy secretary-general of the women's organisation, *GERWANI* which was outlawed in 1965. She is one of a group of former political prisoners who have set up the Indonesian Institute for the Study of the 1965/1966 Massacre and is herself working with people in Central Java to exhume the bodies of the victims of the massacre.

Sulami is the focus of a documentary screened in Australia last August by Mike Carey on *Dateline*, entitled: 'Indonesia's Killing Fields'. The film is a damning exposure of Suharto's role in the killings and provides plenty of evidence for Indonesia's former dictator to be indicted for crimes against humanity.

The film interviews people who took part in the death squads, Muslim leaders who studied Hitler's *Mein Kampf* for advice on what to do, and an army officer who boasts of his role in 'cleaning up' the communists.

## Suharto must be tried

Sulami speaks of her determination to push for Suharto to be tried for crimes against humanity because of the campaign of slaughter which he organised in 1965 to destroy the PKI which was then a major political force in Indonesia.

The film identifies two army officers who played a leading, personal role in the killings. One of them, Sarwo Edhie, is now dead. The other Kemal Idris, now a member of the National Front (*Barison Nasional*) which brings together a number of retired army officers, makes no secret of the role he played in killing communists, on instructions from Suharto, then a major-general in command of *KOSTRAD*, the army's Strategic Command. He said:

*We were given the task to clean up the PKI in West Java and Central Java.. So I went to every part to clean the PKI up. It was very quick, very clean. By the end of 1965, their movement was not active any more.*

Among the several Muslim leaders interviewed who were complicit in the massacres was Jusuf Hasjim of the *Nahdlatul Ulama*, who recently set up a political party to contest the recent elections. He first explained how Muslim landlords had been the target of land seizures by peasants in the 1960s. He was at the time a leader of the NU's youth

organisation *Ansor* and decided that action had to be taken against the mass organisations affiliated to the PKI, the youth organisation *Pemuda Rakjat*, *GERWANI*, and the peasants' union, *BTI*.

*To resist their pressure, we needed to set up a youth organisation. In order to do this, we studied Mein Kampf by Hitler, to learn how he set up his youth organisation. We set up Banser which would function a bit like the military. It got military training. All this was done with the knowledge of the military although they pretended that they didn't know anything.*



Abdurrahman Wahid, chairman of the NU, has a very different view of the tragedy. Interviewed towards the end, he says that justice must be done, adding that people know that it was Suharto who was involved in the killing of the six generals, the event that later became known as the G30S and was blamed on the PKI as justification for slaughtering so many hundreds of thousands of people.

There are moving shots of Sulami and her colleagues digging in places where scores of people are known to have been slain. Holding part of a human skeleton, Sulami speaks of her determination to have Suharto indicted. ★



## Police open fire on demonstrators

*Shots rang out in Jakarta on 1 July as demonstrators tried to enter the Elections Commission office during a protest organised by the PRD. More than twenty people were rushed to hospital, some suffering from gunshot wounds. Following widespread condemnation of this use of brute force, the PRD labour activist, Dita Indah Sari was suddenly released. Meanwhile, human rights activists say police behaviour has not changed since the force was separated from the armed forces.*

The demonstration outside the office of the General Election Committee (KPU) was in protest against irregularities during the elections on 7 June by the former ruling party GOLKAR. The demonstrators wanted to meet KPU members to demand that GOLKAR be disqualified from the election.

### Shot from behind

The demonstration started as a peaceful rally of hundreds of members of the PRD, the People's Democratic Party, through Jakarta. On its way, the size swelled with hundreds more joining in. The demonstrators were also calling for an end to the Indonesian army's *dwifungsi*, or dual function, giving it a dominant role in political life.

When the crowd reached the KPU office, they were confronted by about fifty police who were armed with rifles, pistols, bamboo clubs and tear gas grenades. The crowd was addressed by PRD activists, including Andi Arief, who was abducted by *Kopassus* forces shortly before the downfall of Suharto, and Hendri Kuok who is the party's representative on the KPU.

Leaders asked KPU officials for the crowd to be allowed to enter the building to meet members of the Committee but were told only a few dozen would be allowed in. The crowd rejected this and decided to stage a sit-in inside the building. As they moved towards the entrance, police opened fire without warning, shooting plastic bullets at point-blank range. Several people were hit while others were beaten up, also sustaining serious injuries. The crowd quickly dispersed but even as they were fleeing, the shooting continued, with some being hit from behind. Those who fled found their path blocked by eight truckloads of *Brimob* (police commando) troops.

In all, more than one hundred people were wounded in the initial shooting and the fracas which followed. The most seriously injured was a PRD member standing in the front line. Dytha Caturani was pulled behind the police line, shot in the back and brutally beaten while lying on the ground. She sustained severe injuries to the face and head from police jackboots. Others who were also hospitalised required operations to remove bullets. At least seven of the wounded had sustained gunshot wounds.

### Dita Indah Sari released

Four days after the brutal attack on the PRD rally, one of its best known activists was suddenly released from prison. It is widely believed that her unexpected release was in response to the outcry that followed the police attack on the PRD's rally. There had also been many work-

ers' demonstrations outside the prison where she was being held, calling for her release. There has also been strong international pressure from trade unions and from Amnesty International, calling for her release.

Dita Sari who chaired the party's trade union centre, the PPBI (Indonesian Center for Workers' Struggle) had been held for more than two years in Tangerang Prison, West Java. She was arrested in June 1996 following a huge workers' action in Surabaya, East Java. Along with other PRD leaders, she was later tried and sentenced to five years.

In December last year, Dita Sari was told that she could be released on condition that she undertook not to engage in any political activities, an offer which she refused. In June this year, workers' committees from several regions in Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi formed a new workers' organisation, the FNPBI (National Front for the Struggle of the Indonesian Working Class) which elected Dita Sari to chair the organisation in recognition for her consistency in struggling for the interest of workers.

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