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Mass killings sweep across East Timor

In the first half of April, there were three massacres in East Timor, in Liquisa, Dili and Suai. All are part of Operasi Sapu Jagad, the military operation designed by ABRI. In a combined operation by para-military death-squads and ABRI troops, East Timorese civilians were butchered. For these killers nothing is sacred; church sanctuaries were attacked and Bishop Belo's convoy was ambushed.

The killing spree, the first major operation of *Operasi Sapu Jagad* or Global Clean-Sweep Operation (see following article), started in the Liquisa sub-district on 4 April in a village called Dato, three kms west of Liquisa town. Two dozen members of the newly-established pro-integration para-military group *BMP* (*Besi Merah Putih*, Red-and-White Iron) attacked the village, known to be a bastion of pro-independence supporters. They attacked and destroyed the house of the village head. The attacking force came from Maubara to the west where pro-integration forces were in control. The Dato villagers managed to chase the *BMP* group away and they fled to the headquarters of *Koramil*, the sub-district military command.

Early next morning, an attack was launched on Dato from two directions by the *BMP* para-military thugs backed this time by soldiers from *Koramil*. The *BMP* were armed with standard ABRI weapons including M16s, AKs and SKS semi-automatic rifles. Five people were killed and eight were seriously injured. A dozen houses in the villages were razed to the ground. Two priests from nearby Liquisa tried in vain to calm the situation by holding discussions with the *Koramil* commander. Most of the terrorised villagers fled and sought refuge in the Liquisa church.

Slaughter in the church

On the next day, 6 April, an even bigger force launched an attack on Liquisa church where two thousand refugees, many fleeing from the attack on Dato were taking refuge. This time, the attacking force consisted of soldiers from Battalion 142, from *Kodim* 1639 Liquisa, from *Koramil* Liquisa, police and Brimob troops as well as *BMP* death-squads led by Eurico Guterres. The two priests were taken from the church to the local military command and shortly after, the attack started. Under the protection of Brimob troops surrounding the church who fired into the air, the para-militaries started shooting into the church. A tear gas grenade was thrown into the church and the refugees taking

sanctuary there scattered, trying to escape from the building. The scores of people trapped inside and outside the church were then set upon by men armed with knives, machetes and firearms and mercilessly stabbed, hacked and shot to death. The reports from human rights groups in Dili describe the sheer horror of that moment.

The parish priest, Fr Rafael dos Santos, published an account of what happened, explaining that the sadistic brutalities commenced after he and another priest had been removed from the premises and taken to the local military command. 'Their aim,' he said, 'was to murder all the people in the church.' When he returned a few hours later, all the bodies had been removed. 'There was blood every-

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EAST TIMOR

where and my bedroom was full of blood. The Indonesian armed forces and government must be held responsible for the massacre at Liquisa church,' he said. [*Suara Timor Timur*, 9 April]

The Liquisa massacre is undoubtedly the worst human rights atrocity to have struck the people of East Timor since the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991. While Bishop Belo sticks to a figure of 25 deaths, based on the number of corpses heaped outside the church, human rights groups have compiled a list of 57 dead and 35 wounded. Fourteen more people are reported as having disappeared.



Distress among the people in Liquisa

Later two army trucks drove up to the church compound and soldiers loaded the corpses to be taken to an unknown destination for mass burial.

On the following Sunday, Bishop Belo went to Liquisa for Mass but when he arrived, the church was empty as people were still too afraid to venture from their homes. He had never before found a church empty when he arrived to take a Mass. He asked for the church bell to be rung and gradually several hundred brave souls turned up. Later, on the way back to Dili, the Bishop's convoy, with a number of Indonesian and foreign journalists, was attacked. Rocks were tossed into the cars, one of which nearly killed John Aglionby, correspondent of *The Guardian* in Jakarta.

The attack on Liquisa church was an attempt to spread the influence of para-militaries westward from Maubara to Liquisa where pro-independence support is strong. It was also aimed at terrifying East Timorese into accepting the will of pro-integration forces and a warning to Dili, little more than a hundred kilometres to the east, that it was next on the hit-list.

The Dili massacre

Eleven days later, on 17 April, the capital Dili was the chosen target of *Operasi Sapu Jagad*. The day of horror started with a rally convened by the *Milisi Pro-Otonomi*

(MPO), the pro-autonomy militia, the structure headed by War Commander Joao Tavares and his deputy Eurico Guterres. The rally was held outside the governor's office and attended by Governor Abilio Soares, military commander Colonel Tono Suratman, chief of Police Colonel Timbul Silaen and other government and military officials. Members of para-military death-squads from other parts of East Timor were present. The large crowd consisted mainly of local residents trucked in from the suburbs of Dili who had been summoned from their houses by soldiers at local army commands and ordered to attend the rally.

Tavares said the pro-autonomy militias had a history dating back to 1975 of supporting the Indonesian invaders against *FRETILIN*. In a speech full of venom and hatred,

Guterres said it was the duty of the para-militaries to deal with the 'defilers' of integration. 'As from today, I order all pro-integration militia to clean up the defilers of integration. Arrest and kill them if necessary. I, Eurico Guterres, will take full responsibility.' He then declared that the home of Manuel Carrascalao in Dili was the main target of the day's operations. Guterres is a close associate of the disgraced Lt General Prabowo and the elite force, *Kopassus*. Formerly chief of *Garda Paksi*, a youth killer squad set up at the instigation of Prabowo, Guterres now heads a para-military group called *Aitarak* (the Tetum word for 'thorn') which is based in Dili and liaises constantly with *SIGINT*, the intelligence network of *Kopassus*.

Following the rally, the paras careered around the town, shooting at random into the air terrifying inhabitants, and attacking a number of houses and buildings connected with pro-independence activities, during the course of which several people were killed. One target was the CNRT office which had been vacated following the Liquisa massacre, another the home of CNRT's Dili chief, Leandro Isaak and the home of David Diaz Ximenes, another top CNRT activist.

In the afternoon, the paras went to the home of Manuel Carrascalao, a well-known businessman, formerly a member of the local assembly who has become vociferously pro-independence. His younger brother, Mario, served as governor of East Timor for ten years. Several years ago, Manuel and others like him who had formerly been pro-Indonesia, set up the Movement for East Timorese Unity and Reconciliation (GRPRTT), the secretariat of which is in his home. More recently he has also acted as spokesperson for the CNRT in Dili.

In preparation for the attack, roads leading to the house were blocked off. Shortly before the attack, Manuel Carrascalao and his daughter Chris had left the house to go to the military commander's office to warn him that the paras were causing havoc in the capital and were likely to attack their home. Colonel Tono Suratman who clearly knew what was going on as he had a few hours earlier, attended the rally at which MPO leader Guterres called for pro-independence people to be killed, told Manuel. 'We have to be neutral. You Timorese must sort this out yourselves.'

There were about 170 people taking refuge at the Carrascalao home. The attack was unrelenting; many people were slain in cold blood, including women, children and babies. Among the dead was Manuelito Carrascalao, the 17-year-old adopted son of Manuel who had been doing what he could to protect the refugees. He was shot in the head, stabbed in the stomach and had his shoulder sliced.

Several harrowing accounts of the sadistic killings inside the house have been given by survivors, one by a man who was gravely wounded but was not done to death as were other wounded people, because he pretended to be dead. He said he saw women being shot and slashed and babies snatched from their mothers, then held by the feet and their heads smashed against the wall.

Irish Foreign Minister in Dili

It so happened that the Irish Foreign Minister, David Andrews, arrived in Dili on a scheduled visit just as these terrible events were unfolding. In his entourage was Tom Hyland, Ireland's leading East Timor activist. The minister was with military commander Suratman when Manuel Carrascalao arrived to ask for protection. A few hours later, while visiting Bishop Belo, Manuel and Chris Carrascalao arrived in great distress to say that Manuelito had been killed. He decided to cut short his visit to Dili and return immediately to Jakarta to start alerting other world leaders about the terrible events in Dili.

The death toll from Dili's nightmare on 17 April cannot be accurately determined because many of the bodies as well as the wounded at the Carrascalao home were removed by the army to unknown destinations. The generally accepted figure is that thirty people were slain in a day of unbridled evil. Two days later, Bishop Belo was allowed to visit the hospital where twelve bodies were being kept, to say prayers and visit the many wounded. It took several days before the Carrascalao family were able to take possession of Manuelito's body for burial. It is not clear whether the other bodies were buried in a mass grave or returned to the families.

Most of the wounded were treated in Motael Clinic, with families doing what they could to prevent relatives from being treated at the military hospital, Wira Husada. There is a severe shortage of surgeons and medication to cope with scores of people wounded in Liquisa, Dili and elsewhere. Since the massacres, Motael's only surgeon has been joined by four volunteer doctors to help cope with the emergency.

Wiranto pays a visit

With many governments and world leaders as well as the UN secretary-general loudly condemning the slaughter and holding the Indonesian armed forces responsible for these events, ABRI commander-in-chief General Wiranto made a hurried visit to Dili for damage limitation purposes. While calls intensified for the para-militaries to be disarmed and disbanded, he made it clear that arms supplied by ABRI to these death-squads would not be withdrawn.

All that he could come up with was the ceremonial signing of a so-called peace accord between 'the two warring factions'. In fact there is only one warring faction in East Timor, the para-militaries and their ABRI backers and manipulators. The signatories were from the pro-integration leaders and from the CNRT as well as from the East Timor military and police chiefs. The document is not worth the paper it was written on.

The Suai killings

At the time the peace accord was being signed in Dili, more killings were underway in Suai, a town located in the south-west corner of East Timor, not far from the border with West Timor. Information about these killings is sketchy because of communications difficulties and the fact that the area has been sealed off. There are reports of scores of people disappearing and bodies being thrown into a local river, some of them severely mutilated or decapitated. The local parish priest, Fr Hilario has told some callers that the death toll is probably as high as one hundred but he has only been able to identify a smaller number of victims by name. The family of one victim, Abilio Pires, told relatives abroad that his body was sighted lying in a field several days after he went missing but they were too afraid to go out and take it home.

Killings in Ermera

Ermera, in one of East Timor's most prosperous regions, benefits from a lucrative trade in coffee. It lies not far from Dili, to the south-east, and hence is more accessible to visiting foreign journalists.

Visiting the region for *The Observer*, John Aglionby was informed that as Wiranto's peace accord was being signed in Dili on 21 April, a village chief, **Bartholemew Borromeu** was being beaten to death by local army officers. 'His skull was completely smashed,' said the local priest Fr Sancho Amaral. He was also the local representative of the CNRT, according to the priest, and had survived a torture session the previous Sunday. 'It's all about intimidation,' he said.

A vicious campaign of terror by the military had been underway for two weeks already. 'People are being taken away every day to be interrogated and beaten,' the priest said, and a massacre had occurred in the remote village of Talimoro. A bus driver said that at least six people are known to have been killed there, 'but everyone is too frightened to go and find out what really happened'. Others believe the death toll there could be as high as twelve. Since then, at least seven people have been killed in Ermera, in a campaign to pick off CNRT leaders. They include a local councillor, **Antonio da Lima** who was shot in the village of Gleno, followed in the next few days by four more deaths. 'They were all killed by soldiers or East Timorese territorial troops,' said Fr Amaral. He described the past few weeks as the worst in his two and a half years in Ermera. [*The Observer*, 25 April 1999]

Five shot dead in Cailaco

Following an attack by *FALINTIL* on 13 April when a pro-integration figure Manuel Soares Gama in Cailaco, Bobonaro district was killed, the local military commander in Bobonaro, Lt-Colonel Burhanudin Siagian rounded up five people in the district and shot them dead in the presence of the local administration head and the police chief. This military commander who operates in liaison with the *Halilintar* para-military death squad is quoted elsewhere in this issue (see next item) as saying he will stop at nothing to sabotage the Habibie initiative on East Timor. *

ABRI and the para-military death squads

On 17 April a wave of terror struck the people of Dili, the capital of East Timor. Truckloads of armed pro-integrasi thugs entered the capital for a rally at the governor's office and later went on the rampage, attacking the homes of pro-independence supporters. Eye-witnesses confirm the direct involvement of Indonesian security officers in the operation.

At least a thousand members of para-military death squads roamed the streets of Dili on that day, brandishing firearms and machetes. Eurico Guterres, deputy war commander of the pro-integration forces, as he is called, told his followers to use violence if necessary to cleanse the territory of pro-independence groups. Several reports confirm that Indonesian soldiers and policemen were among the para-militaries. Soldiers and police on duty as the violence spread through the city stood by watching and cheering as people were killed and houses ransacked. At least thirty people were killed, including Manuelito, the adopted son of Manuel Carrascalao, a prominent pro-independence politician and spokesperson of the CNRT.

In the weeks leading up to 17 April, the violent activities of para-military/ABRI death squads escalated dramatically. New groups emerged bearing fearsome names like *Besi Merah Putih* (Red and White Iron), *Mahidi* (Dead or Alive for Indonesia) and *Darah Merah* (Red Blood). Their leaflets are written in strident, militaristic language with undisguised calls for their enemies to be annihilated.

The Dili campaign of terror occurred 11 days after a church compound in Liquisa full of refugees was attacked by para-military/ABRI forces, killing at least 25 villagers.

The new groups differ in important respects from older para-military gangs used for years as auxiliary units by the Indonesian territorial forces. The groups that have emerged since 27 January when President Habibie announced that the East Timorese would be given a choice about their future are part of a clear military strategy.

Operasi Sapu Jagad

The strategy is being implemented by means of an operation code-named *Operasi Sapu Jagad* (Global Clean-Sweep Operation). The name is Sanskrit, the language often used by the army and hardly likely to be chosen by Timorese. The aim of Global Clean-Sweep Operation is to



Show of force in front of the governor's office by the para-military

assert that East Timor's integration with Indonesia is irreversible and anyone supporting independence must be dealt with. Para-military death squads have been created, trained and armed to front the operation and make it look as though it is an East Timorese campaign. Their statements are belligerent in the extreme and they have warned all Timorese civil servants who support independence to abandon their homes and surrender the facilities they enjoy as Indonesian civil servants. ABRI planned the operation and is in command of its implementation.

The events on 17 April were directed primarily against those working for the Indonesian administration while openly supporting independence as well as those who formerly sided with Indonesia but subsequently become pro-independence advocates. Since 27 January, more and more East Timorese officials came out in support of independence, encouraged by the change in the political climate to express openly what they had been feeling for years.

In earlier acts of terror, several highly-placed civil servants were targeted. During an incident in Maubara on 2 February, the deputy-head of the Liquisa DPRD (local assembly) was attacked by members of *Besi Merah Putih*. Another victim was Carlos Alberto, a senior official at the

plantations office in Liquisa. The editorial office of the Dili-based daily, *Suara Timor Timur* was destroyed on 17 April. The paper had become increasingly even-handed and published Father Rafael's harrowing account of the Liquisa tragedy which occurred on 6 April. The paramilitary/ABRI accused *STT* of being the mouthpiece for pro-independence forces.

Operasi Sapu Jagad has three main aims. The first is to create the impression that there is a civil war in East Timor. Hard-liners in ABRI and the Indonesian government have argued that a referendum in East Timor is a recipe for civil war and to prove it, terrorist actions have been launched, using the para-militaries. But recruitment has been difficult. Many villagers fled their homes rather than join, while many of those who joined did so unwillingly or out of fear. There is reason to believe that some para-military recruits are from West Timor. TV footage shows well-trained men wielding semi-automatic rifles, meaning that they received combat training in Java from ABRI officers.

The second objective is to sabotage the ballot made possible by Habibie's initiative which infuriated many of the political elite in Jakarta, not least key factions in ABRI. Stunned at first by the Habibie initiative, it took time for them to muster their forces but now, the hopes sparked by Habibie's offer to the Timorese have been overwhelmed by the brutality of the para-militaries/ABRI on the ground. The fact that ABRI officers openly participate in or lead *Sapu Jagad* operations suggests that important sections within the Indonesian administration also support it.

The third objective is to destroy the CNRT, the National Council of Timorese Resistance. The more open political atmosphere in East Timor that followed the fall of Suharto encouraged many groups, including the CNRT, to abandon clandestinity and organise publicly. The CNRT opened an office in Dili. Many local CNRT officials in the localities have been targeted in the recent terror. There are also reports of a sustained attack by more than a thousand regular troops on *FALINTIL* bases in Aileu and Manatuto.

Divisions within ABRI over Timor

ABRI is clearly split on many issues and none is more divisive than East Timor. The largest faction, including those who planned and are executing *Operasi Sapu Jagad*, hold the view that East Timor's integration is irreversible. They include a number of local military commanders in East Timor including Liquisa *Kodim* 1638 (district military command) commander, Lt Colonel Asep Kuswanto and Ermera *Kodim* 1637 commander, Lt Colonel Muhammad Nur. Another is Lt Colonel Burhanudin Siagian, commander of Bobonaro *Kodim*. A contact recently had a chat with this commander at a roadside stall in Batugede. He was with twenty paras from the *Halilintar* death squad and told our source that he could not accept the Habibie decision and would do whatever necessary to prevent a change in the status quo in East Timor. At Dili headquarters, the key figure is Colonel Mudjiono, deputy-commander of *Wira Dharma Korem* 164. (This officer's presence in East Timor is curious as there is no tradition for *korems* to have deputy commanders).

Top generals who play a particularly active role include Major-General Adam Damiri, commander of the *Udayana* Territorial Military Command which includes East Timor, and Lt-General Tyasno Sudarso, the head of *BIA*, military intelligence. His predecessor at *BIA*, Lt-General Zacky Anwar Makarim who spent many years as an intelligence

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officer in East Timor, was in Dili on 17 April and sources now say that he was probably in overall charge of the horrific events on that day. Prominent East Timor veterans, now retired, including Generals Benny Murdani and Tri Sutrisno, as well as the sacked Lt General Prabowo are also known to be part of this faction, as well as Lt General Yunus Yosfiah, Information Minister in the Habibie cabinet who has been implicated in the murder of five television journalists in Balibo in October 1975.

The involvement of top military intelligence officers strongly suggests that *Operasi Sapu Jagad* is a military intelligence operation. It is reminiscent of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor in 1975. That started with an intelligence operation code-named *Operasi Komodo* to destabilise the region and give the impression that pro-Indonesian forces among the East Timorese were substantial. History often repeats itself; in East Timor it is doing so with a vengeance.

Another faction argues against letting East Timor go because ABRI has made huge sacrifices, losing thousands of men in combat in East Timor. They will take a lot of convincing before accepting that the invasion and occupation was a grievous mistake of the previous government and for the sake of justice and peace, the people of East Timor should be allowed to determine their own future. They should understand that clinging on to East Timor can only mean yet more sacrifices by Indonesian soldiers.

The present ABRI leadership under Wiranto have accepted President Habibie's policy of letting the East Timorese choose. But although they hold key positions at the top, their standing within ABRI is very weak. It will depend on the political will of the Habibie government plus pressure from civil society to persuade this group to stick to its position.



Another tiny group in ABRI now accept that Indonesia's annexation of East Timor is colonialism and Indonesia should leave East Timor as soon as possible. This view has been publicly expressed by retired Lt-General Hasnan Habib and is also shared by a small group of serving officers. This is the only faction that has broken with the para-

digm of Suharto's New Order. It will take time before this group becomes an influential voice among ABRI officers.

But in addition to the three objectives of *Operasi Sapu Jagad* already mentioned, there is another which goes beyond the question of East Timor, that of stirring up trouble in Indonesia which is happening in so many parts of the country. Disturbances in East Timor are particularly useful in this connection because the issue is such a prominent one on the international agenda.

The dispute over East Timor is one of the major issues rocking the present administration. If both Habibie and Wiranto can be shown to be incapable of maintaining order in East Timor, those plotting for their removal will have a 'legitimate' reason to make a move. It is not too far-fetched to think of a scenario that might shatter the positions of either or both these men.

Where does Wiranto stand?

General Wiranto, commander-in-chief of ABRI expressed support for the Habibie initiative on 27 January. This was interpreted by many in the army as showing a lack of commitment on his part to the army's East Timor project. His career in the army owes little to the annexation, never having served in the territory. He is not from the elite force, *Kopassus* and has never been involved in intelligence operations, unlike virtually all East Timor veterans. His attitude was seen as a betrayal of the army's tens of thousands killed over the past 23 years.

He is unlikely to have been instrumental in the recruiting and arming of the para-militaries but has done nothing to respond to the many calls from governments to disarm and disband them. He has reportedly told foreign diplomats that he 'could easily' disarm them so why has he done nothing? The answer lies in his lack of authority within ABRI, his inability to resolve the many conflicts within his ranks. But that does not absolve him from responsibility for what has happened.

The position of the resistance

President Habibie's decision to offer the Timorese a choice was a breakthrough but his time schedule did not correspond with the CNRT's plan for the transition. Habibie has said that if the East Timorese opt for independence, East Timor's separation will happen before the millenium. The CNRT leaders had planned a transition of five to ten years, justifiably arguing that the Indonesian occupation has wrought terrible havoc on East Timorese civil society and the country's physical resources. Bishop Belo's preferred transition period was even longer. The Habibie proposal forced CNRT leaders to opt for a three to five year transition under UN auspices.

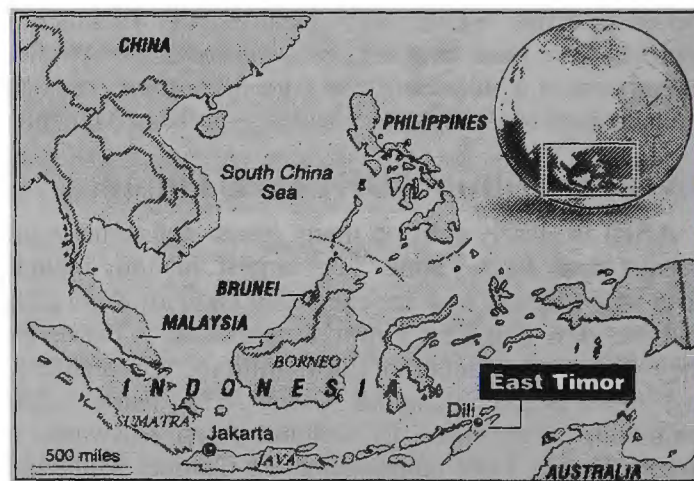
But the question of transition is minor compared to that of security which is far more complex and fraught with danger. Suharto's downfall, followed by Habibie's offer accelerated the pace of political developments in East Timor. The economic crisis has hit everybody hard and the political changes have caused profound upheavals. The more than 20,000 Indonesian civil servants working in East Timor felt abandoned by Jakarta, with many demanding to return home. They have often been the target of East Timorese anger, channelling their intense anti-Indonesia feelings towards innocent civilians. The more than 20,000

Indonesian soldiers also felt betrayed and morale among the troops has sunk to an all-time low.

East Timorese have been able to express their pro-independence feelings openly. The student movement has been very active organising the population down to village level, in preparation for a referendum. For the best part of 1998, things went well but dark forces within ABRI eventually struck back.

As the security situation worsened and the death toll rose inexorably, Xanana Gusmao displayed true statesmanship by doing what he could to safeguard stability and security. *FALINTIL*, the armed wing of the resistance, was ordered to stop their operations and people in the cities were told to refrain from organising rallies. This goodwill found no response from Indonesia. The para-military forces held a rally early in March to form a pro-integrasi force under Joao Tavares as *panglima perang* (war commander). Tavares has collaborated with the Indonesian military since 1975. Eurico Guterres was appointed deputy *panglima perang*. Towards the end of March, the Udayana military commander, Major-General Adam Damiri, convened a meeting of the main para-military leaders at his headquarters in Bali and announced that he had resources to fund a pro-integrasi force of two thousand men.

Meanwhile the violent activities of the para-military/ABRI had been escalating throughout March and early April. Thousands of East Timorese villagers, in particular in the western region, fled as para-militaries tried to force the menfolk to join them. By 9 April human rights groups in Dili had monitored forty fatalities and 22 injured either shot or stabbed, 77 victims of torture, three missing and several cases of rape. More than 18,000 people had fled their homes.



Even with terror mounting, the CNRT kept to its cool, determined not to be drawn into major conflict.. Xanana responded to a request from Joao Tavares for a meeting and agreed that they could work together to seek a peaceful solution a pledge that was soon betrayed by Tavares. The para-military/ABRI forces continued with their campaign of terror and by early April they controlled all roads into West Timor; many villages in the western part of East Timor had been abandoned by terrified villagers. On 3 April, Udayana commander Major-General Adam Damiri spoke aggressively during a press conference in Dili about the army's warlike intentions in East Timor. Two days later, Xanana received news that four people had been killed by the paras in Liquisa district. The pressure on Xanana from his countrymen and women became intense

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Referendum calls reverberate in Washington

Many leading Acehnese intellectuals and activists came together in Washington to consider the deepening crisis in Aceh. They expressed support for a referendum to determine the future status of their land. The Congressional Caucus on Human Rights held a briefing on Aceh a few days later. For the first time ever, the problems of Aceh have reverberated in the US capital.

The one-day conference in Washington on 3 April, which was attended by 140 people, took place against the background of the quickening pace of change in Aceh where escalating human rights violations and army brutalities have turned more and more Acehnese against their links with Jakarta. The participants included senior professors, politicians, human rights activists and representatives of several international human rights NGOs. The conference, entitled *The Future Integration of Indonesia: Focus on Aceh*, was held at the American University in collaboration with the Student Association for a Burmese Coalition and was convened by the International Forum on Aceh (IFA) which came into existence following a meeting on Aceh held in New York last December.

The dominating theme in most of the contributions was the need for a referendum to allow the Acehnese people to decide whether they wanted Aceh to be an autonomous province, a state within a Federal Indonesia or an independent state. Judging from almost all of the speeches, it was clear that there is growing alienation from the Republic of Indonesia. The speakers unanimously condemned the continuing atrocities committed by the Indonesian security forces, and called for the prosecution of soldiers responsible for almost ten years of terror and persecution when Aceh was treated as a *daerah operasi militer* (DOM) or military operation zone, and for the many atrocities perpetrated by the army since DOM was lifted in August 1998.

The Indonesian embassy in Washington was invited to send a speaker but turned down the invitation although members of the embassy staff were spotted in the audience. With Aceh now becoming such a 'troublespot' for Jakarta, the authorities at home were clearly embarrassed by the prospect of being confronted with demands threatening its hold on one of its most profitable, revenue-raising regions.

Tengku Hasan di Tiro of the Aceh/Sumatra National Liberation Front (ASNLF) was also invited to attend but was unable to come due to ill health.

Professors air their views

Of the several university professors who spoke, only **Professor Ibrahim Alfian** of Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, in Central Java, spoke out in favour of continued integration with Indonesia, highlighting the support Aceh had afforded to the Republic of Indonesia under its first president, Sukarno, in the early years of its existence.

By contrast, **Professor Abdullah Ali** of Syiah Kuala University in Banda Aceh spoke of the strategic position of Aceh and the growing dissatisfaction among its people

which had led so rapidly to the demand for a referendum, an idea that had never before been broached. He described a meeting recently between Syamsudin Mahmud, governor of Aceh, and senior personalities where it was agreed that the situation had reached crisis point. The failure of the central government to respond to public opinion had resulted in growing support for federation or a referendum.



Aguswandi assisted by Sidney Jones

Dr **Husaini Hasan**, leader of the Aceh Liberation Front, totally rejected either autonomy or federation. Aceh's treatment as a 'Special Region' (granted in the 1950s to end the revolt by Daud Beureuh) was a tactic to distract the people from their legitimate demand for independence. To accept becoming a state in a federated republic would deprive the Acehnese of their identity as a nation. Independence was the only alternative acceptable to the Acehnese, he said.

Dr Husaini who now lives as an exile in Sweden, said that he had spent three years in the bush with Aceh Merdeka and had never used violence. He had spent much of the time carting round stencil machines and typewriters to spread the word. 'The only time my hands have ever been stained with blood is when I treat my patients as a gynaecologist.'

Another voice supporting outright independence came from **Professor Lukman Thaib**, a professor of political science at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. He spoke of

the efforts of Tengku Hasan di Tiro, leader of the Aceh/Sumatra National Liberation Front, to raise the issue at the UN by means of putting it onto the agenda of ECOSOC as a formal request from Hasan di Tiro had been circulated as an ECOSOC document.

During a question and answer session following Dr Lukman's presentation, Jaffar, a leading activist in the IFA responsible for convening the Washington event, wanted to make it clear that there is no organisational connection between it and the ASNLF and that the IFA is totally dedicated to non-violent actions.

Student leaders speak out

The presence of two student leaders coming direct from Aceh gave the Washington conference its most distinctive flavour, as the student movement is in the forefront of the movement calling for a referendum. The issue exploded onto the scene following a student conference in Banda Aceh at the end of January this year and has snowballed ever since.

The first to speak was **Aguswandi**, general secretary of **SMUR**, Student Solidarity for a Referendum. He came to the rostrum wearing a headband with the word, Referendum and addressed the meeting with passion. He spoke at length about the atrocities perpetrated by the armed forces in the past few months. People had drawn the conclusion that the government has no desire to resolve the crisis, and that there was no reason to expect anything any-more from Jakarta.

'Sovereignty must be speedily restored to the people of Aceh,' he said. This had strengthened people's desire for independence. In the opinion of the students, the best way to achieve this was by means of a referendum because this was the non-violent way forward. 'A referendum is the wisest way forward, the safest, most democratic and realistic way,' he said.

The other student leader to speak was **Radhi Darmansyah**, a member of the Presidium of **FAR-MIDIA**, the Action Forum for Reform of Islamic Students in the Special District of Aceh, who described the brutalities of the armed forces in Aceh as an act of genocide. This was evident from the systematic nature of their military operations: the destruction by means of atrocities of the family structure creating social stress for children, the destruction of people's livelihoods leading to widespread impoverishment, the annihilation of many of the younger generation, and the use of torture, disappearances in total disregard of the people's legal, political, social and cultural rights.

He outlined three necessary steps: reject the new military command for the region of Aceh, cancel the general elections because they could not be conducted democratically and peacefully but would become a source of conflict and yet more disturbances, and the presence in Aceh of international agencies to monitor the human rights situation. He appealed in particular to the International Red Cross, the UN's High Commission for Refugees and Amnesty International to send representatives. He also hoped that the international community would support a referendum in Aceh as the wisest and most democratic solution.

An Indonesian MP, **Drs Ghazali Abbas**, who sits in Parliament for the Muslim party, the PPP, said he felt deeply concerned about his people. 'I came here,' he said, 'to discuss how to achieve a peaceful and prosperous life and to free the people from fear. If all this could be achieved, we could say that the people enjoyed freedom but *de facto*,' he said, 'the Acehnese were not yet free.'

He concluded his speech with the rendition of an Acehnese song which deeply moved all the Acehnese present.

International NGOs offer support

Speaking on behalf of TAPOL, **Carmel Budiardjo** said that we were at a 'turning point in the struggle of the Acehnese people'. TAPOL and other human rights organisations like Amnesty International and Asia Watch (now Human Right Watch/Asia) had been reporting the atrocities since the early 1990s when DOM was in full swing but Western governments ignored the issue. Although DOM has been lifted last August, the repression had continued, reaching a climax with the killings in Idi Cut on 3 February. She described the present status of military operations



Some of the participants of the Aceh conference during the Congressional Caucus on Human Rights in Washington D.C.

as DOM Mark-II. The Idi Cut massacre, more than any other incident, had caused the Acehnese to question their position within the Indonesian Republic.

The brutalities perpetrated by members of ABRI are largely to blame for pushing the people of Aceh into a more openly hostile attitude towards Indonesia, she said. Armies bent on repression will never learn, they do not understand that they provide the best schooling for commitment to a nationalist cause. She said that the Western powers were in favour of keeping Indonesia together, as the best way to exploit its abundant natural resources, including those in Aceh.

She noted the growing opposition in Aceh to creating a new *Kodam* and the call for the withdrawal of all military forces, including the territorial army. This would mean dismantling military commands down to the village level. 'This spells out what ending the *dwifungsi* really means.... It is not just ending the army's control of key positions in

executive and legislative bodies but insisting on the armed forces' role being limited to defending the country against external attack, she said.

Sidney Jones of Human Rights Watch focused her remarks on the problems which campaigning for a referendum is likely to confront. There were several regions in Indonesia confronting similar grievances: human rights violations, cultural infringements, transmigration and the theft of natural resources. The Indonesian state was facing pressure from many quarters in addition to Aceh. This might well harden the attitude of the central government to calls for separation.

She raised some key questions. If East Timor obtained its independence, would this make things easier for Aceh? She had her doubts. She also warned that it would be extremely difficult to persuade the UN to become involved in conducting a referendum in Aceh, after having devoted so much energy to solving the question of East Timor.

Jana Mason of the US Committee for Refugees gave a very useful address on the problems confronted by Acehnese political refugees, regarding which the Committee has published a report entitled: *The 'Least Risky Solution': Malaysia's Detention and Deportation of Acehnese Asylum Seekers*. [Copies available from US Committee for Refugees, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Suite 200, Washington DC 20036.]

The texts of most of the speeches are available on the IFA website, see www.aceh.org/forum/dcconference.

In Aceh, Habibie visit leads to scuffles

President Habibie made a five-hour visit to Banda Aceh on 26 March in an attempt to calm passions but it was hardly a success. After a visit to the governor's office, he was whisked off to Baiturrahman Mosque for Friday prayers, followed by a 'dialogue' with a carefully selected audience of dignitaries, and he then left straight for the airport to return to Jakarta. The day before the visit, the government announced the release of thirty Acehnese political prisoners, an obvious PR move to curry favour.

Students had been campaigning for days to boycott the visit unless he came with a clear decision to hold a referendum in Aceh. On the day of the visit, security forces were out in force to prevent thousands of students from crossing a bridge to get near the mosque. When students tried to break through the barricade, there were scuffles and many people were injured. Warning shots were fired and tear-gas canisters were fired into crowd; the wind blew the gas back, forcing many of the troops to flee.

Inside the mosque, Habibie delivered a lengthy address, offered apologies for past sufferings at the hands of the security forces and promised to finance a programme to re-build damaged properties, set up new religious schools and pay for the burial of some of the victims of DOM violence. Needless to say, this did not impress the Acehnese. Even the governor of the province, Syamsuddin Mahmud, Habibie's host, had harsh words to deliver. He said there was a sense of deep dissatisfaction in Aceh for past treatment. He went back in history to show why measures taken by the centre since 1945 had failed to satisfy the population. They had been granted special status in 1959 but a law on regional government in 1974 had annulled what advantages this had given by suppressing political freedom, especially freedom of expression. Anyone who criticised the government was accused of rebellion. It was as a con

sequence of this, he said, that the Aceh Merdeka Movement had emerged.

Faudri, a student in the audience, told the President bluntly that the people did not want any more promises from the government because it only prolonged the suffering. 'What we want is a clear political commitment. The only comprehensive solution for Aceh is a referendum,' he said [*Republika*, 27 March]

Referendum campaign and flag-raising

The Habibie visit provided the impetus for yet more calls for a referendum. The following day, a student organisation in Medan, the FMPRA, or Student Front to Support a Referendum in Aceh, sent a delegation to the main TV station. It demanded and was granted time to broadcast a statement calling for a referendum. [*Kompas*, 28 March]

A couple of days later, 24 students from several universities began a hunger strike calling for a referendum and rejecting the setting up of a military command in Aceh. It was also reported that the chairman and deputy chairman of the regional assembly, the DPRD, along with the leader of the armed forces faction in the assembly, had all signed a statement supporting a referendum. [*Waspada*, 1 April]

Since then there have been many demonstrations with students and high school pupils scrawling the word 'referendum' on walls and hanging up banners across streets and on buildings. More recently large crowds have taken to the streets not only shouting referendum slogans but waving the Aceh Merdeka flag and pulling down the Indonesian red-and-white national flag. On 24 April, the Medan-based daily, *Waspada*, reported that following a bloody incident in Lhokseumawe earlier in the week (see below), Aceh Merdeka flags had been unfurled everywhere in Aceh 'with no one daring to pull them down'. They have appeared not only in cities and suburbs but in many districts; in many places leaflets containing the flag have been plastered on the walls of houses, on shop windows and on road-signs.

The banner- and flag-raising incidents, often accompanied by the pulling down of the Indonesian flag has led to scuffles some of which have turned violent, between the pro-referendum crowds and the security forces.

AFP described a colourful rally on 18 April when hundreds of people including scores of young children paraded through Lhokseumawe's main avenue for several hours, cheered by hundreds of onlookers, waving the Aceh Merdeka flag.

'This was the first time ever that the independence flag has been openly displayed,' a resident said. He added that most homes in the villages in the northern Aceh district were flying the flag.

The flag has a bright red background contrasting with the white crescent and star symbol trapped between two thick black horizontal stripes. [*AFP*, 19 April]

On 19 April, thousands of high school students went to the local military command, *Kodim*, in Sigli, Pidie to demand that referendum banners that had been torn down be restored to their places. The local commander rejected the demand and ordered his men to disperse the crowd by force. Shots were fired into the air and then in the direction

of the crowd; at least seven were injured and many were arrested.

Two shot dead as ferment intensifies

Two days later, hundreds of students marched to police headquarters in Lhokseumawe to demand the release of colleagues who had been arrested several days earlier. Scuffles broke out as some started pulling down the Indonesian flag at a nearby gas-station. Shots rang out and a 17-year old student named Ahmadi from a private technical high school fell to the ground, mortally wounded. A seven-year old boy was seriously wounded and many others were injured. A police officer was also killed. The police say that the shots were fired by unidentified persons.

Aceh is clearly in the grip of a virtual revolt against Ja-

karta. Events are moving rapidly with radical demands being superseded by even more radical demands. First it was calls for justice and the prosecution of army personnel responsible for the killings during DOM, then came the demand for a referendum and an election boycott, now this has turned into Aceh-wide hoisting of the Aceh Merdeka flag. The population seem to be telling Jakarta that their writ no longer runs in Aceh.

In such circumstances, it is difficult to imagine how the 7 June elections will have any relevance. Few people are likely to register, making the whole exercise meaningless.

The security forces are currently tied up in their campaign of terror against the people of East Timor and trying vainly to cope with unrest in several parts of the country, but they are hardly likely to allow the political ferment in Aceh to continue without a harsh clampdown in the coming weeks. *

A wave of killings in Aceh

Dozens of civilians have been killed in Aceh in the last few months. The pattern of killings is similar to the petrus, an acronym for pembunuhan misterius, or mysterious killings. In 1983/84 thousands of people were killed in cities throughout Java by petrus death-squads.

The petrus killers were known to be ABRI special units. The killings were professionally executed using modern semi-automatic rifles, standard ABRI weaponry. The victims were slain on the streets or in their homes in front of their families. Selected soldiers from the red beret unit *Kopassus* were known to be the executioners.

The killers were described as being military-type, muscular men with crew-cut hair. The dictator Suharto admitted frankly in his autobiography that he had ordered the military to deal with organised criminals in a radical way as a 'shock therapy'. Petrus has become the model for ABRI's handling of its political enemies. During the popular insurrection against Suharto in 1998, dozens of activists disappeared. A year on, it is feared that most of them have been taken care of by special ABRI units.

Cuak, ABRI spies

The people killed in Aceh are known to the Acehnese as *cuak*, men who helped ABRI to track down people suspected of giving active or passive support to *GAM*, *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, the Free Aceh Movement. From 1989 till August 1998 Aceh was treated as a military operations region (DOM), which turned it into an army occupied territory where law was in the hands of the military. Many thousands of innocent Acehnese died or disappeared and there are at least 16,000 orphans and thousands of widows as a result of one decade of DOM.

District military commander of North Aceh, Colonel Johnny Wahab has admitted that most of the victims were *TPO* (*Tenaga Pembantu Operasi*, operational assistants), the official ABRI name for *cuaks*. He alleges that the killings have been committed by members of the *GPLHT* (*Gerakan Pengacau Liar Hasan Tiro*, Disruptor Gang of Hasan Tiro), ABRI's new name for *GAM*, the Free Aceh Movement. All the killings have occurred in three districts, Pidie, North and East Aceh, the districts where most of the DOM atrocities occurred.

Few people accept this version and believe that they are the work of *petrus* killers. Some occur in broad daylight when

the *cuak* is shot in a public place. Abdul Wahab Usman, village head from Blangpala, Nisam subdistrict in North Aceh, was killed on his way to the mosque. Another Blangpala villager Effendi opened the door of his home early on 29 March and was killed by a volley of gunfire. His three-year old son rushed to hug his father and was shot in the thigh.

Story of a Kopassus killer

The introduction of press freedom after the downfall of Suharto has done a great service, removing many of the taboos of the Suharto era. Recently an account appeared in the press of a *Kopassus* officer who said he had killed about a hundred people, though he had lost count. Now retired, he is known as *Dono*. He has no remorse for being a member of a *petrus* death squad. As a soldier who served in East Timor he says he finds killing easy: 'It isn't difficult for me to carry out an order to kill because I once served in East Timor'. *Dono* went on to say: 'It's like killing an East Timorese guerrilla. I had only one thought; how to kill an enemy of the state who always disrupts stability. No one must escape. Every target must get three bullets in lethal parts of the body'.

Dono explained how the *petrus* squads were organised. The commander gathered a group of men for an assignment. They usually met in a hotel; the members of the group were from different squads, who usually did not know each other. The victim, his house and whereabouts was identified. The commander handed out the weapons, often equipped with a silencer. The bullets were unregistered. The mission was clear, no question of failure - the target had to be killed. If the killing happened in public and people gave chase, the team was instructed to kill the witnesses as it was a covert military operation. [*Media Indonesia*, 7 March]

The wave of violence in many parts of the Indonesian archipelago has escalated in the post-Suharto period; professional killers like the *Kopassus* squads are widely believed to be partly responsible for the pre-election wave of violence. Many of them could be men like *Dono*, for whom killing is an expression of their loyalty to the state. *

Police separated from the armed forces

On 1 April POLRI, the Indonesian National Police, was separated from ABRI, the Indonesian armed forces. This is an important step forward but much more is needed to transform the force into a democratic institution in charge of upholding law.

Some analysts in Jakarta called the 1 April ceremony an April Fool's joke but the fact is that political changes in Indonesia compelled the ABRI leadership to make a start with this separation. In most countries, there is a strict separation between the police force and the army. The police are responsible for upholding the law while the army are in charge of defending the state's sovereignty. But things have been very different in Indonesia. In 1964, during the Sukarno era, *POLRI* was incorporated into the armed forces by Presidential Instruction *KepPres No.290, 1964* but it was under Suharto that steps were taken to militarise the Police by means of the National Defence Law of 1982 and the Police Law of 1997.

Although *POLRI* has been separated from ABRI, it remains under the jurisdiction of the Defence Minister, General Wiranto, who continues to be the commander-in-chief of ABRI, a fact which casts doubt over the true significance of the change. Since the change, the army has begun to use its former name, *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* or TNI; the term is increasingly being used instead of ABRI which also includes the navy and the air force.

***POLRI* structurally part of ABRI**

As part of ABRI, the Police Force has taken on all facets of army structure, including ranks, budget, duties and even wage structure. The 1997 Law placed *POLRI* within the integral command structure of ABRI.

This has created huge problems for the average policeman on the beat. Most organised crime such as gambling, smuggling, prostitution is connected to members of the army, meaning that the police are powerless to arrest the culprits.

The police academy has a military curriculum which does not recognise the force as the guardian of the general public but is based on the military credo of treating everybody as a suspect.

Expenditure on the police has been ridiculously low because most of ABRI's budget has gone to the army, the superstar. The general public has always had a low opinion of the understaffed, poorly-trained police. Police have a track record of violence and many people have died in police custody. Police officers have also been involved in numerous killings of criminal suspects on the streets, with no attempt to charge the perpetrators. Corruption is rampant and the average policeman lacks authority. The force is justifiably regarded as the illegitimate child of ABRI,

maybe not quite as brutal as its foster parent but the difference is marginal.

In the early years of Suharto's *Orde Baru*, the police force had practically no function. The army was in charge of law and order in general and its powerful security body *Kopkamtib* had virtually unlimited powers to arrest and detain people. Under Indonesia's procedural code, the police force is the arresting agency also responsible for interrogating suspects, but in many instances, especially in political cases, it was the army that arrested and held people.



The much hated Anti-Riot Police

It was not until the early nineties when popular protest became more frequent, that *POLRI*'s role became more up front.

***POLRI* against demonstrators**

Domestic and international criticism of the excessive role of ABRI in curbing internal dissent forced Suharto and the ABRI leadership to adopt a new policy. By 1993 the police were beginning to deal with popular unrest.

It was now the role of *POLRI* to arrest and interrogate suspects, while a special *POLRI* force was responsible for dealing with demonstrators on the streets. This new policy was first tried out in so-called 'troublespots' like East Timor. This resulted in a change in Dili, the capital of East Timor, when police officers began to arrest demonstrators who were taken to the police station instead of the military command posts, although the army's special force, *Kopasus* did not relinquish its special intelligence role.

ARMED FORCES

POLRI's special force *Brimob* (*Brigade Mobil*, Mobile Brigade) became a much feared and hated force. This is the most militarised force in POLRI and is trained to deal with mass demonstrations. *Brimob* possesses sophisticated equipment, including UK-made water cannon and armoured personal carriers. Since the May 1998 upheaval, some forces within POLRI have received special anti-riot training and have re-emerged as PHH (*Pasukan Anti Huru-Hara*, Anti Riot Unit). It has become a daily scene in urban centres to see PHH and *Brimob* units chasing and clubbing demonstrators.

In places of violent unrest like Maluku and West Kalimantan [see separate item], police officers were given orders from their superiors in Jakarta to shoot on sight, and they have acted accordingly.

Conflict at the top

Senior police officers are frequently in conflict with their army counterparts. Seven years ago Police Major-General Koesparmono Irsan, then head of the Police Academy, proposed that the police should be separated from ABRI. Most POLRI officers favour this, not least because POLRI is often called on to do the dirty work of the army, such as arresting students, with their officers having to take the blame, while the overall strategy and command is in the hands of the military.

In particular the tragic shooting of students at the Tri-sakti University in May 1998 upset the police force. A number of police officers were scapegoated and tried for the shooting while the army came out relatively unscathed. National Police Chief General Dibyo Widodo publicly protested at the way his officers had been sacrificed; not long afterwards he was replaced. The present police chief, General Roesmanhadi has continued to press for separation. Finally on 1 April the first grudging step was taken.

The next steps

The most difficult part is how to demilitarise the police force. A whole generation of police officers have been trained to think like the military. Before the average police officer can be seen as protector of the general public in poor urban neighbourhoods, there will have to be a complete overhaul in mentality and training. The curriculum at the Police Academy will also need to be changed.

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forces have busied themselves primarily with evacuating terrified refugees instead of hunting down and arresting the perpetrators.

Suharto's *Orde Baru* created a culture of violence. As Professor Ben Anderson from Cornell University said during a recent visit to Indonesia, it started with the killings of hundreds of thousands of innocent people in 1965/1966. ABRI's tradition of fostering criminal and para-military groups to do its dirty work has contributed to this tradition of resolving problems with machetes and guns.

Disastrous government policies like the ambitious transmigration programme have significantly contributed to disrupting fragile, complex social structures in many regions outside Java, as pointed out by indigenous leaders at their Congress in March (see separate item).

Another key problem is the territorial structure of the army. Territorial military commands function as shadow administrations down to the village level. If POLRI is to act as the upholder of law, the army's territorial structure should be abolished. This is what ending the army's *dwi-fungsi* should really mean. But this territorial structure is the backbone of the army's stranglehold over society which means that a lot of political will is needed and many battles will be need to be fought before the army is willing to relinquish this power structure.

An essential part of the civilianisation of the police is its location in the government structure under a civilian ministry. In most countries, the police are under the interior ministry but in Indonesia, this ministry is also controlled by the army.

Anti-subversion law repeal changes little

The widely-condemned anti-subversion law is now in the process of being repealed, but it will be replaced by six new articles in the Criminal Code to deal with anti-state 'crimes'. Justifying the change, the Justice Minister, Muladi, said this was to prevent a 'legal vacuum'. In other words, there is no intention to relinquish state powers to convict and punish people for political activities.

The new articles will penalise activities endangering the Pancasila, propagating Marxism-Leninism, acts of sabotage and attacks on military installations. The maximum penalty under these articles will be twenty years instead of death as under the anti-subversion law. These anti-state 'crimes' will now be regulated under the criminal procedural code, which allows detention without charge of up to sixty days, instead of the one year period under the anti-subversion law.

In addition, a new law on state security is being drafted by the armed forces commander General Wiranto and will be submitted to Parliament for adoption before the June elections. According to Muladi, the new law will allow the armed forces to take measures to cope with unrest. [*Jakarta Post*, 1 April]

Leading human rights lawyer, Munir, who has seen the draft of the bill says it is modelled on Malaysia's Internal Security Act and will be even more of a threat to the public than the discredited anti-subversion law. Warning people not to underestimate ABRI, Munir said that if the new law is enacted, it will empower the authorities to 'to silence or arrest anyone regarded as a threat to (their) vested interests'. [*Jakarta Post*, 6 April] ★

It is undoubtedly true that dark forces are deliberately trying to destabilise the country, in particular in the run-up to the general elections which, as everyone agrees, is a critical first step towards building democratic political structures in the post-Suharto era. The bombing of the Istiqlal Mosque which was clearly designed to trigger feuding between Muslims and Christians, the fanning of religious conflicts in Maluku and the killings in West Java are clear examples of conflicts triggered by gangsters in the pay of forces linked to Suharto's New Order.

So far, the security forces have shown themselves to be powerless, incapable even of making meaningful arrests, let alone producing any answers to why violence is now so widespread. In truth, they are part of the problem though it has not yet been possible to substantiate the many suspicions that members of ABRI are the ones who are causing the riots. ★

Growing conflicts within ABRI

Recent events in East Timor, West Kalimantan and Maluku expose deep-rooted differences within the Indonesian armed forces, ABRI, both at the top and in the field. Indonesian contemporary history is marked by violent internal conflicts resulting in misery for the Indonesian people. The post-Suharto period contains all the ingredients of yet another eruption within ABRI.

The wide-ranging reshuffle in ABRI earlier this year [see *TAPOL Bulletin* No. 151, March 1999] was a sign of serious splits within ABRI but the internal conflicts are far from over. According to leaked reports in March, a second reshuffle was about to be announced but nothing happened, which suggests that there is a stalemate in Cilangkap, ABRI's Pentagon and in Bina Graha, the presidential office. Formally, President Habibie has the final say as *Panglima Tertinggi*, the Supreme Commander. In this new reshuffle, already widely leaked and reported in the press, the Army Chief of Staff General Subagyo is slated to lose his job. The head of *BAKIN*, the co-ordinating body for intelligence, Lt. General Z.A. Maulani would also be replaced. The documents for the reshuffle have reportedly been ready for some time and are now on the desk of the President awaiting his signature.

Reform or status quo

It could be argued that General Wiranto who holds two key positions, as minister for defence and security and ABRI commander-in-chief, enjoys the luxury of wielding great power. Not for a very long time has anyone held both these posts.

But in reality the four-star general is in a very weak position. ABRI's image in the eyes of the Indonesian public has never been so low. The involvement of officers in the killing and kidnapping of activists, ABRI's vicious role in Aceh, East Timor and other places has been widely reported in the post-Suharto era. General Wiranto's alliance with President Habibie is regarded by many as being very shaky. Almost daily, people demonstrate in the streets demanding the resignation of both men.

The Habibie government has so far failed to deliver anything substantial: the economy is still in shambles and political stability remains out of reach. The transitional government is trapped in between reform and status quo. The public judge the government lacking credibility and legality. Most ABRI officers regard any reform as being an effort to minimise their political power. Students in the streets continue to demand reform and an end to the dual function of ABRI while ABRI officers are increasingly involved in schemes to destabilise the country and derail the process of reform.

ABRI conflict at the top

General Wiranto and his group of reform officers still support the process of reform of the Habibie government, as far as it goes. Two of the most important events; the special MPR session in November and the general elec-

tions in June 1999 are top of the agenda. At the same time this reform group in ABRI continue to re-define and reshape ABRI so as to turn it into something distinct from its structure during the *Orde Baru*.



In a seminar held in London on 29 and 30 March by two think-tanks, the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the Portuguese IEEL, Air Vice-Marshall Graito Usodo, advisor to General Wiranto, presented a 14-point programme of reform. He said that ABRI would continue with internal reform and the changes would be significant and drastic.

The more important points were: ABRI is redefining its role for the next century and will reshape its role in conformity with political changes in society. This includes separation of the police force from ABRI [see separate item] and an overhaul of ABRI's *sospol* tasks which manage the implementation of ABRI's dual role in society, in other words, ABRI's meddling in civilian affairs.

Air Vice-Marshall Graito Usodo also spoke about changes in the territorial duties of ABRI by redefining security and order at the village level. The reformed ABRI will no longer be involved in day-to-day politics and ABRI seats in the legislative bodies DPR/MPR will eventually be reduced. ABRI will not favour any political party, including Golkar, the ruling party. ABRI will also redefine its doctrines. While it is obvious that ABRI reformers are trying to develop a new format for ABRI, the big question remains: does the average ABRI officer agree with all the changes?

While at the conceptual level, ABRI seems to be pursuing a course of reform, the reality is that there are cracks all over the place. Lt. General Hendropriyono, presently Minister of Transmigration is known to aspire to the posi-

tion of Wiranto. A notoriously brutal and ambitious man, Hendropriyono was given the choice by Wiranto of continuing as a cabinet minister and retiring from ABRI or resigning from the cabinet and returning to ABRI without a position. Hendropriyono soon realised that his bid for power was over and opted to remain in the cabinet.

Army chief of staff General Subagyo turned out to be more difficult to handle. As former commander of the 6,000-strong elite *Kopassus* squad, Subagyo represents an important segment of ABRI. His conflict with Wiranto is a public secret but Wiranto has not been able to muster the strength to remove him. Subagyo's conflict with Wiranto is not only a power struggle but involves competition regarding arms procurement. Everybody knows that business deals with the arms industry in the west means juicy deals involving the transfer of large sums of money to private bank accounts in Switzerland. It was widely reported in the Indonesian press that Subagyo was due to become the next ambassador in Malaysia.

Another conflict is between the present ABRI leadership and retired ABRI officers. While the Wiranto group has more or less resigned itself to playing a lesser role in society, many veterans see this as a betrayal of ABRI's achievements. Within the cabinet, Wiranto often has to deal with General Feisal Tandjung who holds the post of coordinating minister for politics and security. Feisal Tandjung is typical of a *Orde Baru* officer and not likely to abandon the idea that ABRI should be in the driver's seat. He represents the feelings of many retired officers and poses a threat to the Wiranto group.

Conflicts in the field

While conflicts at the top remain unresolved, conflicts at lower levels are reaching danger-point. East Timor is a clear example of territorial commanders openly organising and conducting military operations by using para-military groups to attack villages in stark contravention of the policy of Habibie, their supreme commander.

Major-General Adam Damiri, the commander of the Udayana military command, publicly held a meeting with para-militaries, at which he gave the signal for *Operasi Sapu Jagad* to start, resulting in many casualties among the population in many parts of East Timor, including the capital Dili. With this act Damiri is in open defiance of Habibie's decision to give the East Timorese the chance to determine their own political future. Some local Indonesian sub-district commanders are openly recruiting and organising the para-militaries. Should they fail to get enough recruits, territorial soldiers must disguise themselves as para-militaries. The cost of this operation is enormous and analysts in Jakarta believe that the money is being supplied by a group of influential retired generals including Benny Murdani and Try Sutrisno. Most highly-placed officers in the eighties owed their senior positions in ABRI to their long terms of service in East Timor.

The role of the military intelligence

The eruption of unrest throughout Indonesia is one of the most hotly discussed topics in political circles. All the events of the past few months cannot but lead to the conclusion that the performance of both *BIA*, the military intelligence, and *Bakin*, the intelligence coordinating body, is

woeful. None of the major clashes in Ambon and West Kalimantan [see separate item] were foreseen by either agency. During the January reshuffle, *BIA* chief Major-General Zacky Anwar Makarim got the sack but his successor Major General Tyasno Sudarto has not made a difference. Formally speaking, *Bakin* is a civilian agency but it is always run by ABRI officers. Officially it is not within the ABRI structure and reports only to the president, like the national security council in Washington. The present *Bakin* chief, Major-General Z.A. Maulani is very close to Habibie. Since recently taking over, he dismissed all the senior officials, all of them senior ABRI officers.

At a more fundamental level, political analysts believe that it is not so much a question of the intelligence bodies performing woefully but that they are the source of the unrest. The theory that it is provocation that is causing all the unrest is still seen as the most likely explanation although it could be argued that this theory downplays the reality of antagonisms between rival groups in Ambon and West Kalimantan. Major General Zacky Anwar was present in Dili during the terrible events of 17 April, allegedly on a working visit. It seems obvious that Wiranto and his staff are not in control of the intelligence apparatus. In none of the major events of unrest have any of the perpetrators been arrested. Increasingly, the general public believe that the unrest has been triggered by certain forces to destabilise the political situation and render general elections virtually impossible.

The history of ABRI conflicts

The history of independent Indonesia is ridden with internal ABRI conflicts. The Madiun affair in 1948, usually described as a communist rebellion, was in fact an internal conflict within ABRI in which left-wing units were defeated by right-wing units.

During the fifties, Indonesia's fragile democracy was trying hard to run the state along democratic lines while ABRI was straining to get out of the barracks and play a role in politics. Several efforts were made to topple the government, the most serious being in October 1952 when senior army officers, backed by troops and tanks, tried to overthrow the Sukarno government. The regional rebellions in 1958 when parts of Sumatra and the northern part of Sulawesi tried to break away from Jakarta were also an internal ABRI affair as the rebel leaders were virtually all military men.

The October 1965 event when six senior generals were killed by a faction within ABRI was also an internal ABRI conflict although the official version still blames the PKI, the Communist Party, for trying for trying to seize power. In all these conflicts, the people were the ones who suffered the consequences. Hundreds of thousands of people lost their lives and millions were incarcerated as a result of the 1965 events.

The present conflict within ABRI is very dangerous. The killing of innocent villagers in East Timor is an act of insubordination by ABRI officers. Conflicts within ABRI will continue to pose a threat because of ABRI's dominant role in Indonesia's politics. Unless the military doctrine *dwifungsi* is abolished once and for all, and ABRI is limited to protecting Indonesia's territorial sovereignty, human tragedies will continue to jeopardise the security and safety of the 210 million inhabitants of the archipelago.

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Stalemate follows dialogue with Habibie

After months of procrastination, the National Dialogue between President Habibie and representatives of the people of West Papua was held on 26 February. Responding to the demand for independence, the president had nothing to offer apart from advising his visitors to 'reflect'. In April, the police in Irian Jaya in a direct attack on freedom of speech, prohibited all activities to socialise the dialogue, arousing widespread anger throughout the province.

The initiative to hold a dialogue between the people of West Papua and the Indonesian president came in the wake of a number of flag-raising incidents last July, some of which were brutally quelled by the armed forces. The National Dialogue was seen as a way of calming down passions in favour of independence which followed the collapse of Suharto's New Order last May. It was hoped that dialogue would pave the way for negotiations rather than confrontation during which yet more people would fall victim.

For almost a year, West Papuans have been voicing their many grievances against Jakarta because of the constant pattern of atrocities to which they have been subject for over three decades, the unbridled exploitation of the territory's abundant natural resources, and the seizure of ancestral lands bringing impoverishment for the people.

Independence, the only way

A delegation of one hundred representatives from all parts of West Papua attended the National Dialogue with President Habibie which was held at the Presidential Palace on 26 February. The event was well reported in the Indonesian media, giving the Indonesian public some idea of the depth of resentment felt towards Jakarta from one of its far-flung dominions.

Leading the delegation was Tom Beanal, head of the Amungme tribal council, LEMASA, based in Timika. Beanal is widely known for his courageous challenge to Freeport/Rio Tinto, the multinational which has for years trampled on his people's rights and despoiled their ancestral lands. In presenting a statement on behalf of the delegation, he made it clear that the overwhelming majority of West Papuans support independence. He said they would wait till the end of March for the President's reply. If this did not come or the reply was unsatisfactory, they would press for international talks between the Indonesian government, the United Nations and the people of West Papua, and would take measures to set up a transitional government. He said later that they would also call on the population to boycott the general elections scheduled for 7 June.

'During 36 years of integration with Indonesia,' he said, 'we have been treated with contempt. We will not consider anything but independence.'

He said that the delegation included representatives from all the fifteen districts in the province of Irian Jaya



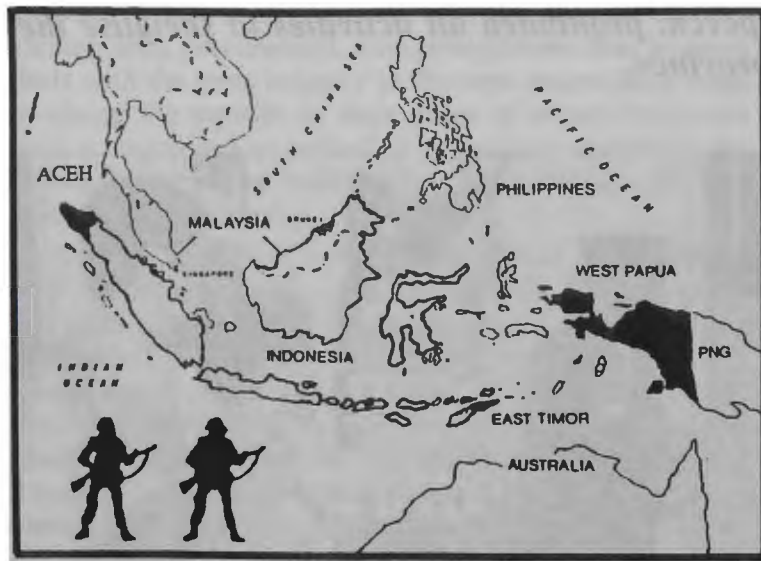
Habibie and some members of the National Dialogue

and they had come with clear mandates from their people. In Timika, 13,755 questionnaires had been sent out, of which 13,753 had been returned in favour of independence, with only two against. In Fak-Fak, a consultation had been held during which all the 16,281 respondents had supported independence.

The Dialogue initiative provided a platform for West Papuans to air their aspirations and was well reported elsewhere, particularly in the Netherlands. In Washington, six members of the US Congress from both parties wrote to President Habibie describing the Dialogue as 'the most constructive means of resolving the long-standing and ongoing human rights problems within Irian Jaya'. The Dialogue would, they said, 'require openness to international scrutiny of the process, including access to the United Nations and other international observers and timely media coverage.' The members of Congress also said: 'It would be extremely unfortunate if this attempt at National Dialogue were to suffer the defects that detract from its legitimacy, such as the problems of inadequate representation and human rights violations that marred the 1969 Act of Free Choice.' They called on President Habibie to release people detained for participating in flag-raising and other peaceful expressions of their aspirations for freedom and urged him to allow international observers and humanitarian relief organisations full access to Irian Jaya.

WEST PAPUA

Habibie in agreeing to take part in a high profile meeting with West Papuans, seemed to be anxious to project a willingness to listen although he had nothing concrete to say that would satisfy the West Papuans. Whatever his intentions however, he clearly did not have the support of the armed forces as was clear from the experiences of the members of the Team of One Hundred on their return home. Several of them were subjected to acts of intimidation. Rocks were thrown at their homes and their vehicles and cars were damaged by unidentified groups but when appeals were made to the security forces for protection, they were told that no protection could be provided.



Confronted with the real danger of physical attacks on members of the dialogue delegation, a decision was taken to set up 'posts' called *posko* for the protection of the delegates.

Freedom to socialise Dialogue banned

For the members of the Team of One Hundred, the next step was to inform their communities about the Dialogue with Indonesia's head of state.

However, on 17 April, the regional chief of police, Brigadier-General Hotman Siagian, issued a Police Proclamation banning all activities to socialise the results of the dialogue with the president and ordering the closure of the posts and support networks within seventy-two hours. These activities were described as being 'separatist' and a source of disorder in the community. John Rumbiak, well-known human rights advocate, condemned this as a blatant violation of freedom of expression.

The Proclamation alleged that socialisation of the Dialogue, the *poskos* and other organisations set up by the Team of One Hundred had 'caused anxieties, splits and fear within the community which if unchecked could disrupt stability and security'. The ban cited Article 154 of the Criminal Code setting penalties for 'expressions of hatred of the government authorities' and Law 9/1998 on Freedom of Expression as the grounds for possible action against those who ignore the ban.

Theo Uluay, head of the Irian Jaya Tribal Council, made a direct appeal to the police chief to lift this unjust ban and warned that there could be trouble throughout the province if this was not done within a week. A group of members of the Team of One Hundred also made representations to the police chief along similar lines.

Freeport gets go-ahead for expansion

The giant copper-and-gold mine operated by US-based Freeport with massive investments from London-based Rio Tinto has won government approval for a doubling of output, from 160,000 tons per day to 300,000 tpd. [*Jakarta Post*, 1 April] This will hugely increase the tailings spewed out, to the detriment of the local people whose ancestral land was seized more than twenty years ago. Needless to say, the tribal people who have suffered so much as a result of the mine's operations were not consulted about giving approval for this expansion.

Freeport's application for this expansion was initially given the go-ahead by Habibie, which led the Minister of Mines and Energy to protest that this should not be done without an increase in royalties paid to the government. After lengthy negotiations, the Ministry secured an agreement for royalties to be increased from 1.5 per cent to 3.5 per cent on copper sales, and 1 per cent on gold and silver sales. A Ministry official said the company had agreed to four conditions: increasing royalties payable to the government, improving tailing management, stepping up environmental protection and improving slope stability.

There is no indication that an Environmental Impact Assessment was conducted in advance of this expansion, which only proves how easy it is for multinational corporations to get their way with the present government. A hastily convened meeting was held by the Mines Ministry to which Tom Beanal, who chairs the Amungme Tribal Council, Fr Theo v.d. Broek and the district chief of Timika were invited, but discussions were brief with virtually no chance of challenging, let alone delaying, the approval until local people had been consulted. *

continued from page 6

and on the same day, 5 April, he issued a statement telling his people to take action against the terror campaign in self-defence.

From all sides in the Indonesian government and the para-militaries, Xanana was denounced for allegedly issuing a 'declaration of war'. General Feisal Tanjung, the Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security Affairs, threatened to send Xanana to the notorious Nusakambangan prison island while Justice Minister Muladi warned that if he failed to retract the statement within a week, he would be returned to Cipinang prison. The para-military/ABRI forces blamed Xanana's statement for making them step up their actions. The bloodbath in Liquisa came on the day after but as Xanana said in his statement, the prologue to the Liquisa bloodbath had already taken four lives.

Western governments refused to be dragged into blaming Xanana. Their criticisms after Liquisa and later after the 17 April terror in Dili have put the blame squarely on ABRI and their para-military proxies. Xanana has not been moved anywhere and Muladi's threats are now part of history. *

1965 tapols released at last

Ten political prisoners, all of whom have been in prison for more than thirty years, were finally released from prison in March. There are now no more tapols being in connection with the events of 1965. Their release led to renewed interest in the events of October 1965 and to Suharto's role in the killing of the generals and the massacre of hundreds of thousands of communist suspects. Some former PKI members are conducting investigations of the massacres in several parts of Java.

The first four to be released on 25 March were being held in Cipinang Prison Jakarta. They were: **Asep Suryaman (73)**, who had been in detention since September 1971, and **First Sergeant Bungkus (71)**, **Sergeant Major Nataneal Marsudi (71)** and **Colonel Abdul Latief (72)** all of whom had been in prison since October 1965. The first three had been under sentence of death while Colonel Latief had been serving a life sentence.

The other six were being held in other parts of the country and were released within the following days. They were: **Isnanto (74)**, under sentence of death, who was in Tanjung Gusta Prison, Medan; **Markus Giroth** and **Sido**, both serving life in Ujung Pandang Prison; **Buyung Ketek**, and **Sri Suhardjo**, who were being held in Padang, and **Soma Surabrata** who was being held in Pamekasan Prison, Madura. They were all serving life sentences.

One shameless indignity to which they were subjected was the requirement to sign statements of fidelity to the state dogma, Pancasila, and the 1945 Constitution. Lawyers acting for the four men in Cipinang said that had refused to sign but were compelled to do so, otherwise they would have had to remain behind bars.

Re-writing history

The releases unleashed a huge interest among journalists and historians, eager to hear what they had to say about the events of October 1965. With Suharto removed from power, here was a golden opportunity to check the official version that could not be challenged while Suharto was in charge.

The four men from Cipinang Prison issued a joint statement when they left prison in which they said that they intended to help re-write history by clarifying the events on the night of 30 September. They said quite categorically that the man who staged the coup d'état against Sukarno was Suharto. His hold on power for thirty-two years had come about because of his own manipulations, they said. [Merdeka, 27 March]

Among the first to want to hear their accounts were the children of some of the generals who were kidnapped and murdered on the night of 30 September. From their comments, it is clear that they are not satisfied with Suharto's version, which is understandable since it is now well known that Suharto was informed by Colonel Latief of the impending kidnaps several hours beforehand. Their fathers might have been alive now had he acted on that warning.

Riyanto Nurhadi, the 42-year-old son of the late Major-General Harjono said he hoped the freed prisoners would 'begin the process of revising history'. 'I have a feeling that they will tell us the true version of the 1965 abortive coup,' said Riyadi, who was nine years old at the time of his father's death. 'My mother and our whole family do not bear any grudges against them. We only hope they will not keep silent after all these years.'

The daughter of the murdered General Pandjaitan, Tuti Pandjaitan, who was eleven years old in 1965, said 'History has been engineered to serve the interests of the New Order regime. The PKI and the Air Force were made the scapegoats.' She too hoped the released men would reveal the truth about 1965.



The Cipinang Four celebrating their release

POLITICAL PRISONERS

But the daughter of another slain general was more cautious. Nani Nurahman, daughter of the late General Soetojo, only warned people against exploiting the releases, saying it 'would open old wounds both for former political prisoners and the relatives of the slain generals.' [*Jakarta Post*, 29 March]

An internal army affair, says Bungkus

Within days of his release, Sergeant Bungkus was telling the press that the 30 September Movement was an internal affair of the army and was not a movement run by the Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI. This contradicts Suharto's claim, which became the official version, that the PKI was behind the action, on the basis of which he branded the action with the name 'G30S/PKI' and immediately proceeded to physically annihilate the PKI.

Former Sergeant Bungkus, who was a member of the *Cakrabirawa* Palace Guard at the time of the kidnapping of the generals, has been interviewed by several publications and newspapers since his release. The Palace Guard was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Untung, one of three army officers who led the action against the generals on the night of 30 September 1965. He was tried soon after Suharto took power and executed. Another member of the trio, Brigadier-General Supardjo, was also executed. The third member was Colonel Latief who was given a life sentence and was released from Cipinang Prison together with Bungkus.

In an interview with *Suara Karya*, Bungkus explained that he was in command of the unit that was ordered to capture Major-General Haryono. He was captured at his home but was shot dead soon afterwards by a member of his team even though they had been under instructions to take him alive. (The original purpose of the kidnappings was to force the generals who were thought to be plotting against President Sukarno to appear before Sukarno and account for their actions.) Bungkus said that the soldier who shot him had been startled by a shadow looming and fired his rifle, killing the general.

He strongly denied that he was a member of the PKI; he was simply a soldier acting on orders from his superior officer. He said that he had no regrets because he acted strictly according to military discipline, carrying out the orders of his superior officer.

He said he was firmly convinced that the 30 September Movement (led by Lieutenant-Colonel Untung) was an internal affair of the army reflecting dissatisfaction among some officers with the policies of their superiors.

Had the Movement really been run by the PKI, Jakarta would have gone up in flames, he said, and other parts of the country would have been thrown into chaos.

Bungkus returned home to impoverished circumstances; he has never owned a house or even a tiny plot of land. During the 34 years he spent behind bars, his wife and their six children went through extremely hard times. 'They suffered much more than I did because in prison I always had something to eat but they were often thrown onto the streets.' [*Suara Karya*, 30 & 31 March]

Ex-tapol: Indict Suharto for 1965 killings

Former political prisoners who were arrested and held for many years following the 1965 events have called for

Suharto to be indicted for crimes against humanity because of his role in organising the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of people in the six months after he took power in October 1965.

The ex-tapols were speaking at a press conference at the Legal Aid Institute office in Jakarta to launch the Institute for the Study of the 1965/1966 Massacres. Chairing the Institute is Sulami, until 1965 the secretary-general of *GERWANI*, the women's organisation banned by Suharto. 'The massacres were perpetrated by Suharto and his military henchmen. We will reveal the truth about the massacre of PKI members in order to make the public realise that such practices should never have been regarded as appropriate,' she said. [*Indonesian Observer*, 16 April]

The decision to make the investigations public was an act of great courage at a time when expressing sympathy for Suharto's millions of PKI victims is still regarded as taboo though eagerness to know the truth about 1965 and Suharto's role is growing. By doing so, the organisers clearly hope to challenge public opinion to face the criminal role of the country's dictator who ruled the country for more than 32 years. *GERWANI* in particular suffered grievously because Suharto sought to demonise the women's organisation by spreading malicious lies about its role in the murder of the six generals.

Sulami told the press that investigations already conducted in many parts of Central Java had shown that in Blora alone, 8,000 people had been slain. 'The mass grave (in Blora) is located in Cagak Blora forest. We haven't yet dug up the whole grave but having gone only one metre down, we already found human bones,' she said. She identified other places where mass graves had been discovered.

Asked why she was so sure that Suharto was responsible, considering that civilians had also taken part in the killings, Sulami said Suharto led the military operation at the time. 'The fact that civilians took part in some regions was the result of military intervention. Before the army arrived in the villages, no such brutalities occurred.' She also spoke of her own experiences during 19 years of imprisonment from 1967 till 1986. [*Merdeka*, 16 April]

Also present at the press conference were representatives of other mass organisations banned by Suharto, *Pemuda Rakjat* (People's Youth) and *LEKRA*, the organisation of cultural workers, as well as the banned PKI daily, *Harian Rakjat*. Indonesia's leading writer, Pramoedya Ananta Toer, who spent 14 years in prison after 1965 is on the advisory board of the Institute. He was not present at the launch as he was in North America on a speaking tour to launch his prison memoir, *A Mute's Soliloquy*.

Gulag memoir re-published in Indonesia

The prison memoir by Carmel Budiardjo, *Surviving Indonesia's Gulag*, has been re-published in its Indonesian translation in Indonesia and is now on sale in bookshops. The Indonesian title is *Bertahan Hidup di Gulag Indonesia*. The first edition which came out in 1997 was not sold in bookshops but was distributed through the grapevine..

1965 bibliography by TAPOL

A four-page bibliography listing all major books and articles about 1965 has been prepared by TAPOL and is available on our website. Copies can also be obtained from our office, for a small donation to cover costs. *

Killings in many parts of Indonesia

The post-Suharto era has been marked by unspeakable ethnic and religious violence. The bombing of the Istiqlal Mosque, Jakarta's main mosque, indicates that dark forces are trying to destabilise the country. The killings in West Kalimantan, South-East Maluku and West Java during March and April has caused many to doubt whether the general elections can take place in these regions.

Ethnic cleansing of Madurese

Violence erupted in West Kalimantan between local Malays and Dayaks and the Madurese minority. The conflict was located in the Sambas district, near the border with Malaysia. By late March, Indonesian press reports said that at least 33,000 Madurese refugees were sheltering in the capital, Pontianak. The district of Sambas has a population of around 800,000 people, of whom eight per cent are Madurese. Official sources say that two hundred people have been killed in the carnage but observers believe that the death toll is far higher. Many Madurese settlers were forced to flee into the jungle where the chances of survival are slight.

Madurese have been moving to Kalimantan since the sixties and they are now into the third generation. These are people who were born in Kalimantan and have never lived on their island of origin, Madura.

The international press has reported extensively on this latest conflict, not least because of the grotesque brutality of the killings. The conflict has been bitter and merciless and the security forces were unable to do anything. Whole Madurese settlements were slaughtered. Along the road from Singkawang to Montrado which is a Madurese settlement, severed heads were on display. Some of the killings were ritual. In the second week of the conflict, the security forces were given orders to shoot on sight, as a result of which several people were shot dead.

On-going conflict

The conflict between the Dayaks and Malays, the two local communities, and the Madurese, the newcomers, has been going on for several years. In late 1996 and early 1997, there was a new eruption which became extremely violent. On that occasion, it was between the Dayaks and the Madurese [see also *TAPOL Bulletin* No. 139, February 1997]. But tension between the ethnic groups goes back to 1968 when the first forest concessions were granted and Madurese transmigrants started to arrive.

In many parts of the Indonesian archipelago, there are simmering conflicts between locals and newcomers. According to one explanation, problems emerge because of deep-rooted differences between local people steeped in their communal lifestyle and newcomers who bring a mercantile lifestyle with them. These problems are universal. The *Orde Baru* economic system has only deepened the



Citizens of Ambon seeking refuge to other islands

rift between the two entities, fostering business opportunities for the mercantile class while the communal people are marginalised, sinking deeper and deeper into misery and impoverishment. The Dayaks are rurals and the Malays live in the coastal and urban areas. Often the ethnic distinctions are not clear because of inter-mingling and inter-marriage over several generations. Central government policies have only exacerbated the problems.

Strictly speaking, it is not correct to identify the Madurese in Kalimantan as the mercantile class because most commercial activities are in the hands of Chinese or Sumatran traders. Some Madurese have emerged as small traders in the cities but their role in the economy is marginal. The locals accuse the Madurese of being aggressive and violent. Madurese are often portrayed as being quick-tempered but the fact that many of them live in isolation in transmigration sites has resulted in a lack of communication and social intercourse with the local communities.

Military way of resolving conflicts

It was in 1979 that the first serious conflict erupted and it flared up again in 1983 and 1993. During the last conflict in 1996/1997, which lasted several months, at least three thousand Madurese were killed and tens of thousands were evacuated. The present outbreak is a virtual replay of 1997 only worse, because most Madurese settlements have been razed to the ground and a large number of Madurese settlers are now refugees.

The conflict between the communities was never properly resolved. The military authorities simply brought some elders together for a peace ritual which has obviously failed. A monument to commemorate a peace treaty signed after the 1979 conflict was destroyed during the 1997 conflict. Such peace rituals do nothing to tackle the social and economic problems dividing the communities. Human rights groups also complain that none of the people guilty of the killings and other human rights abuses have been brought to trial.

The fate of the Madurese

The severity of this latest conflict will have serious repercussions for the Madurese community. In the short term, it is impossible for them to go back to their burned-out villages. Nor is the option of returning to the overcrowded island of Madura feasible. The only idea that the government has come up with so far is a proposal to resettle the Madurese on an island near Pontianak, the capital of West Kalimantan.

Maluku: the violence spreads

In our last issue, we reported on the ethnic conflict in Ambon, the largest island in the Maluku archipelago. While the troubles there have calmed down somewhat, killings have since flared up in other parts of Maluku.

The violence in Ambon has forced many people to flee their homes and 39,000 refugees are now sheltering on Buton, a small island off the south coast of Sulawesi which is hardly able to cope with this huge influx. Another 75,000 refugees, mostly from Ujung Pandang and Bugis, have also fled back to their places of origin.

On 30 March violence erupted in Tual, the capital of the Kei islands in south-east Maluku. In a five-day clash between the Christian and Muslim communities, at least fifty people were killed. The reason for the outbreak is unclear but some local residents claimed that graffiti defaming Islam was the trigger. Residents blame the violence on instigators, the same ones who fanned the earlier conflict in Ambon and Haruku where at least 300 lives were lost.

The two communities, both armed with machetes and Molotov cocktails, attacked each other. Powerless to stop the carnage, the security forces resorted to the method they used in Ambon and started shooting at the feuding crowds. Many of the victims have died or been wounded by gunfire. During the first week, at least 18,000 people sought refuge in police stations and the local air and naval bases.

Very soon the conflict spread to Kei Besar island where people from two villages attacked another village and burned down sixty houses. Three people were killed and dozens wounded. On 14 April, Antara reported that 112 had died and twenty-six villages had been destroyed on three islands in south-east Maluku.

On 23 April, another conflict, which lasted three days, erupted. Thousands of feuding Muslims and Christians fought a fierce battle, which started when several policemen opened fire on the opposing groups, injuring at least ten people. At the end of the first day, press reports said that eleven people had died. The total number of deaths is still unclear but it could reach into the hundreds.

While all this was going on, violence erupted on the historic spice island of Banda in Nusatenggara Timur, where seven people lost their lives on 21 April. Two churches, forty-seven buildings and a kindergarten were gutted.

A week earlier, violence had erupted again in Central Maluku in the district of Amahai, where two people were killed and twenty-one houses were torched.

Political killings in West Java

A series of assassinations has so far resulted in more than a hundred deaths in Ciamis, West Java. According to *Kontras*, the Commission for Missing People and Victims of Violence, the murders have been committed by people who have received military training. There are strong indications that the hundreds of assassinations last year in Banyuwangi, East Java, are being replicated in Ciamis. The victims are similar: soothsayers, Muslim clerics and people



Kompas 24 March 1999

known for their anti-Suharto views.

The killings in Banyuwangi were never resolved by the authorities despite the many warnings from local organisations about the perpetrators. The people of Ciamis have been stricken by fear and prefer to remain silent.

Why the spiralling violence?

Social scientists and politicians have come forward with many explanations for the violence that has spiralled since the downfall of Suharto last May. Everybody agrees that the tight grip on society during the Suharto period was bound to lead to explosions once the iron-fist stability imposed by ABRI under the dictator was lifted. Conflicts between communities have existed for ages below the surface but they were never properly addressed.

On the contrary, as some local leaders in Kalimantan have said, instead of dealing with the real issues, community leaders have been forced to shake hands in meaningless peace rituals. During the recent outbursts, the security

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Global condemnation of ABRI

There has been international condemnation of ABRI's actions in Timor, acknowledging that the para-militaries are operating under instructions from the armed forces. While these death squads continue to run riot in East Timor, the tripartite talks at the UN have failed as yet to reach agreement on the handling of security arrangements when the ballot on East Timor takes place in August.

In February, Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State, visited Jakarta, and held a meeting with Xanana Gusmao, something which has become a must for all visiting government leaders going to Jakarta. Developments then seemed to be on track for a peaceful ballot in a few months' time, provided the para-militaries who had already been disrupting parts of the country were disarmed and disbanded. The Indonesian claim that the paras represented one side of a dispute between two so-called 'warring factions', the pro-integrationists and pro-independence forces, was still widely accepted.

In March, the Australian television programme, *Date-line*, broadcast a film about the para-militaries called *A Licence to Kill* giving a devastating portrayal of their leaders' bellicosity and the intimidating methods used to recruit members. Copies of the film were circulating worldwide and were used to persuade governments of the need to press for these death squads to be disarmed.

But it was not until the appalling massacres in Liquisa and Dili that it became abundantly clear that paras were proxies of ABRI, a fact that was clearly reflected in most international press reporting on the incidents.

The Guardian in London editorialised: 'It is now absolutely clear that elements within the Indonesian military are set on destroying the chance for a peaceful choice....Thugs armed by the local military have cut a murderous path across the territory.' It accused the military of engaging in 'a blatant attempt to subvert the rights of the East Timorese and the wishes of the international community.' [*The Guardian*, 21 April]

The New York Times placed the blame clearly on the militias backed by the Indonesian Army. It wrote in an editorial that arrangement for a vote on autonomy 'could fall apart if Jakarta fails to stop the militias, which have acted with the blessing of local army and police commanders. Washington must warn Indonesia that international loans could be suspended unless it acts.' [*NYT*, 23 April]

EU takes a stand amid mounting anger

In the first of three public statements about East Timor during April, the European Union said, responding to the Liquisa massacre: 'The EU deeply deplores the rise of violence in East Timor during recent months... and urges the Indonesian authorities to immediately intervene and stop such actions by militia by disarming them.' It strongly urged the Indonesian authorities to hold accountable those responsible for such killings.

In a statement issued on 20 April, the EU expressed deep concern that violence had escalated substantially

since its earlier statement. It condemned the fact that the killings at the home of Manuel Carrascalao 'occurred within a short distance of the Indonesian military command and that those forces did not intervene in order to prevent or stop the incident.'

Meanwhile in the Irish Parliament on 22 April, Foreign Minister David Andrews delivered a statement on his visit to East Timor, saying: 'I was shocked and horrified by what I encountered there.' He said he had been 'appalled' by his meeting with the Indonesian-appointed governor and said of his meeting with the military commander, Colonel Tono Suratman that 'he did not demonstrate any willingness or sense of responsibility ... to maintain law and order and to protect the lives and property of citizens'. This confirms the widely-held view that the Indonesian military doesn't give a toss about what the international community thinks.

Soon after the Liquisa massacre, the Clinton Administration sent Stanley Roth, Assistant Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific, to Jakarta to impress upon the Indonesian authorities its condemnation of the killings. That this was done in the midst of the Kosovo crisis is a measure of the depth of Washington's concern.

The Australian Prime Minister, John Howard expressed 'deep concern' over the killings in Dili and the 'growing evidence' that Indonesian security forces had failed to act to stop it. 'I am very concerned at the way in which the situation has deteriorated, and the Indonesian government cannot escape responsibility for at least some of that, if not all of it.' [*International Herald Tribune*, 19 April.]

The House of Commons was informed that Prime Minister Tony Blair had sent a 'strong message' to President Habibie complaining about 'the recent appalling events in Liquisa and Dili where deaths occurred and protection for the people from the armed forces was not forthcoming'. [Statement by Minister of State Tony Lloyd, see *Hansard*, 20 April]

Speaking in the House of Lords in a debate on Indonesia and East Timor, Lord Avebury said Wiranto should relieve the commander of the forces in East Timor Major-General Adam Damiri of his duties and Colonel Tono Suratman as well as disbanding the militias and reducing ABRI's presence. [*Hansard*, 22 April]

UN talks: What kind of a UN presence?

On 22 and 23 April, what was supposed to have been the final round in the UN-sponsored talks between Indonesia and Portugal, in preparation for the ballot, agreement was only reached on the autonomy proposal. While it was

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Indigenous peoples join forces

More than two hundred representatives of indigenous people from all parts of the archipelago held a congress in Jakarta to share experiences and draw up a common programme to protect their interests against mining companies, loggers and development projects and restore their sovereign rights over land expropriated against their wishes.

The week-long Congress held in March was a milestone in the history of indigenous people who for decades have confronted a powerful Indonesian state that looks upon them as backward and in need of modernisation. Agreement was reached by the 231 delegates to set up an organisation called AMAN (the name means 'safe' in Indonesian), the Alliance of Indigenous Peoples of the Archipelago. By not using Indonesia in the name, they got round the question of state boundaries which are rejected by a number of West Papuan and Acehnese groups.

It was a colourful event with many delegates attending in traditional dress, sparkling with enthusiasm at being participants in this milestone event. At the root of their problems is the contempt held for their land rights by the Indonesian state based on a Constitution that ignores people's rights to forests and gives primacy to state interests over traditional land ownership. Indigenous people have long suffered the ignominy of being called '*suku-suku terasing*' which means 'alienated' or 'isolated tribes', as if they need to be brought into the mainstream of Indonesian (that is to say, Javanese lifestyles), in tune with the twentieth century. In practice this has meant impoverishment of indigenous people whose lands have been grabbed for development projects, dams, plantations and mines.

Minister confronted

In attendance at one of the sessions was the Minister for Agrarian Affairs, Hasan Basri Durin, who, according to one columnist 'looked pale and was rendered speechless' by the grievances voiced from the platform. One delegate, Chief Tenganai Neratai of the Kubu tribe in Jambi, South Sumatra, dressed in a red loincloth, said: 'We are suffering because our lands and forests have vanished.' His people now control only one tenth of the 300,000 to 400,000 hectares of their forested land along the Batanghari River, much of which has been seized for forestry concessions,



Demo in Parliament by indigenous women

photo:Down to Earth

and agricultural and transmigration sites. 'They never asked our permission,' he protested.

L.B. Dinggit, chief of the Dayak Bentian tribe in East Kalimantan, was awarded the prestigious 1997 Goldman Environmental Prize in San Francisco for his efforts to preserve the forested areas of his homeland. But the governor of the province refused to welcome this award. Instead, Chief Dinggit was charged with a criminal offence for allegedly forging signatures and given a six-year sentence. He told the conference he had acted to defend his people's right to the land against a company, PT Kalhod Utama, which was granted a forest concession of about 1,400 square kilometres in 1982 that was transformed into profitable industrial forests.

Noer Fauzi, chair of the Agrarian Reform Consortium, told the Congress that virtually unrestricted access to forests occupied by indigenous peoples all over the country had led to a free-for-all land grab in which government-made laws reigned supreme. For the government, forests were important for their contribution to economic growth and national security, in stark contrast to forest peoples for whom they provide secure livelihoods and sound, well-tested methods to maintain sustainability.

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Basuki Resobowo, a man against the stream

On 4 January 1999 Basuki Resobowo died peacefully at an old age home in Amsterdam. He was 82, the last survivor of a generation of progressive painters like Soedjojono, Affandi and Hendra. Basuki was a colourful figure and his life was marked by a combination of painter and political activist.

Basuki was a prominent member of the PKI, the Indonesian Communist Party and is one of the last surviving members of the Central Committee of the Party. In October 1965, he was in China to attend the 1 October celebrations and due to the political upheaval he was unable to return home. Ever since, he has been a political refugee/activist. In 1970 he moved to Europe, obtained refugee status in (West) Germany but became active in Holland and joined several groups like *Gerakan Demi Demokrasi dan Hak Azasi Manusia* and *Front Demokrasi Indonesia*. He was an editor of the *Demi Demokrasi* magazine and attended several international conferences on behalf of these movements.

Basuki was involved in several solidarity groups in Europe and supported the Komitee Indonesië in the Netherlands as well as TAPOL. Many of the political cartoons published in *TAPOL Bulletin* in the '70s and '80s were his. He was also a skilful creator of political posters and the very first posters used at public meetings for East Timor and in the campaign for the release of Indonesian political prisoners were designed by him. In 1992 he joined a hunger strike of Indonesian student activists in protest against the threatened execution of political prisoners being held in Indonesian prisons.

Basuki devoted most of his time to painting and most of his works reflect intense disgust with the situation in Indonesia and his leftist political views. There was a distinct Basuki style in all his works. He was proud to be a communist but was frustrated by the lack of action by his fellow political refugees in Holland and Germany. Many fellow activists in Europe are proud owners of one of Basuki's painting. I myself have a powerful painting of the Tanjung Priok bloodbath of 1984. Most of his paintings would not sit well in the homes of respectable middle-class families. He held several exhibitions, the last one being in Amsterdam in 1995; they were always well attended.

Besides painting, he was a prolific writer. During his stay in Holland he wrote an autobiography, a novel called *Karmiatun*, *Perempuan Indonesia*, a comic book on *Cut Nyak Din* an Acehnese heroine of the anti-Dutch struggle, and a political essay entitled *Bercermin di Muka Kaca - seniman, seni dan masyarakat*. I had the good fortune to have met Pak Bas soon after his arrival in Europe. Together, we attended many meetings, organised many demonstrations and had many discussions. He was a humble, stubborn and highly committed person and always sided with the underdog, as expressed in his article in *TAPOL Bulletin* No. 61, January 1984.

Basuki was a founding member of LEKRA, the cultural organisation linked to the PKI. LEKRA was the most in-

fluent cultural organisation in the fifties and had many important artists among its members, including the writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer, the painter Sudjojono, the filmmaker Bachtjar Siagian, the poet Rivai Apin and many others. During the period of Guided Democracy of the early sixties, LEKRA was involved in fierce polemical disputes with more liberal and right-wing artists, strongly propagating the line of 'Politics to the Fore'. The polemics became very heated and after the military takeover, many LEKRA members ended up in prison or concentration camps, not a few of whom died as victims of Suharto terror.

Basuki was never a typical card-carrying communist. More an artist than a professional politician he always lived as a bohemian par excellence. But two years ago because of growing difficulties coping with old age, he had to be taken to a nursing home.

He was also a founding member of PERFINI, a film company run largely by members of the PSI and Masyumi, two political parties who clashed with the PKI. He was involved in the production of several legendary films made in of the early fifties, including *Krisis* and *Tangan-Tangan Yang Kotor*. These black-and-white films were in the tradition of the Italian neo-realist movies of that era. Few of these films are now extant; neglect and deliberate destruction during Suharto's *Orde Baru* wreaked lasting damage to the Indonesian cinema.

In 1965 Basuki directed a movie commemorating the 45th anniversary of the PKI, very few people have ever seen the film, copies may still be available in Beijing.

Basuki's early days

Basuki regarded himself as *anak Betawi* (a Jakarta boy) because he lived for more than 35 years in the city, but he was born in Lampung, South Sumatra where his father was a civil servant in the Dutch administration. In the thirties he joined the *Taman Siswa* movement, a nationalist movement which placed special emphasis on education. Through *Taman Siswa*, Basuki was radicalised and became part of the anti-colonial movement. He joined the communist party during the Japanese occupation and stuck to his leftist political convictions to the end. People in Amsterdam still remember him carrying a huge banner saying *Hidup PKI*, 'Long live the PKI' in one of the many anti-Suharto rallies.

Hundreds of people, young and old, attended Basuki's cremation. He was a source of inspiration for many of us and his fighting spirit is like a rock in the ocean. We all miss you, Pak Bas.

Liem Soei Liong

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

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When disputes were taken to court by the rightful land owners, it was usually ineffective. 'The dispute between the Dayak Bentian and the government symbolised the hegemony of state laws over traditional community laws,' he said. [*Jakarta Post*, 7 April]

Women delegates act together

One of the most impressive events of the Congress was the coming together of the women delegates to compare notes about their specific problems and to agree on the formation of a women's organisation, Alliance of Indigenous Women of the Archipelago. One of their grievances was directed at their own communities. Complaints about the oppression of women in traditional societies drew considerable attention. The point was driven home by the fact that less than ten per cent of the delegations attending the Congress were women.

The women directed their anger in particular at the government's family planning programme under which prescribed methods of birth control are imposed. Matea Mamoyau from the Komoro tribe in West Papua complained that even though they have their own safe traditional methods of birth control, 'we were herded like cattle to the health centres (where) the doctors and nurses forced us to use IUDs, implants or swallow pills.' Some of these methods have dangerous side-effects which is not the case with traditional methods.

The women also complained about government projects

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agreed that the ballot would be on 8 August, agreement on the far more critical issues of security and the modalities for the voting were postponed until 5 May as Foreign Minister Alatas was unable to accept proposals made by Portugal without first consulting Jakarta.

The critical question at issue is the nature of the UN's presence before and during the voting. In a statement in March, East Timorese resistance leader, Xanana Gusmao said that conditions on the ground had deteriorated to such an extent - mind you, this was before the Liquisa and Dili tragedies - that a UN peace-keeping force would be needed. However, Alatas told the press in New York that 'this has never been discussed' and that 'the main responsibility will be shouldered by Indonesia'. The secretary-general's special ambassador on East Timor, Jamsheed Marker, agreed, saying: 'We have taken the word and the understanding of the Government of Indonesia that peaceful conditions will prevail.' [*Transcript of Press Conference at UN Headquarters*, 23 April]

On 27 April, the Australia Prime Minister John Howard held talks with Habibie at which the central issue was the UN presence. Habibie told Howard that Indonesia would allow UN police advisers in to help monitor the ballot. This is totally unsatisfactory. First, monitoring the ballot is not the same as safeguarding security. Second, the agreed number of police was 'so small that it was strictly a tokenistic exercise'. [*Australian Financial Review*, 28 April]

Whether agreement is reached on the nature of the UN presence depends on the 5 May UN talks. If Habibie's offer is accepted, it will be a grave betrayal of the hopes of the East Timorese for a ballot free of the murderous terror being inflicted on them by ABRI and the para-militaries. *

and companies that take over indigenous land for plantations, timber estates and mines which invariably marginalise women.

'We do not recognise the state'

The Congress ended with the adoption of a declaration which demanded an outright end of abuses against them and respect by the state for their sovereignty. It said that there was no place for a uniform policy because of the diversity of the people in the archipelago. 'If the state does not recognise us, we also do not recognise the state,' it said.

A basic statement of views was also adopted which said that 'customary institutions have been torn apart by the imposition of regional and village administration applied uniformly' based on the 1974 law on regional administration. 'The imposed concept of the village has led to extraordinary conflicts,' the statement said, while state control of resources 'has become a powerful tool to eradicate the sovereignty of indigenous peoples'.

The demands included an end to such terms as 'isolated tribes' and 'state-owned land, a return of political sovereignty of the indigenous peoples, the revoking of all laws denying their sovereignty, an end to military intervention leading to violence, particularly towards women, and the correction of all abuses of basic rights'. The Congress demanded the repeal of a number of laws including those on land, mining and forestry exploitation. It also stressed that all government or private programme involving land should entail consultation with indigenous peoples, in such matters as transmigration, mining and forestry exploitation. [*Jakarta Post*, 22 March] *

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