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All-out offensive in East Timor

The Indonesian forces of occupation in East Timor have once again declared their determination to obliterate the resistance in East Timor. On 20 June, several more battalions were despatched to the territory to unleash a new military operation called Tuntas (Finish Them Off). In May and June, Falintil, the armed wing of the resistance, launched several daring attacks in Dili, Baucau and Viqueque resulting in the death of at least 52 members of the Indonesian security forces.

According to sources close to the resistance, ABRI, the Indonesian armed forces, has compiled a target list of 1,700 East Timorese suspected as members of the clandestine front or in contact with Falintil. Scores of Timorese were rounded up all over the territory in the first wave of arrests. On 17 June the authorities claim to have captured 57 'criminals' suspected of involvement in the recent disturbances. [*Media Indonesia*, 18 June].

In Baucau alone 12 civilians were killed. ABRI claims to have dismantled a resistance network operating in several districts of Dili. Several persons were killed in the operation and others captured alive, according to Major-General Rivai, the Bali-based Udayana territorial military commander whose territory includes East Timor [*Surya*, 11 June].

The heavy casualties sustained by the Indonesian security forces compelled the Indonesians to start an all-out operation to eradicate the resistance. Special police forces known as Brimob and Perintis, plus territorial troops and special army units, along with intelligence agents have been carrying out house-to-house searches.

Army and police chiefs sacked

The Falintil attacks which struck right at the heart of the enemy, in Dili, Baucau and Viqueque, the three main cities, proved that Falintil is far from being a 'spent force' as Indonesian army chiefs always claim. The offensive was waged at a time when the forces of occupation were on high alert because of the elections, making it all the more humiliating for them. It was clear that heads would soon begin to roll.

The first to go was Colonel Mahidin Simbolon, the military commander of East Timor. Since the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991 a military posting to East Timor is no longer the guarantee of a brilliant career in the army. In the 1990s, most military commanders in East Timor have been

sacked prematurely and have disappeared into oblivion. The disgraced Colonel Simbolon has been assigned to attend a course at the National Defence Council and has been replaced by Colonel Slamet Sidabutar, commander of Group II of Kopassus, the red beret command based in Surakarta. Major-General Prabowo, the Kopassus chief, flew in from Jakarta for the installation. Colonel Slamet Sidabutar has a background of both intelligence and commando operations.

We apologise for the late arrival of this issue. Following an accident that befell one of our editors, we were unable to produce Bulletin No. 141 in time. Everything is now back to normal and our next Bulletin will appear in August.

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Two weeks later the high profile police commander, Colonel Yusuf Mucharam was replaced. This was only to be expected as so many of the ABRI casualties were police officers. He has been replaced by Colonel Atok Rismanto, the second in command. Mucharam has been withdrawn to police HQ.

Destabilising the elections

The Falintil attacks were intended to disrupt the Indonesian elections in East Timor. For months, clandestine front activists had been discussing the feasibility of launching public protest in the main cities against the elections. The East Timorese clandestine front in Java had joined with the Indonesian pro-democracy movement in campaigning for a boycott. But in occupied East Timor something different was needed, because Indonesian elections there are illegitimate.



Bishop Belo and Jose Ramos Horta in Oslo during the Nobel ceremony.

However, since last December the level of repression has greatly intensified. The Nobel Peace Prize to two East Timorese was like a red rag for the Indonesian bull(y). On the ground in East Timor, the niceties of diplomacy gestures, the 'Alatas face' of the regime, are subsumed by the brutalities of ABRI. This appears to have ruled out a major protest movement against the election by the clandestine front which could have resulted in yet another bloodbath.

Within the East Timorese resistance, Falintil's position is not merely symbolic. It stands at the peak and all important political decisions must have the agreement of the Falintil leaders. A decision was taken to destabilise the country during the elections. Guerrilla units would enter the cities and hit at the enemy, targeting the forces of occupation as well as symbols of the Indonesian occupation, including the polling booths. The offensive would send a clear message to the outside world that resistance to the Indonesian occupation is very much alive and can strike wherever it wants.

The impression one gets from reading reports in the Indonesian press is that the East Timorese resistance achieved its objectives. The elections were disrupted and the forces of occupation sustained heavy blows. In many

places polling was postponed because polling booths had been demolished or because the population refused to be herded to the polling stations. Official claims about the voting results in East Timor cannot be taken seriously.

More than 50 ABRI casualties

On 26 May a Falintil unit attacked a police post in Laga-Toaucau. Three Indonesian policemen were killed and two severely wounded [CNRM Report, 3 June].

On 27 May a police van transporting Brimob (Mobile Brigade, the elite police forces) troops was ambushed in Baguia. A grenade was lobbed into the vehicle, killing four and wounding two. [CNRM Report, 3 June].

On 28 May, the eve of the election, a guerrilla unit drove down from the mountains in a Toyota Kijang pickup and headed straight for the barracks of Company A of Brimob in Bairopite, in western Dili. Three sentries on duty were taken by surprise and struck down by machetes and gunshots. Heavy fighting ensued, with casualties on both sides. The police lost seventeen dead and several were severely wounded, one of whom died in hospital. There are conflicting reports about the casualties among the attackers. It seems that all five in the pickup were killed while four or five young East Timorese were killed in the aftermath. According to the police, 22 people took part in the attack, 13 Falintil members and 9 back-up people. Another five were arrested when they tried to burn down the newly re-built market, Mercado Lama, located in the heart of the city.

This two-pronged attack was aimed at hitting hard at the Indonesian security forces and attacking symbols of *pembangunan* (development) like the market. A week later, a second attack on the market was more successful. [CNRM Report, 3 June; Jawa Pos, 31 May; Bernas, 3 June; Surya, 8 June].

On 29 May, election day, many polling stations in the eastern part of the country were attacked. Polling booths in Baucau, Quelicai, Viqueque and Ossu were gutted. During these operations, an Indonesian intelligence officer and his wife were killed. Polling booths were burnt down in Ermera and Bobonaro, and hit by grenades Liquica. An attempt to raid the ammunition depot of Battalion 745 in Lautem failed.

In Lospalos Indonesian security forces fought hard to prevent polling booths from being burned down and fierce fighting broke out. According to resistance sources, ten young Timorese, all members of the clandestine front, were killed. In Ermera, nine Indonesian soldiers were killed by Falintil. [CNRM Report, 3 June; Surya, 30 May].

On 30 May, a Falintil unit ambushed an ABRI truck carrying 26 members of Brimob and police units, with two soldiers as drivers. The truck was flagged down by someone in battledress, thought to be a soldier. A grenade was thrown into the back of the truck, followed by a volley of gunfire coming from several directions. The truck exploded as bullets hit a petrol drum. Seventeen policemen died in the inferno while four were shot dead as they tried to escape. The guerrillas departed without sustaining casualties. [CNRM Report, 3 June; Merdeka, 2 June; Bernas, 2 June]

On 31 May, a guerrilla unit ambushed a car belonging to the local administration in Baucau but no casualties were reported. [CNRM Report, 3 June; Surya, 2 & 6 June].

On 7 June, the newly rebuilt Mercado Lama went up in flames. Mercado Lama lies at the heart of the Indonesian-controlled East Timorese economy. This is the third time

since the Indonesian occupation that the market-place has been gutted. More than 500 stalls were destroyed. The action had been well prepared. Several parts of the market had been doused with petrol and warning shots were fired to give stall-holders time to leave the scene. Several youngsters held back the fire brigade by throwing stones. Chief of Police Yusuf Mucharam told the press four of the six people involved had been arrested. He claimed that Falintil commander David Alex had given orders for the action. [*Bernas*, 9 June; *Republika* 11 June].



A Falintil unit in the interior of East Timor.

Civilian casualties

During these actions many civilians were also killed. Colonel Yusuf Mucharam alleged that 17 Timorese civilians were killed by the resistance forces, ten in Lospalos, two each in Baucau and Ermera and one each in Viqueque, Ermera and Ainaro. [*Surya*, 8 June] But resistance sources give a different account. CNRM representative in the US, Constancio Pinto, told the UN Decolonisation Committee on 16 June that the Indonesian forces had killed 18 people on election day alone, including ten who tried to burn down a polling booth (in Lospalos).

On the same day in Lospalos, the Castelo family and friends were attacked by Indonesian security forces as they were watching RTP1, the Portuguese international television channel. Eight people were killed on the spot.

Major-General Rivai has also claimed that the resistance attacked a transmigration site in Muapitin on 28 May, alleging that nine civilians were killed. Another report contradicts this, claiming that two soldiers and a civilian were killed. There have been no independent reports to substantiate Rivai's claims. [*Merdeka*, 2 June; HR Watch Report, 4 June].

Our own monitoring of reports from both Indonesian and East Timorese sources suggest that the only civilians killed by Falintil were the Indonesian intelligence agent and his wife on election day in Baucau. He has been named as Dominggos da Silva, a former member of the local legislative body, the DPRD. The majority of Indonesians who

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become members of legislative bodies in East Timor are (former) ABRI members. ★

East Timorese speak out on referendum

The week before the elections, Foreign Minister Ali Alatas gave a lecture at Universitas Timor Timur in Dili.

East Timor is a special case for Alatas, not only because he spends so much time trying to defend Indonesia's occupation abroad but because he always heads the GOLKAR electoral list for East Timor, even though as a member of government, he cannot take up the seat.

After his lecture entitled 'Development of East Timor in the Era of Globalisation', a student from the Agrarian Faculty, Januar Jesus de Belo stood up and asked: 'Is the Government of Indonesia developing East Timor or developing the people of East Timor? We are told that the majority of East Timorese support integration but why doesn't the Indonesian government agree to hold a referendum?' As he sat down, the questioner was enthusiastically applauded. All that Alatas could say in reply was that the people of East Timor had already expressed their wish to integrate with Indonesia. [*Kompas*, 24 May]

Three weeks later, a group of East Timorese students attending universities in Java visited the National Commission for Human Rights in Jakarta to say that many East Timorese want a referendum even though the Indonesian government is dead set against it. Representing the East Timor Student Movement for Peace, the group handed over a petition calling for an end to the fighting in East Timor and for reconciliation between groups of East Timorese. They said the problem requires a political solution; they criticised Portugal for being inconsistent and described Indonesia as 'arrogant and unrealistic' in dealing with the problem. [*Jakarta Post*, 17 June] ★

Bishop Belo meets President Clinton

US President Bill Clinton had a brief meeting with Bishop Ximenes Belo, the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, the first time that a US President has met a Timorese leader. Bishop Belo received the Nobel Prize because of his courageous stance in speaking up about the suffering of his people. He has many times accused Indonesian authorities of torture, arbitrary arrests and other abuses in East Timor and spoken out for autonomy for East Timor or for a referendum.

Earlier this year, Clinton declined to meet Jose Ramos Horta, the other Nobel laureate. The meeting between Bishop Belo and President Clinton took place in the White House on 17 June during the Bishop's meeting with National Security advisor, Sandy Berger.

After the meeting, White House spokesman Mike McCurry said: "The President expressed his interest in

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Moral and political defeat for Suharto

The 1997 elections were disastrous for the regime. The level of violence was unprecedented, with a death toll of almost 300. Suharto's image abroad plummeted as the world press almost unanimously portrayed the elections as undemocratic, rigged and nothing more than a ritual. Violent clashes spilled over to the post-election period as the blatantly rigged results were announced.

The official results came as no surprise. The ruling GOLKAR got 74 percent, the Muslim-oriented PPP won 23 percent, five percent more than in 1992, while the Nationalist/Christian PDI share tumbled to a mere 3 percent.

Since Suharto came to power, elections have been carefully stage-managed according to a system devised by Major-General Ali Murtopo, Suharto's key political fixer up to 1978. He thought up the 'floating mass' doctrine which treats the people as politically illiterate, because giving political responsibility to the masses would be like riding a tiger. Depoliticisation was the order of the day. The vast majority of Indonesians live in the countryside and are easy prey to the crude manipulations of GOLKAR's electoral machine, helped along by the fact that all government officials are members of GOLKAR.

Rekayasa

General elections are the supreme example of *rekayasa*, meaning stage-management. GOLKAR is always assured of obtaining a huge majority as the two other contestants are not allowed to campaign below sub district level. [For the many ways the two small parties are disadvantaged, see *TAPOL Bulletin* No. 140, April 1997].

In urban areas people things don't run so smoothly, so other means of 'persuasion' are used. Local officials are set targets which may vary from 60 to 100 percent. Because village heads, sub-district and district heads know they can be sacked if they don't achieve the target, they resort to heavy-handed methods. The more remote the region, the easier it is to achieve the target. In remote places like Papiuan settlements, local officials don't even bother to hold the



Security troops had to work many extra hours during the election campaign.

election, registering all the votes for GOLKAR. Elsewhere, elections are held, with people being herded to the polling booths under the watchful eye of officials who use a variety of methods to achieve the target. A villager cannot risk conflicts with the village-head on whom he or she depends for an ID card or other permits.

Rigging

But this time, in some densely populated areas, the system did not work. In many parts of Java populated overwhelmingly by Muslims, including the green belt of slums around Jakarta, support for the PPP was massive. Here, GOLKAR officials needed more creative arm-twisting such as direct threats or financial inducements. One option used in districts where large numbers of civil servants live was double voting with civil servants voting in their place of residence and at their place of work. They received Rp. 40,000 for their pains.

Large corporations also did their bit to help GOLKAR by assembling employees and promising an extra one month's salary as long as everyone voted GOLKAR. At polling booths in schools (15-year-olds have the vote), the Education Ministry warned that schools with less than 100 percent for GOLKAR would be blacklisted. In some schools, over-zealous head teachers told pupils that exam results would depend on how they voted.

OPERASI FAJAR

In places where GOLKAR confronted special problems, rigging was particularly heavy. *Operasi Fajar* (Dawn) was launched to improve GOLKAR's position. It targeted slum areas with large numbers of newcomers. Teams of GOLKAR functionaries, usually low-ranking civil servants, were assembled a few days prior to polling day and told to persuade people to vote GOLKAR, promising inducements like cash or a few kilos of rice. Each team member was required to canvas about a hundred people. The operation continued up until the eve of polling day.

Tampering with ballot boxes was one of the easiest methods used. The boxes were simply spirited away without local supervisors knowing what was happening.

An academic named Alex Irwan who studied violations in 1992, described the elections as nothing more than a ceremony. Commenting on the 1997 elections in *Tempo Interaktif*, he concluded that nothing had improved; on the contrary, violations had increased. He said that protest

votes would not be registered because no one would know what happened to their spoilt voting slips.

A transformed political climate

But what was very different this time round was the political climate. Things began to change in 1993 when the PDI elected Megawati Soekarnoputri as chair. Many pro-democracy groups now saw the PDI as a vehicle around which a coalition could be built, combining forces within and outside the system. As the new PDI became the rallying point, Suharto decided to destroy this threat by sacking Megawati in June 1996 and laying siege to the Party's head office on 27 July. Suharto was not minded to let things get out of hand as they did in Nigeria and Burma where Obiola and Aung San Suu Kyi won elections convincingly but were prevented from holding office. Obiola is now in jail while Aung San Suu Kyi is still under house arrest.



A pro-Megawati action. She remains arguably Indonesia's most popular politician.

Politics in Indonesia have not been the same since 27 July. Already months before campaigning started, anger and frustration were widespread. People came out onto the streets in support of Megawati and riots erupted all over Java as well as in Bali, Madura and Kalimantan.

The unrest forced the authorities to think up ways of curbing mass participation in the campaign which had been allowed in the five previous elections. They issued regulations outlawing public rallies and confining campaigning to indoor gatherings and stage-managed dialogues between the contestants. In the pre-election period, GOLKAR held large open-air gatherings addressed by GOLKAR 'vote-getters' with performances by popular artists and musicians. These rallies attracted large crowds because civil servants were ordered to attend while others turned up to hear their favourite artists perform.

The election campaign

Strapped for cash, the PDI and PPP could not provide such lavish entertainment. Suryadi, the puppet chosen to replace Megawati at the head of PDI, and Hasan Metareum of PPP, are both Suharto loyalists. Suryadi was treated with contempt by the vast majority of PDI members who remained loyal to Megawati. At virtually every event addressed by Suryadi, he was jeered at, often having to flee for his life. On one occasion, someone in the crowd threw a huge python onto the platform. Megawati's popularity presented Suharto with a catch 22 situation: had he allowed her to participate, the GOLKAR vote would certainly have

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plummeted, but her removal backfired because it made her even more popular. While Suryadi's PDI sank into obscurity, the PDI-Megawati structure remained intact. For the first time in 32 years, an Indonesian politician could now claim to have a mass base.

At the grassroots, the PPP found itself in the fortunate position of winning support from the PDI-Megawati masses. In many cities, a Mega-Bintang (Bintang or star, being the symbol of PPP) coalition emerged. Although this was not to the liking of Hasan Metareum, it turned PPP rallies into much more lively events, attracting many first-time voters. It was obvious that the PPP share of the vote would increase. In many places, anti-GOLKAR feelings ran high, even leading to conflicts with the security forces. People in vast numbers had lost their fear of the military and the police.

Violence erupts

During the four-week campaign, no fewer than 200 riots were recorded in cities right across Java, climaxing with the worst incident of all, in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan (see separate item). No sooner had the polling booths closed on 29 May than violence erupted as thousands in many cities protested against implausible local victories for GOLKAR.

During the month prior to 29 May, some 300 people lost their lives and numerous banks, markets, shops and departmental stores went up in flames. The disturbances also scared foreign investors, with investments falling by 25 per cent in the early part of 1997. Suharto's much-vaunted political stability was in tatters.

The first election-related incident flared up in Pekalongan between GOLKAR mobs and PPP supporters. In most subsequent incidents, this pattern was repeated. Pekalongan is a medium-sized town on the north coast of Central Java and a stronghold of the PPP. Here and elsewhere, PPP supporters were infuriated when GOLKAR supporters started tearing down their posters and banners. In some regions, the tension was so high that local PPP leaders decided not to campaign. The decision not to allow outdoor rallies only made matters worse. In many places, angry crowds also vented their fury against government offices and police posts.

The security forces which had been trained in special procedures to handle election crowds frequently used excessive force particularly against people who rallied under the banner of the grassroots Mega-Bintang alliance. During the first week of the campaign, responding to the spontaneous emergence of this alliance, the authorities banned all public display of support, ripping down its banners. In Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Surabaya as well as smaller towns like Klaten and Bangil, clashes became almost a daily event, intensifying as election day drew near. Outside Java, towns like Jayapura and Ujungpandang were also hit.

On 20 May riots occurred simultaneously in Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang and Pekalongan, followed the next day by a huge clash in Yogya between the masses and the security forces, where neighbourhoods like Sleman, Kulonprogo and Bantul were engulfed in serious street brawls, as people armed themselves with home-made weapons. Fierce clashes occurred on the same day in Klaten and

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Pekalongan resulting in dozens of people being treated for serious injuries. On 22 May, the penultimate day of the campaign, a clash between PPP supporters and the security forces ended tragically, with at least 18 people being rushed to hospital with bullet wounds. On the next day, demonstrators in Bangil attacked a police post; five demonstrators received gunshot wounds but the crowd, undaunted, attacked and destroyed a police post. Later a shopping centre and a church were also destroyed. On the same day, crowds demolished at least fifty shops and five banks in Tangerang, a satellite town near Jakarta.

The day before 29 May, election day, polling booths were the main target. In Surabaya, Wonosobo and Kudus unidentified persons burned down polling booths.

PRD scapegoated again

Repeating the claims he had made after 27 July 1996, Lt. General Syarwan Hamid, the all-powerful head of the social and political department of the armed forces, again blamed the PRD, the People's Democratic Party, as the 'mastermind' behind the wave of violence, notwithstanding the fact that its top leaders were now safely behind bars and local activists had gone underground. Most political analysts were not impressed by Hamid's preposterous claims although it is widely acknowledged that PRD activists took the lead in calling for an election boycott, courageously daubing slogans on walls and distributing leaflets. Even local army commanders took a different line, admitting that anger and frustration, not elusive 'third parties', were the main cause of the disturbances.

The PRD took advantage of the internet to disseminate uncensored statements, reports and analytical comments, much to the annoyance of military intelligence and people like Hamid. Even those behind bars were able to circulate statements, while Budiman, chair of PRD, was interviewed during his trial by the domestic and world media in the courtroom cell.

A re-run in Madura

Sampang, a sleepy coastal town on the isle of Madura, off the north coast of East Java, literally exploded when the results were announced. In this staunch PPP bastion, where at least 80 percent of the votes were expected to go to the PPP, the results were precisely the opposite - a huge majority for GOLKAR announced after the ballot boxes had been taken to the district administration for the count. People went on the rampage for hours, storming through the five sub-districts of Sampang. Ballot boxes were seized and burned. Anger quickly spread to the neighbouring districts of Pamekasan and Sumenep where ballot boxes were destroyed as well as a number of government buildings, the GOLKAR office and police posts. Polling stations were gutted. Houses of GOLKAR members were also targeted and a bridge linking Kedungdung and Tambelangan was destroyed, along with shops and a church.

In Pamekasan, crowds also attacked and burned down the police post. Calm was only restored after the revered local religious leader, Kyai Alawi, appeared.

For the first time ever, the East Java military commander Major General Imam Oetomo decided that the voting should be re-run but turned down demands that this should cover the whole of the island. As violence contin-

ued, he issued a shoot-on-sight order. But during the re-run there were more disturbances as thousands of PPP supporters were turned away from the polling booths. According to *Siar*, an alternative news agency, in a report on the internet on 1 June, at least eleven PPP supporters were shot by members of the security forces and sustained gunshot wounds during disturbances in Sampang and Pamekasan. Subsequent reports from Madura give the impression that the island is in a state of open revolt because of disgust with the way in which the voting was rigged.

Post-election disturbances

Anti-riot troops had been well prepared for the disturbances. Small well-trained mobile units kept a 24-hour vigil in the big cities, ready to be despatched at short notice to wherever they might be needed, using armoured vehicles and helicopters. Recently-delivered riot-control equipment from the UK, including Tactica water cannons, special protection shields, tear gas canisters and rubber bullets were in evidence everywhere. Even in small towns like Jember, East Java, a Tactica water cannon was out on the streets.



Pierce them all or not at all.

In East Java where the level of violence had been particularly high during the campaign, military commander Major-General Imam Oetomo issued a shoot-on-sight order. The scale of the disturbances in the province was so widespread in the weeks following the election that Oetomo announced on 16 June that he was 'declaring war' on the rioters. Thirty company units were deployed in a number of 'troublespots' including Madura, Jember, Pasuruan, Probolinggo and Situbondo. In Bangkalan, Madura, the GOLKAR office, local administrative offices and the police headquarters had been razed to the ground by angry crowds. In Jember, nine demonstrators were treated for

gunshot wounds. The situation in the town was so bad that special police and army units had to be rushed in from Surabaya and Malang. [*Media Indonesia*, 17 June]

A report in the East Java daily, *Jawa Pos* [16 June] described the situation throughout the island of Madura as extremely tense. Heavily armed troops, including special police and army units along with the marines, were stationed everywhere. A spokesman for the provincial police command was quoted as saying: 'To prevent any repetition of incidents in Sampang and Bangkalan, we have now stationed a large number of troops all over the island of Madura.' In an attempt to restore order, many roads were heavily patrolled and completely closed to the general public. Fires were still blazing in a number of places with crowds preventing fire-fighters from getting near.

In Jakarta, the US and Australian embassies warned their citizens to be watchful of the possibility of more violence erupting. Dozens of families from the affluent Chinese community decided to go abroad until the tension eased.

Golput, the major victor

For opposition groups outside the system, an election boycott was the only option. *Golput* or *golongan putih*, ('white group') covered a range of protest actions - turning in blank voting slips, invalidating slips or staying away altogether. Opinion polls in several universities showed at least half of the students opting for *golput*. Inevitably, because of the extent and depth of social control in the countryside, *Golput* protest was mainly confined to densely populated areas in the major cities and in provinces like Central and East Java.

A week before the election, Megawati announced that she would not vote, her rather cautious way of supporting *Golput*. It is widely acknowledged that in many places, *golput* took second place after GOLKAR. With the counting of votes so tightly controlled, it is not possible to know the exact number of abstentions, but several monitoring groups came up with their own estimates. Several newspapers also highlighted the fact that abstentions were far greater than in 1992. On that occasion, *golput* was limited to politically active groups, but this time, protest votes were far more widespread. Even religious bodies like the Catholic Bishop's Conference assured their members that it was not sinful to refrain from voting. Unrecognised parties like Sri-Bintang's PUDI and the PRD openly called for a boycott along with a string of political NGOs. Many ad hoc student committees, bearing a rich variety of names, joined the broad alliance of protest against the elections.

Official figures indicate that about 14 million people, or 11 percent of the electorate, failed to vote but monitoring bodies like KIPP, the LBH and PDI-Megawati said they had received thousands of voting slips from the public. Some boycott supporters held gatherings to burn their voting slips. Some tore up their slips in front of election officials while others stuck photos of Megawati on their voting slip or scrawled words like: 'Hang Suharto' and 'Illegal elections'.

The Jakarta *golput* vote is believed to have been between 15 and 30 percent while in Surabaya, it was thought to be nearly 25 percent. Yogyakarta protests accounted for 16 to 22 percent. In some defiant neighbourhoods *golput* was almost total. One village in Karangasem in Bali declared itself *Desa Golput* (Golput village). In a number of

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kampungs in Jakarta and Yogya, Golput accounted for more than 50 per cent of voters.

Monitoring the violations

For the first time, groups like KIPP (the election monitoring committee) and the legal aid bureau, YLBHI monitored the elections in different places. Observers from abroad were also present. KIPP, whose activities were not formally banned, said that its 8,000 volunteers in 47 cities had found evidence of systematic violations. Gunawan Muhammad, chair of KIPP, reported many cases of multiple voting, intimidation of election observers and procedural irregularities.



A protest on election day outside the Indonesian embassy in London. Several Timorese chained themselves to the railings of the building; it took the police hours to cut them free. Photo Paul Mattson

Prof. Baharuddin Lopa, the secretary-general of Komnas HAM, the National Commission of Human Rights also acknowledged that there was many violations. The LBH in Surabaya identified 26 different violations. Indro Sugianto the chair of LBH Surabaya, condemned the excessive use of force by security officers against peaceful campaigners. KIPP volunteers in Surabaya discovered a number of violations like bribery by officials, manipulation of vote counting and the absence of observers during the counting. KIPP in Yogyakarta noted that tampering with votes was widespread. Blank voting slips were counted as GOLKAR votes while votes cast for one of the other parties were declared invalid. ★

PKI leader dies after 26 years on death row

On 8 May, Sukatno, one of the five remaining 'G30S' prisoners under the death sentence, passed away. He was 67 years old. He was buried the next day in Jakarta in the presence of many friends and sympathisers.

Sukatno was the most senior member of the PKI among the 1965 prisoners still being held at the time of his death. He had dedicated his whole life to leftwing political activism. He fought in the ranks of the youth during the revolutionary period of 1945-1949. His role as an organiser will be honorably recorded in the annals of Indonesian history even though he spent more than half his adult life in prison, the captive of a vindictive and heartless regime.

Sukatno was born of working class parents in Turen, Malang, East Java on 31 December 1929. His father was a blacksmith at a sugar factory. After finishing primary school he trained as an electrician at his father's factory. When fighting broke out in 1945 to defend the newly proclaimed Republic he was still a youngster of 15; he joined the youth militia of Pesindo, the Socialist Youth of Indonesia and fought in Surabaya in the heroic action to defend the city before being driven out by British forces. He later went to South Sumatra to continue to fight for the Republic.

After the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949, he helped build Pesindo as a regular youth organisation, no longer a militia, in Central Java, becoming deputy general secretary. In 1950, Pesindo changed its name to Pemuda Rakyat, People's Youth, and became the youth wing of the Indonesian Communist Party, the PKI. Sukatno joined the PKI at around this time and rose to become general secretary of Pemuda Rakyat.

He travelled widely after being elected onto the executive committee of the World Federation of Democratic Youth. In 1955, he was a PKI candidate in the general election, the only democratic election ever held in Indonesia. At 26, he was the youngest member of Parliament.

In 1959, he was elected onto the PKI Central Committee as a candidate member, and became a full member in July 1964. When the events of October 1965 occurred leading to General Suharto's seizure of power, he was still an MP but was immediately stripped of his immunity, losing his seat when Suharto purged the legislature of all members of the PKI and its associated organisations.

Pemuda Rakyat was accused of direct involvement in the October 1965 event because dozens of its members happened to be undergoing training at the airforce base where army officers who organised the kidnapping and murder of six army generals on 1 October were based. During the violent clamp down of the PKI that followed, Sukatno evaded arrest and went into hiding. In September 1967, he joined forces with a number of PKI leaders in South Blitar to set up a PKI Major Regional Committee in East Java. This was the only organised attempt at resistance to Su-

harto's unlawful banning of the PKI. In July 1968, their base was destroyed during a military campaign called Operasi Trisula, conducted by the East Java military command. A number of people were shot dead;



In the final months of his captivity, Sukatno was almost entirely incapacitated.

others were arrested and taken into custody, among them Sukatno.

After a brief trial in early 1971, Sukatno was sentenced to death on 11 March 1971. His appeal was turned down by the appeal court and the Supreme Court confirmed his death sentence in 1985. As his time in prison dragged on, he became increasingly demoralised when other death sentence prisoners were executed. In the late 1980s, there were calls by the international community for the release of the death sentence prisoners on the grounds that they were suffering two punishments, facing the ever-present threat of a death sentence and serving life as well.

Sukatno refused to ask President Suharto for clemency in the conviction that he was not guilty of anything. He also feared that if he did so and it was refused, his only

defence against the firing squad would have been removed. The prison authorities and army officers frequently urged him to file a clemency plea but he refused to do so.

In February 1991, it was discovered that the court had filed a plea for clemency on his behalf without his consent. President Suharto turned down this 'clemency plea' on 13 May, 1992.

He was notified of the decision at a time when his state of health had begun to deteriorate and the anger and anxiety he felt only made things worse, physically and psychologically. Then came the death in Cipinang Prison of his close friend and comrade, Ruslan Widjajasastra, who had been paralysed and half blind for some time. Ruslan's death shattered him, added to which he was suffering from a prostate disorder. In the final years of his life, he was unable to walk unaided and had to be carried by fellow prisoners to meet visitors. His memory had also faded.

His plight was taken up by the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians in 1990. Ever since, the IPU has annually made strong representations on his behalf to the Indonesian president to pardon Sukatno and allow him to spend the remaining years of his life in freedom, but to no avail.

In April this year, his prostate disorder worsened and he

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was taken to the Police Hospital in Kramat Jati, East Jakarta. This ill-equipped hospital is the only place the authorities at Cipinang will allow prisoners to be taken, presumably on the grounds of security. Having spent a couple of weeks there with minimal treatment, he was returned to prison on 1 May. Doctors who had examined him said that 'there is nothing wrong with him'. But four days later, as his condition worsened, he was taken back to the same hospital. After pleas were made on his behalf by humanitarian groups, he was transferred to Cikini Hospital but the doctors there were unable to help as he was already close to death.

Reflecting on my own brief acquaintance with Sukatno, it is painful to think that a man I knew as brimming with enthusiasm, who succeeded in building Pemuda Rakyat into a vibrant mass organisation with branches right across the country, should have spent his last years in such distress and debilitation. This is a case of slow, painful homicide, a crime for which Suharto's New Order must be held responsible. *

Carmel Budiardjo

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peace and reconciliation for the people of East Timor and our willingness to raise issues with respect to human rights in our discussions with people in the region, specifically with the Government of Indonesia".

The meeting took place amid growing tensions between Washington and Jakarta [see separate item]. *

New format for UN talks

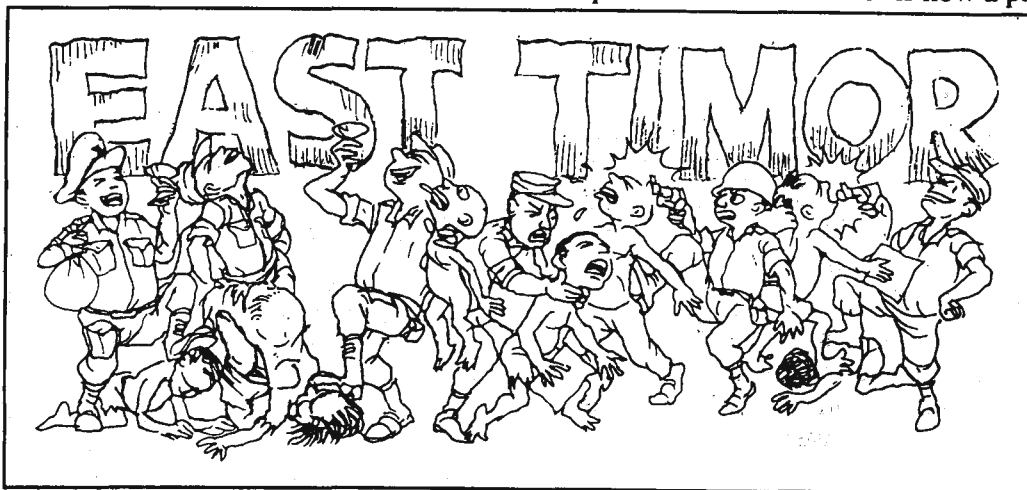
On 19 and 20 June, UN Secretary-General Kofi

Annan resumed the bi-annual tripartite talks with the foreign ministers of Portugal and Indonesia, the ninth in the present round of talks, and the first to be convened by Kofi Annan. Also present was UN special envoy on East Timor, Jamsheed Marker. He was specially appointed by the UNSG to develop a new format for the talks.

The two governments agreed on the new format proposed by the UN. Jamsheed Marker will initiate a series of talks starting on 28 July between senior officials from both sides. Each round is expected to last one or two weeks. The UN hopes that the agenda under the new format will be more flexible and open. So far the tripartite talks have been

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nothing more than a ritual, with Indonesia sticking to its position that East Timor is now a part of Indonesia.



Asked by journalists at a press conference after the talks whether Indonesia would agree to having a referendum, Ali Alatas insisted that this had already happened. He said that it was Indonesia's intention during the coming talks to prove that its version of events was the correct one.

'Far too many lies have been disseminated about East Timor,' he told journalists. [*Republika*, 22 June]

The two sides have also agreed to resume the annual All Inclusive East Timorese Talks started in 1995, most likely in Austria in August. Jamsheed Marker will immediately hold preliminary discussions with different Timorese groups to prepare the talks. The Portuguese regard the AIET Talks as being a second track alongside UN efforts to find a comprehensive solution while Indonesia insists on the talks in New York and Austria being kept completely separate. *

Politician charged for publishing a book

A senior politician is to face charges for a pamphlet he published earlier this year in which he criticised the policies and style of government of President Suharto. The treatment of this elderly man illustrates the insecurity of the New Order regime, fearful that opinions at variance with official state policy are gaining support among the general public.

The 77-year old Soebadio Sastrosatomo was a co-founder with Indonesia's first Prime Minister, Sutan Sjahrir, of the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) in 1945 and has continued to carry the torch of his party even though it was disbanded by President Sukarno in 1960 and was never rehabilitated under Suharto's New Order.

In January this year, he published a 24-page pamphlet entitled: *New Era, New Leadership: Badio Rejects the Machinations of the New Order*. Two months later, Attorney-General Singgih banned the book on the grounds that it might create public disorder. At first, Soebadio himself was not harassed; instead his assistant, Buyung Rachmad Nasution, who had arranged for the book to be printed was summoned by the police for questioning as a suspect, on charges of insulting the head of state. After this charade had been going on for about a month, the police summoned Soebadio initially as a 'witness' but on 12 May, he was summoned as a 'suspect'. He will face charges under Article 134 of the Criminal Code for insulting the head of state which carries a maximum penalty of six years imprisonment.

It now appears that both men will be charged and tried soon.

Suharto's coup d'etat

His pamphlet begins with a call on young Indonesians to stand up in defence of sovereignty of the people which has been eroded by the New Order. Soebadio strongly criticises Suharto for two actions he took in the early years of his New Order, sealing his grip on power. No wonder Suharto has reacted so ferociously!

The first was Suharto's wilful misuse of the Instruction to General Suharto which was issued by President Sukarno on 11 March 1966. As is clear from the document, writes Soebadio, Sukarno did not confer power on Suharto; he only gave him the task of safeguarding the government's stability and the personal safety of the head of state. Suharto was required to report to the President on his actions but never did so. In effect, says Soebadio, this was a coup d'etat. Now, Suharto claims that the original of this document 'has been lost'. All in all, this means that Suharto's hold on power is not legitimate.

Suharto's Pancasila Democracy is nothing less than the erosion of the people's sovereignty, the starting point for a new form of neo-colonialism. Offering a comparison between the late President Sukarno and Suharto, Soebadio says that whereas Sukarno sacrificed his own reputation in the interests of the people, Suharto has used the state for his personal interests. He cites the 'national' car project (owned by the President's son, Tommy), the Busang gold mine and the Freeport copper and gold mine as examples

where the head of state changed the regulations in the interests of capitalism, without consulting with the people.

He also writes of the disparities in wealth that are so evident in the regions. The New Order boasts of economic progress, claiming that it has succeeded in meeting the needs of the people. 'But Suharto's proud achievements have been attained at the cost of democracy, both political and economic democracy, which have been murdered.'

He is strongly critical of the elections. They cost huge sums of money but serve no purpose other than prolonging the legitimisation of Suharto's power. The DPR has no more powers than the *Volksraad*, the assembly created during the Dutch colonial era, he says.



The defiant Subadio.

National consensus murdered democracy

The other move by Suharto which is highlighted in Soebadio's pamphlet is the 'National Consensus' reached in 1972 between Suharto and the political parties which survived the army's purging of the political system in the 1960s. Under this consensus, the parties agreed that the armed forces would have one hundred seats in Parliament filled by presidential appointees, without taking part in the elections, in exchange for an electoral system in which parties would contest under a system of proportional representation. This consensus was in fact 'the murder of democracy'.

The parties were only too happy not to be dissolved by the rulers. They willingly accepted the National Consensus in order to protect their own existence and did not consider it necessary to safeguard democracy.

As things stand today, he writes in conclusion, Suharto can be praised for many spectacular technological advances, but the fact is that Suharto will not countenance any criticism of himself. 'People may not do anything that conflicts with his way of thinking. I regard this as the destruction of the spiritual essence of his own people.' *

PRD activists get harsh sentences

Twelve leaders and activists of the People's Democratic Party have been found guilty of subversion and heavily sentenced in a series of fraudulent political trials in Jakarta and Surabaya for the 'crime' of wanting Indonesia to become a multi-party democracy.

Following trials in which the defendants courageously and untiringly exposed the fraudulent nature of the court proceedings, all nine activists *Partai Rakyat Demokratik* who were tried in Jakarta were found guilty of the charge of subversion on 28 April and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. They had staged many walk-outs in protest against innumerable unfair practices in court.

Although they were brought to the courthouse on the final day, they refused to appear in the courtroom, saying the court could not take an impartial decision. At the previous session, they had dismissed their team of lawyers saying their presence was pointless under the circumstances in which the trials were being conducted.

Politics, the preserve of the rulers

Delivering the verdict against PRD chairperson, **Budiman Sudjatmiko**, who was sentenced to thirteen years, the judge said that he was 'guilty of undermining the state ideology and inciting students and workers to demonstrate against the government'. He had 'discredited the New Order government under President Suharto' and had rejected the socio-political role of the armed forces. The PRD had taken social democracy and populism as its ideological principles instead of *Pancasila* (the state ideology).



Budiman and his mother after the court verdict

Budiman could face fresh charges because the judge instructed the prosecutor to look into his 'politically charged'

closing statement and his behaviour in court which bordered on contempt of court. In other words, politics is a matter for the rulers and for no one else.

All the accused were leaders, activists or members of the PRD or its affiliated organisations, *Solidaritas Mahasiswa Indonesia untuk Demokrasi (SMID)*, the students' organisation, *Pusat Perjuangan Buruh Indonesia (PPHI)*, the Workers Struggle Centre of Indonesia, *Serikat Tani Indonesia (STN)*, the Indonesian Peasants' Union and *SPRIM (Solidaritas Perjuangan Rakyat Indonesia dengan Rakyat Maubere)*, Solidarity Group with the East Timorese People.

The fourteen Jakarta and Surabaya verdicts are as follows:

- * **Budiman Sudjatmiko**, 27, PRD chairperson, 13 years.
- * **Garda Sembiring**, 25, chairperson of SMID's Jabotabek (Greater Jakarta) branch, 12 years.
- * **Ignatius Damianus Pranowo**, 28, secretary-general of the PPBI, 9 years.
- * **Jakobus Eko Kurniawan**, 27, chairperson of the PRD's Development Department, 8 years.
- * **Suroso**, 24, secretary of SMID's Jabotabek branch, 7 years.
- * **Dita Indah Sari**, 24, chairperson if the PPBI, 6 years (reduced on appeal to 5 years).
- * **Petrus Hari Hariyanto**, 26, general secretary of the PRD, 6 years.
- * **Mochamad Sholeh**, 21, a member of SMID in Surabaya, 4 years.
- * **Ken Budha Kusumandaru**, 23, a member of SMID's Jabotabek branch, 4 years.
- * **Coen Husein Pontoh**, 27, chairperson of the propaganda department of the STN, 4 years (reduced on appeal to 3.5 years).
- * **Victor da Costa**, 22, a member of SMID's Jabotabek branch, 18 months.
- * **Ignatius Putut Arintoko**, 20, a member of SMID's Jabotabek branch, 18 months.
- * **I Gusti Anom Astika**, 25, head of the PRD Propaganda and Education Department, 4 years.
- * **Wilson bin Nurtyas**, 28, head of the International Department of PPBI and coordinator of SPRIM, 5 years.

PRD's Statement of Responsibility

Speaking in court after the prosecutor's summing-up, Budiman Sudjatmiko refused to call their closing statement a defence plea. It was, he said, a Declaration of the PRD's

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Responsibility addressed to the Indonesian people, not to the court.

'The charge of subversion demonstrates that the trial is political. The decision rests with forces outside these walls. It has nothing to do with the law and everything to do with politics. There is no such thing as the separation of powers - Trias Politika - it's all in the hands of one man, General Suharto, backed by the armed forces, ABRI, as defenders of the Five Political Laws of 1985.'

The PRD had chosen democracy, a political system with parties and a Parliament, he said, recalling Vice-President Moh. Hatta Declaration X in November 1945, enabling the establishment of political parties. Only with political parties can political power be based on the people's will. *'It is unacceptable for anyone to be charged with subversion just because he or she understands this simple truth.'*

The events on 27 July 1996 were the climax of events going back to the disruption of the *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia*, the PDI, under Megawati's leadership. The bloody onslaught against the PDI head office was the start of an operation by top army officers to clean up the forces of democracy.

'We first heard of this attack on the PDI office from Garda Sembiring. We never believed such a thing would happen because we thought that the political costs for the government and ABRI would be far too high. Little did we realise that the rulers had not only planned the attack but had also decided who would be the scapegoat.'

Budiman compared the 27 events to the Reichstag Fire which paved the way to Hitler's rise to power. *'We stand here like the insane Dutchman whom Hitler accused of being the communist responsible for a fire that had been started by Hitler himself to legitimise his rise to power.'*

Initially in the hysteria surrounding their arrest, they were alleged to be plotting a rebellion but this did not figure in the charges. The National Human Rights Commission said nothing about this in their report, stressing that the incident involved violations of the freedom of assembly and association, freedom from fear, freedom from cruel and inhuman treatment, the right to life, the right to the security of the person, and the right to property.

The 5 political laws of 1985

At the heart of the conflict was the question of people's sovereignty and the state of political life in Indonesia. State institutions, notably the bureaucracy and the military, had interfered in the internal affairs of one of the parties permitted to exist.

The PRD Declaration dealt at length with the five political laws adopted in 1985. These laws, enacted twenty years after Suharto's seizure of power, formalised the political system put into place by General Suharto as he tightened his grip on political life. It is a system, as the PRD declared, in which parties do not control the government and the military but are controlled by the government.

Under Law No. 3, 1985 on political parties, those parties allowed to exist have been turned into fraudulent electoral machines. The PDI was created as part of this political system, which rests on the powers of bureaucrats and mili-

tary to interfere in the internal affairs of the political parties and silence all opposition.

'As we standing here know from our own experience, we could challenge the system only by signing interrogation reports in preparation for charges under the subversion law and the threat of a death sentence hanging over us. Such gagging methods are very effective for rulers who have no moral, constitutional or historical legitimacy.'

After the 27 July events, 'we young members of the PRD lived through very hard times, accused by the dictator General Suharto of being the reincarnation of the PKI and were threatened by his guns'.

When the PRD came into being (in June 1996), none of the parties were able to function independently or have roots in the community. The Suharto dictatorship accused the PRD of being the reincarnation of the PKI because, like the PKI, it has affiliated organisations for workers, peasants, students and cultural workers. But all parties in the old days had similar structures, and today GOLKAR has its own mass organisations.

As soon as the PDI showed signs of becoming an alternative party and with a mass basis, everything was done to prevent it from consolidating itself. However, at its conference in December 1993, the party elected Megawati Sukarnoputri as its chairperson. Under her leadership, the PDI changed from an electoral machine into a party dealing with peoples' problems. Reform, the party's independence and upholding the sovereignty of the people were frequently mentioned in her speeches.



Evening demonstration in the streets of Amsterdam.

But for the rulers, it was one thing if such remarks came from extra-parliamentary forces but quite another coming from a party with representatives in Parliament. The combination of extra-parliamentary and intra-parliamentary forces terrified the New Order rulers, especially as the 1997 elections and the 1998 MPR session drew near. There was a new meaning to party political life. A challenge to the system had come from within the system.

The PRD Declaration went on to expose the Five Political Laws of 1985 as the bastion to preserve and perpetuate the dictatorial powers of the New Order which is now more than 30 years old.

Participation in the political process will always be bereft of meaning if people do not have the freedom to create independent parties. The first article of the law on political parties names only three parties, the PDI, the PPP and GOLKAR. No other parties may exist and these parties may only have branches at the national, provincial and district level; below that, they may only have commissioners, preventing contact with the masses at the village level.

Article 10 establishes the principle of the floating mass, allowed to organise once every five years for an election. It is as if people are only interested in basic needs, having sub-contracted their political rights to the rulers.

Law No 8, 1985 on social organisations destroyed democratic life in Indonesia, placing social organisations under government guidance, giving the government powers to remove elected leaders if an organisation is deemed to have violated provisions of the law. Moreover, organisations may not affiliate to a political party. Yet, the basic purpose of a political party is to struggle for the interests of its members through affiliated organisations.

Social organisations are held under the regime's arm-pit, with no right to an independent existence. The law also allows only one organisation in each sector, an impossible state of affairs in a society with diverse cultures and interests.

Law No 5, 1985 on a Referendum was enacted to protect the interests of the rulers and prevent any attempt to amend the 1945 Constitution. Suharto alleged that any move to end representation of the armed forces in Parliament would pose a threat to national security. A Referendum is supposed to be a way of testing public opinion but in Indonesia, the purpose of a Referendum would be to protect the interests of those in power.

Anti-democratic elections

The 1985 Law on Elections contains very general provisions, leaving it to the Executive to work out the details. A general election is supposed to be a way to change the government by constitutional means. In the New Order, it is nothing but a farce, a gigantic extravaganza which has nothing to do with people's sovereignty. The five-yearly exercise is held simply to legitimise the regime. Everyone should have the right to vote and be elected, but in Indonesia, candidates are screened according to vague criteria in order to select individuals who will toe the line.

The law itself says nothing about screening candidates; article 19 says that the government will introduce regulations about the nomination of candidates. According to Presidential Decree No 10/1995, it is for the officially appointed election committee to investigate the candidates, which only goes to show that the rulers can do just as they like.

The Election Institute which conducts the elections is headed by the Minister of the Interior in Jakarta with election institutes in the provincial and district capitals, along with vote-counting committees and voter-registration committees in every village. This is all in the hands of GOLKAR because all the officials, from the Interior Minister down, are members of GOLKAR. How can fairness possibly be guaranteed?

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The other contesting parties are nothing more than token participants with no significant role in the process. The rulers are the ones who conceptualised the system, who implement it and who will win. It is quite impossible to have free, fair and honest elections until this law has been repealed.



Anom Astika in court. He is wearing a 'boycott elections' headband and an East Timorese scarf. Photo John Hunt.

In a democracy, people get involved in politics openly but under the Five Laws, everything is hidden and conspiratorial. A Parliament should be the expression of people's sovereignty with powers to criticise and control the Executive but what we have here is a parliament composed of people selected by those in power.

There is also a law providing for the appointment of 75 members of Parliament from the armed forces. They are chosen, not elected, and members of the armed forces do not vote. If the armed forces want members of Parliament, they should set up a political party and vote in the election.

The force blocking democracy in Parliament is the alliance between GOLKAR and the armed forces. There can never be any rational, open political dialogue if one side threatens the other with the use of weapons. The method devised for appointing representatives of the people is the most conservative, authoritarian and anti-democratic aspect of the election law.

The trials of Wilson and Gusti Anom

The last two PRD leaders to go on trial were Wilson and I Gusti Anom Astika. Their trials ended in the South Jakarta District court on 16 June with a five-year sentence for Wilson and four years for Gusti Anom. The prosecution had asked for 11 and 9 years respectively.

Earlier, the PRD defendants had collectively decided to dismiss their defence lawyers, arguing that in political tri-

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als, having a defence team only helps to confer credibility on the court. Wilson and Gusti Anom defended themselves.

Wilson who studied history at Universitas Indonesia has been a grassroots activist for many years. Like the others he was charged under the anti-subversion law. The prosecution mentioned two activities which had 'undermined the state', namely that Wilson has promoted the principle of people's social-democracy which conflicts with the state doctrine Pancasila and supports the right of self-determination. He was accused of advocating the view that regions like Aceh, West Papua and East Timor should determine their political future which would mean causing disunity among Indonesians.

Gusti Anom is still a social sciences student at Airlangga State University in Surabaya and was a founding member of the PRD. The charges against him were more or less the same as those against Wilson. Sagih, the prosecutor, referring to demonstrations and actions in which the defendant had taken part and said that on numerous occasions, he had spoken in favour of a referendum for the East Timorese, in violation with Law No.7/1976 which sealed East Timor's integration with Indonesia.



Speaking in their own defence

The two defendants drew up political statements in their defence, ignoring the legal aspects of the case.

Wilson's defence statement was 300 pages long but he confined himself to reading the essential sections, including the PRD's Political Manifesto and a PPBI document called 'For change, together with the workers'.

Gusti Anom also read the PRD's Manifesto in court followed by a stinging analysis of the present wave of violence in many Indonesian cities. He argued that the violence was triggered not only by the huge social gap and the arrogance of power but by the fact that political aspirations can find no outlet and are always confronted by state violence. According to Anom, the problem is basically structural, the result of the social, political, economic and cultural structures erected by the New Order.

Lessons to be learnt

There are important political lessons for the pro-democracy movement from the PRD trials. Despite the youthfulness of the PRD defendants, they have shown remarkable political maturity. All were born after 1965, the year the military came to power. They have all shown exceptional defiance in court. Solidarity from the outside,

from parents, relatives and the pro-democracy movement, has been powerful and impressive.

Despite all the persecution and the arrest of most of their leaders and activists, the PRD has been able to consolidate its organisation. The election campaign gave their members now in hiding plenty of opportunity to participate in mass actions. During the election campaign, the party again became the target of ABRI commanders who accused it of being responsible for the recent disturbances.

As compared with some other pro-democracy groups, the PRD's political line demands a total break with Suharto's New Order. As its leaders have said over and over again, the problems are structural; reforms are not enough. In today's Indonesia where injustice prevails, people like Budiman and Dita Sari have become an inspiration for young people in Indonesia. *

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the prisoners at the jail are the three convicted PRD activists, Dita Indah Sari, Coen Husein Pontoh and Mohammed Sholeh. The prisoners were angry because the prison staff insist on visiting relatives paying bribes in order to meet a prisoner, they maltreat prisoners, intercept their correspondence with the outside world and seize prisoners' belongings, in particular books and documents.

The riot commenced late at night on 11 June when some prisoners succeeded in opening up several blocks and started burning prison records and equipment. The authorities were not able to regain control until special troops and police reinforcements had been brought in. Tear gas and firearms were used to quell the rebellious inmates. Once the revolt had ended all the prisoners were transferred to three other prisons in East Java. Dita Sari was transferred to Lowok Waru Prison in Malang.

It was later reported that Coen Pontoh and Sholeh were injured by prison warders and sustained serious facial injuries as they were being evacuated to Kalisosok Prison. Acting on their behalf, Indro Sugianto, director of the Surabaya Legal Aid Institute, has written to the military and police chiefs of East Java demanding that the two men be given thorough medical examinations. Sugianto said that if their clients had indeed been injured by prison staff, those responsible should be charged under the law. [*Surya*, 19 June]

General takes over as Information Minister

Less than a week after the elections, President Suharto appointed General Hartono as Minister of Information, replacing Harmoko who held the post for fourteen years. The appointment came as a complete surprise as it is extremely rare for Suharto to make any ministerial changes in mid-term. General Hartono was appointed after retiring as army chief-of-staff. The General made it clear that he would retain the special powers to withdraw newspaper licences which Harmoko conferred on himself in 1986.

The independent agency, ISAI (Centre for the Flow of Information), has reported that President Suharto was infuriated by media reports of the vote rigging which secured GOLKAR's 'landslide' victory. Seven editors told ISAI that they had 'toned down their election coverage, fearing that the government might close down their newspapers'. Bambang Harymurti, managing editor of *Media Indonesia*, said he asked his editors to be careful when reporting 'sensitive issues'. *

Chilling of US/Indonesia relations embarrasses Suharto

On 10 June, the US House of Representatives unanimously passed an unprecedented legislative amendment condemning human rights abuses in East Timor. This and other recent setbacks in relations between the US and Indonesia are severe embarrassments to the Suharto regime, and examples of what can be achieved by campaigners pressing governments to make good their commitments to human rights

Legislative amendment

The amendment to the Foreign Policy Reform Act, which will shape US foreign assistance from 1998 to 2000, was sponsored by Democratic Representative, Patrick J Kennedy, an energetic campaigner for East Timor. He said the amendment would send a strong and clear message to the Indonesian Government that the US Congress would not tolerate the continued human rights abuses of the people of East Timor and it would "serve as a launching pad for further action against Indonesia".

F-16 deal and IMET cancelled

The previous week, stung by Congressional and State Department criticism of its record on East Timor, human rights and democracy issues, Indonesia scrapped plans to buy nine US-made F-16 warplanes and to participate in an American military training programme, known as E-IMET. The move was forced upon the Suharto regime by the weight of persistent criticism by the US authorities and by Congressional pressure on the White House to pull out of the F-16 deal. If the US lead is followed by other countries such as Britain, it could foreshadow increasing isolation of the Suharto regime by the international community.

Announcing the decision, Foreign Minister, Ali Alatas, said:

"President Suharto conveyed the decision to President Clinton and cited 'wholly unjustified criticisms' in the US Congress against Indonesia which are linked to its participation in the IMET programme and the planned purchase of the F-16 planes as one of the factors that led to his decision."

Mr Alatas's claim that the move would ease friction with the US to allow cooperation on "the many economic, political and security issues that have to be faced in the years to come" was an unconvincing attempt to paper over the obvious cracks in the bilateral relationship.

The F-16s were originally part of a batch of 28 aircraft sold to Pakistan in 1989. Delivery was stopped after Congress passed a law banning military sales to Pakistan because of concern about its production of nuclear weapons. A plan was then hatched to sell the jets to Indonesia and



Aerobatics in the skies of Jakarta. Six Hawk aircraft followed by six F-16 Fighting Falcons.

use the funds to repay Pakistan. The sale was delayed by the White House following Congressional concern at the harsh treatment of Indonesian opposition supporters during the disturbances which followed the Government-backed raid on the PDI headquarters in Jakarta in July 1996, and continuing concern about Indonesia's occupation of East Timor.

The military training programme, E-IMET (Extended International Military Education and Training), was purportedly limited to training in non-military subjects, such as human rights. Full IMET was stopped in 1992, following the 1991 Dili massacre in East Timor, but reinstated, largely in the limited E-IMET form, in 1995.

Last year, the State Department prohibited the export of armoured vehicles to Indonesia. As mentioned elsewhere in this *Bulletin*, the new Labour Government has so far refused to follow the US lead by banning such exports from Britain. The US ban was an extension of the ban on small and light arms exports enacted at the beginning of 1994.

This curtailment of the US arms trade and military training must be followed by Britain and others. Indonesian analysts are already saying that Indonesia will shift to other arms producers, and it is essential that US initiatives are not undermined by other countries.

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State Department criticism

It is likely that harsh State Department criticism of the Indonesian elections was also a factor in Indonesia's decision to cancel the F-16 deal and E-IMET programme. On the day after the elections, using the strongest possible diplomatic language and in a thinly-disguised attempt to undermine the Suharto regime, State Department spokesman John Dinger said:

"The United States believes that parliamentary elections are tightly controlled by the Government of Indonesia. The electoral system severely limits political competition; Indonesian citizens do not have the ability to change their government through democratic means. ...we... believe that Indonesia should move towards a political system in which the will of the people can be heard."

Foreign Minister Alatas denied any link between the cancellation of the F-16 deal and E-IMET programme and the State Department criticism. Curiously, however, he admitted that Suharto's letter to Clinton was dated 26 May but, "for technical reasons", only delivered on 2 June.



The top brass of the Indonesian military are US-trained. Former Army Chief of Staff General Hartono (left) trained in Fort Leavenworth, is congratulating his successor, General Wiranto (F-16 wing).

Earlier criticism included State Department testimony before the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee on 17 April:

"We have important differences over human rights with Indonesia. Administration officials, including President Clinton, repeatedly have made clear that our relationship...cannot reach its full potential until Indonesia improves its human rights performance. ... The United States looks forward to a more democratic Indonesia."

According to a Voice of America editorial expressing the policies of the US government on 4 May:

"Recent developments have raised concerns about Indonesia's commitment to protecting peaceful assembly, freedom of speech, and freedom of association, as well as its respect for the rule of law and the democratic process."

The hard-hitting State Department Indonesia Country Report for 1996, published on 30 January, included the following charges:

"The Government continued to commit serious human rights abuses. Rising pressures for change, including those by political activists and opponents, triggered tough government actions that further infringed fundamental rights. The authorities maintained their tight grip on the political process, which denies citizens the ability to change their government democratically. ... Reports of extrajudicial killings of unarmed civilians, disappearances, and torture and mistreatment of detainees by security forces continued. ...The Government continued to impose severe limitations on freedom of assembly and association. In anticipation of the 1997 parliamentary elections, the Government took a number of actions to intimidate political opponents."

Congressional criticism

Criticism in Congress of Indonesia, recently led by Patrick Kennedy, and culminating in the Legislative Amendment of 10 June, has been equally harsh. Mr Kennedy visited East Timor in December 1996 and, shocked by what he saw, returned to give new impetus to the East Timor campaign in the US.

On 19 March, with bipartisan support, Kennedy introduced to Congress the Indonesia Military Assistance Accountability Act, which would make further government-to-government sales of military equipment, amounting to US\$26 million a year, plus US\$600,000 of full IMET, contingent upon substantial improvements on a range of human rights issues. Those improvements relate to the domestic monitoring of elections, protection of non-governmental organisations, accountability for the attack on the PDI headquarters, the improvement of labour rights, the release of East Timorese political prisoners, the withdrawal of Indonesian troops from East Timor and a substantial dialogue including Indonesian, Portuguese and East Timorese leaders on the political status of the territory. Although the Bill did not ban direct commercial sales of military equipment or E-IMET, it was supported, with reservations by human rights groups, including the East Timor Action Network (ETAN).

On 1 May, a modified version of the Act was unanimously approved by the House International Relations Committee as an amendment to the Foreign Aid and State Department Authorization Bill. This is the first time a State Department Authorization bill has included strong and specific language on Indonesia and East Timor. The amended Bill is thought to have a good chance of passage by the full House. Instead of eliminating all arms transfers, its scope is limited to small arms, crowd control equipment, armoured personnel carriers and other such items "that can commonly be used in the direct violation of human rights". Although much of this type of equipment is already banned, the legislation is still regarded as sending an important message to the Indonesian Government.

Also included in the Bill is a Code of Conduct on arms sales which bans the sale of weapons to dictators, human rights violators and nations that attack their neighbours.

Patrick Kennedy's Bill was cited by Ali Alatas as one reason for Indonesia's cancellations of the F-16 deal and E-IMET programme. Commenting on Indonesia's announcement, Kennedy said:

"This is a major victory for all of us who believe in the importance of human rights. It is a day we can be proud of because it shows that when pressure is put on dictatorship governments such as Indonesia's, these countries will be forced to address their outrageous behaviour. Today's step taken by Indonesia will further the possibilities for human rights issues finally being addressed."

Although the actions of individuals such as Patrick Kennedy should be applauded, it would be wrong to suggest that the US Government has been acting purely out of concern for human rights and democracy in Indonesia and East Timor. A cursory examination of recent history will show that human rights are invariably disregarded, and indeed violated, where they interfere with the strategic and economic interests of the West. In this case, the US is concerned about the transition to a post-Suharto government. The Clinton administration is apparently keen for Suharto to relinquish power in an orderly fashion to a non-military regime as soon as possible (the US Government's views on this were made known to Suharto by the former President, Jimmy Carter, during a secret visit to Jakarta in August 1996), so that Western interests and investments can be protected. The apparent failure of Suharto to provide for his succession, and the serious crackdown on opposition elements during the last year, appear to have disturbed policy makers in Washington to the extent that they feel compelled to criticise and attempt to undermine the present regime.

There is possibly also a pragmatic reason for the Clinton administration's actions. Last year the administration was hit by controversy over donations exceeding US\$700,000 to the Democratic Party by Indonesia's Lippo group conglomerate headed by Chinese-Indonesian business tycoon, James Riady. It was alleged that the money was donated to influence Clinton's Indonesian policy. Senior Republicans are baying for Clinton's blood over this scandal. The White House may be reluctant to push ahead with deals with Indonesia in case they are seen to be linked with the Riady donations.

It remains to be seen whether recent events and criticism of Indonesia will lead to real change, in view of Su-

harto's renowned obduracy and immunity from criticism and the US requirement for strong economic ties with Indonesia. Nonetheless, whatever the reaction of Suharto and whatever the motives and priorities of the US authorities, the Clinton administration's public commitment to human rights and democracy has given space to campaigners, such as Patrick Kennedy and the many human rights groups in the US, to work for a change in US Government policy on Indonesia and to push for lasting progress on human rights in Indonesia and East Timor.

Economic sanctions

The issue of wider economic sanctions is also on the agenda of certain US state authorities. On 29 May, a Massachusetts state legislative committee, despite strong opposition from major US corporations and US trading partners such as Europe and Japan, approved a measure, known as a "selective purchasing" law, that would bar state contracts with companies doing business up to a certain limit with Indonesia and would require state pension funds to divest from those companies. If passed by both houses of the state legislature, the ban would remain in effect until Indonesia complies with UN resolutions calling for self-determination for East Timor. The bill's sponsors have been in touch with counterparts in California and Rhode Island - both of which have large Portuguese-American populations - about getting Indonesian sanctions introduced in their state legislatures.

The Massachusetts legislation follows similar "selective purchasing" laws passed last year by Massachusetts and half-a-dozen US cities imposing sanctions on companies trading with Burma. On 5 June the Burma law was boosted by an endorsement by the European Parliament, which voted unanimously to urge its administrative arm, the European Commission, to refrain from filing a formal complaint with the World Trade Organisation. *

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Horta, Belo and Pakpahan plead to Government

Interviewed by *World in Action* [see separate item], José Ramos Horta, the external representative of the East Timor resistance movement and Nobel Peace Laureate, condemned Britain as the single most important arms supplier to Indonesia and called for a five-year moratorium on arms sales, until there is freedom for Indonesia and self-determination for East Timor. Co-Nobel Peace Laureate, Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, head of the Catholic Church in East Timor, also made a heartfelt plea to the British Government to drastically curtail the arms trade, during a lecture in London on 7 June:

"Please, I beg you, restrict still further the conditions under which this trade is permitted. Do not sustain any longer a conflict which, without these sales, could never have been pursued in the first place, nor for so long."

Many people in Indonesia and East Timor, whose human rights and lives are at stake, are desperately hoping that the new Government will take action against the arms trade. Speaking from hospital in Jakarta, Muchtar Pakpahan, the leader of the independent trade union, SBSI, whose trial for subversion was interrupted when he became seriously ill, said recently:

"During the British general election, we hoped and prayed for a Labour victory. We were also hoping that we in Indonesia would benefit from this. In 1995, I met some Labour Party leaders and officers and I was given a promise that if Labour won they would stop the sale of our weapons and reschedule our loans."

Campaigners in Britain must keep on pushing to ensure that the Labour Government lives up to expectations. They must continue to impress on the Government the message that unless it delivers on Indonesia its new foreign policy will be regarded as stillborn. *

Labour Government policy New era or false dawn?

Although TAPOL and its co-applicants recently failed in the High Court to stop arms sales to Indonesia, hopes have been raised that the political initiative by the new Labour Government to put human rights at the centre of its foreign policy with "an ethical dimension", and tighten arms export controls, will result in a substantial curtailment of arms exports to Indonesia. We are still waiting for the rhetoric to be translated into a policy decision.

Campaigners against the sale of arms to Indonesia suffered a temporary setback in the High Court on 25 March when Mr Justice Laws decided to dismiss the application made by TAPOL, Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) and the World Development Movement (WDM) for leave to apply for judicial review of the Conservative Govern

The organisations were advised by a senior barrister that a further application for leave to the Court of Appeal was unlikely to be successful.

Political campaign intensifies

The High Court decision confirmed that the Government's guidelines cannot be legally enforced. For the applicants, the legal challenge was only ever intended to be one element in the ongoing campaign. It became clear that the human rights and peace movement in the Britain was left with two obligations. Firstly, to work for the enactment of legislation on the export of arms which outlaws the sale of arms to countries whose governments are human rights violators and/or have committed aggression against another state. Secondly, to inform public opinion in Britain as to the true nature of the Indonesian regime under Suharto and the military, so as to render it politically unacceptable for any British government to allow arms manufacturers to equip its murderous armed forces.

The political campaign continued throughout the legal proceedings, and the efforts put into the legal challenge are now paying dividends, in terms of the Labour Government's policy statements and media attention to the issue of arms sales to Indonesia.

As Shadow Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook was made fully aware of the judicial review application and was provided with the evidence of armoured vehicles and water cannon being used for internal repression in Indonesia. At a meeting with TAPOL and other organisations on 12 February, he expressed concern that tanks were being used against non-violent demonstrators and that Hawk aircraft were used in East Timor. He also claimed not to have known that water cannon were being made in Britain. He acknowledged the importance of the judicial review. On 24 March, his office issued a statement saying:

"If in government we have evidence that weapons exported to any country have been used in breach of the conditions governing their export licence, then we will examine whether this might provide sufficient grounds for the licence to be revoked."



Demonstration outside the Department of Trade and Industry in London.

ment's decision to licence the export of armoured vehicles and water cannon to Indonesia [see *TAPOL Bulletin*, No.140, April 1997]. The effect of the decision was that, in law, Government claims to take account of human rights in processing export licence applications count for nothing if the Government makes a political decision that exports to a particular country should be allowed in view of "overall foreign policy considerations". In other words, even if a buyer country's human rights record is poor, and even if equipment is likely to be used for internal repression, foreign policy considerations could allow a licence to be granted.

Early indications were that a new Labour Government might implement a change in policy relating to Indonesia and arm sales. The Party's manifesto included commitments not to permit the sale of arms to regimes that *might* use them for internal repression or international aggression, to increase the transparency and accountability of decisions on export licences for arms, and to make the protection and promotion of human rights a central part of foreign policy. The first commitment represented a potentially significant shift from the previous Government's policy of not licencing the export of equipment which *is likely* to be used for internal repression.

New Labour Government policy

On being appointed Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook vowed to "hit the ground running". He did not disappoint in terms of policy pronouncements, although it remains to be seen whether practical application will follow the rhetoric.

In an interview with *The Observer* on 4 May, Mr Cook reaffirmed his Government's commitments to human rights and to more transparency and accountability on arms exports controls, but refused to be drawn on arms sales bans to individual countries. In a widely-reported keynote statement on 12 May, launching the new Foreign Office Mission Statement, the Foreign Secretary introduced the concept of a foreign policy with an "ethical dimension":

"The Labour Government does not accept that political values can be left behind when we check in our passports to travel on diplomatic business. Our foreign policy must have an ethical dimension and must support the demands of other people for the democratic rights on which we insist for ourselves. The Labour Government will put human rights at the heart of our foreign policy and will publish an annual report on our work in promoting human rights abroad."

STOP PRESS

David Alex, guerrilla commander, captured

David Alex, one of the most fearless guerrilla commanders who has fought against the occupation since 1975, was captured by Indonesian troops on 24 June. The army claimed he died the next day from gunshot wounds but resistance sources say he was heavily tortured. He was captured in Kaibada, not far from Baucau, headquarters of the Indonesian army in East Timor. Four men were taken into captivity at the same time. TAPOL has called for an investigation into the circumstances of his death.

David Alex was for years commander of the Central Sector. He had frequently been interviewed in the bush. He joined Falintil at the time of the brief civil war in August 1975 and became a platoon commander. Prior to the war, he worked in the finance department of the Portuguese administration and served as a conscript in the Portuguese colonial army.

David da Costa, his real name, was in his late forties. Three of his four brothers and two sisters-in-law, as well as his father, have been killed in the course of battle or in Indonesian captivity. He was one of the few resistance leaders to survive the devastating encirclement campaign commenced in 1977, which climaxed in December 1978 around Mount Matebian.

His capture occurred during massive military operations in the region north of Baucau, which followed the daring operations waged by Falintil around the time of the illegal Indonesian elections.

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The Government must now demonstrate how it intends to reconcile the ethical dimension of foreign policy with the commercial dimension, which the Foreign Secretary also stressed in his 12 May statement.

He also announced that the Government will publish an annual human rights report. It was hoped that this would include reports on individual countries, similar to the US State Department Country Reports, so that Government policy could be examined against its own assessment of a particular country's human rights record. Early indications are, however, that the annual report will simply provide general details of the Government's work in promoting human rights abroad.

Virtually all media reporting and comment on the new foreign policy mentioned arms sales to Indonesia. *The Guardian* suggested on 17 May that "Indonesia is at the top of the list for possible action ..." *The Independent*, on 23 May, led its front page with the headline: "If New Labour is so moral, why sell arms to an Asian dictator?" It questioned why the Government had not revoked the recent export licences for the water cannon, armoured vehicles and Hawk aircraft. Two inside pages were devoted to accounts of the repressive practices of British arms buyers world-wide and the use, on 20 May, of water cannon, with chemicals added to the water, to break up an election march by members of the United Democratic Party (PPP). This media reporting shows that public opinion in Britain is becoming informed as to the true nature of the present Indonesian regime. Indonesia is becoming the test case of the new policy. But the Government steadfastly refuses to commit itself on specific countries until it has completed an inter-departmental review of the criteria used to assess export licence applications. On 9 June, the Foreign Office Minister, Tony Lloyd, stressed that it would be premature to prejudge the outcome of the review, expected to be published before the end of July.

Feisal Tanjung to visit Britain?

The Independent reported on 23 June that a senior delegation of military officers, led by armed forces Commander in Chief, General Feisal Tanjung, hopes to visit Britain soon for official talks, which are likely to include the question of arms sales. Sources close to the Foreign Office have confirmed that the visit may take place, and a Parliamentary written answer on 23 June stated that General Tanjung, General Wiranto (Chief of Staff Army) and Admiral Kushariadi (Chief of Staff Navy) have been invited to attend the Royal Navy and British Army Equipment Exhibition at Farnborough in September 1997. General Tanjung is visiting Russia to discuss the purchase of military aircraft, following the cancellation of the purchase of US F-16 warplanes [see separate item]. Indonesia is known to prefer European to Russian aircraft because of the availability of export credits from countries such as Britain.

Revocation of licences?

Campaigners have focused on pressing the Labour Government to revoke the export licences for the armoured

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vehicles and the water cannon. On 23 May, on BBC radio, Robin Cook said: "I was personally surprised that we export water cannons, which we don't use in Britain. I will be asking some searching questions about that."

The Labour Party has been fully aware for some time of the evidence of armoured vehicles and water cannon being used for internal repression in Indonesia, so why not revoke the licences immediately, or at least suspend them until the completion of the inter-departmental review? Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Democrat spokesman on foreign affairs commented, in *The Independent* on 23 May, that there was nothing a review would tell us about Indonesia's suppression of democratic dissent and repression of East Timor that was not known already. He said:

"There was no justification for these export licences being granted in the first instance and a government which puts human rights at the centre of its foreign policy should hardly need to think for a moment before cancelling these licences."

"There can't be a stronger case for a change in Brit-

ain's policy than the example of Indonesia. Knowing what we know, it is inconceivable that we should continue to supply arms to a regime of such brutality."

The Government apparently fears it may be liable to compensate the licencees if the licences are revoked. A barrister consulted by WDM has advised that there would be no such liability. The Government has wide powers under the relevant legislation to revoke licences, and as there is no contract between the Government and the licencee, revocation would not lead to the Government having to pay compensation. Just as the granting of licences can, according to Mr Justice Laws, be linked to the foreign policy of the Government of the day, so can the revocation of licences. If foreign policy shifts to give more emphasis to human rights, it would be perfectly proper for the Government to consider the revocation of licences which contravene human rights criteria.

Copies of the barrister's opinion have been sent to Ministers. If the Government does not revoke the licences, MPs will be approached to sign an Early Day Motion [a form of Parliamentary petition] and exert their own pressure on the Government.

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World in Action on British complicity in repression

Two TV films, "Making a Killing" and "Profit before Principle", made by Martin Gregory Films for World in Action, and broadcast on 2 and 9 June, provide further evidence that British companies are helping the Indonesian regime to create a super-efficient repressive state

An important part of the secret network of production and procurement companies supplying lethal military equipment to Indonesia has been exposed by *World in Action*. The men behind the private defence companies involved are often former or current military officers with easy access to Ministry of Defence officials and Government Ministers. Their unprincipled pursuit of profit is matched in its vigour only by their contempt for human rights and human lives.

The Nitor Group, Rover, BAe

The Nitor Group of Godalming, Surrey has provided 12 "Ultima" weapons training systems, which were developed by the Surrey Police, and use computer technology, to train security forces to shoot accurately at targets, including unarmed demonstrators. During an undercover interview, Marketing Manager, Mike Hithchcock, a former senior Royal Marine and senior Ministry of Defence official, admitted that Nitor normally works through third parties since direct dealings with Indonesia are too sensitive.

The company is negotiating to sell "close quarter battle houses", also known as "killing houses" to Indonesia. They are built to train special forces to storm buildings and kill opponents inside.

Major-General Prabowo, the son-in-law of President Suharto and commander of the army's storm troopers, *Kopassus*, acknowledged his force's debt to British training and techniques. Interviewed at Batujajar, the mountain HQ of *Kopassus*, Prabowo attempted to answer criticism about the army's record, but attempted to rewrite history by

claiming that the victims of the Santa Cruz massacre in East Timor were legitimate targets.

Hundreds of Land Rovers, manufactured by Rover at Solihull outside Birmingham, were filmed at Batujajar, many mounted with heavy machine guns. The "Defender" model has been used in East Timor, according to WinA.

British Aerospace sells so many Heckler and Koch machine guns that Indonesia is known as Heckler and Koch



Major-General Prabowo was surprisingly frank during an interview by World in Action.

country. The guns, made in Nottingham, can fire 400-metre-per-second bullets at the rate of 800 rounds per minute.

Procurement Services International

One of Nitor's third party intermediaries is Procurement Services International (PSI) of Salisbury, part of the Greys Group Ltd. The company claims to be second only to British Aerospace in sales to Indonesia. It was founded by former officers of the Scots Dragoon Guards. PSI sells a range of security equipment, including the Tactica armoured vehicles, made by Glover Webb of Hamble, near Southampton, some of which are adapted as water cannon. According to Sales Manager, David Hewitt, a total of 15 water cannon are due to go to Indonesia. Heavily armed military vehicles, valued at about £105,000, with grenade launchers on the front and back, were filmed. They are sold to *Kopassus* who "love these vehicles".

The WinA team were joined in an undercover visit to PSI by the disguised Nobel Peace Laureate, José Ramos Horta, who remained unrecognised throughout. Managing Director, Nick Oliver, a captain in the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards confirmed: "We are very heavily involved in Indonesia. ... The Police buy our...armoured riot control vehicles, armoured water cannon, armoured personnel carriers, pursuit command vehicles." Contracts supplied since 1993 amount to about £400 million, while contracts in the pipeline amount to £700 million.



Oliver claimed to have been to East Timor on patrol with *Kopassus*. He asserted, in front of the disguised Ramos Horta, that the death toll in East Timor was not as high as alleged. More people had been killed in Northern Ireland. "The difference is that in East Timor, they do it in blocks of 200, and in Northern Ireland, they do one or two a day."

In a PSI warehouse, the WinA team were shown a Hornet vehicle mounted with heavy calibre machine guns. The Hornet is one of more than 300 Glover Webb vehicles recently licenced for export to Indonesia. According to WinA, Hornet vehicles have been used in East Timor. Oliver stated that water cannon and other unspecified vehicles are also going to East Timor.

Oliver claimed that difficulties with export licences under the Conservatives were solved by direct representations to Prime Minister John Major, and Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind. He claimed that there had been discussions with Tony Blair in Opposition, and his view was that "the type of equipment that the Conservatives have given export licences to would present no difficulties for the Labour Government".

The use of equipment

The true nature of the regime and armed forces to which these companies are exporting was left in no doubt. Alfredo, a former East Timorese guerrilla, described how he had been shot, beaten, had his nails pulled out, and burnt

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with cigarettes. Photos of *Kopassus* torture victims, recently submitted to the UN Human Rights Commission, showed appalling brutality. The vehicles and equipment supplied by Britain help to provide the infrastructure necessary for the armed forces to maintain their operations in East Timor and elsewhere and improve their killing capacity.

WinA revealed new evidence that British water cannon were used against student demonstrators in Bandung last year [see *TAPOL Bulletin*, No 140, April 1997]. Eye witnesses confirmed that the peaceful gathering was broken up by the water cannon spraying a liquid that caused eye injuries and stomach upsets. One student, Parsaoran Sirait, pleaded: "...the Indonesian army is already repressing us, please don't add to their repression." The questions raised by the export of water cannon were summed up by José Ramos Horta:

"Water cannons are not used in England to stop demonstrations because it is wrong, it's immoral. Why should it be right to use [them] against East Timorese or against Indonesians? Only because East Timorese and Indonesians are of darker skin?"

Plausible Deniability!

Malcolm Rifkind told WinA that he never met anybody from PSI. John Major's office refused to comment. Tony Blair's office said he had no recollection of meeting anyone from PSI and it was "vacuous in the extreme" to suggest that he would have discussed export licences when in Opposition.

Greys Group Ltd. have since claimed, in response to inquiries, that Nick Oliver and David Hewitt are no longer employees of the company. They deny that Oliver has ever been to East Timor and claim that the "Fast Strike" version of the Hornet vehicle shown in the programme is not exported to Indonesia. The Hornets sold to the Indonesian Police are "entirely peaceful and non-aggressive", according to a senior company source. *

Available from TAPOL, 111 Northwood Road
Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 8HW, England
Price: £3.00 (incl. postage)

PARTNERS IN REPRESSION:
The reality of British aid
to Indonesia

Paul Barber

PARTNERS IN REPRESSION: The reality of British aid to Indonesia

Komnas Ham vice-chair visits TAPOL

On 3 June, TAPOL hosted a meeting between Marzuki Darusman, the joint Vice-Chairman of the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission and representatives of TAPOL, the British Coalition for East Timor, Campaign Against Arms Trade and the National Resistance of Students for East Timor (RENETIL), during Mr Darusman's visit to Britain as a guest of the Foreign Office.

Mr Darusman acknowledged that the Commission was regarded as a cosmetic exercise when it was set up in 1993 and that it had its shortcomings, but he argued it had opened up legitimate channels of complaint for the public. It had also issued several reports which contradicted the Government line.

The Commission opened an office in East Timor eight months ago. Mr Darusman stressed that the Commission is only concerned with human rights issues and not self-determination, but agreed that self-determination can also be regarded as a human rights issue. In his view, the solution to the East Timor issue had to be political and not military and the policies of the present regime could not continue for another 20 years. He made the point that there are differences of opinion within the armed forces and certain elements feel that East Timor should have greater autonomy. He implied that the situation is improving since the Commission is receiving fewer complaints than expected (hardly surprising given that the office is situated opposite the military HQ in Dili).



Muchtar Pakpahan in hospital in Jakarta. He was interviewed recently by The Independent who quoted him as urging Britain to stop selling arms to Indonesia. (Photo: John Hunt)

Mr Darusman was questioned about the use of British military equipment against peaceful demonstrators and was asked to raise the issue with Foreign Office. He

agreed that the use of riot-control equipment against peaceful demonstrators was unjustified, but argued their use was

more acceptable than methods which resulted in severe physical injury.

Undoubtedly, Mr Darusman was here to promote the work of the Commission and was not really prepared to enter into a proper dialogue about how it can be more effective in addressing the institutional root causes of human rights abuses in Indonesia and East Timor.

[Since his visit, Mr Darusman's credibility and political independence have been brought into doubt by his criticism of the US House of Representative's amendment condemning human rights abuses in East Timor [see separate item], and his suggestion that the Indonesian Government should counter the amendment].

Former West Papua hostage protests to embassy

On 10 June, Daniel Start, held hostage by the OPM independence movement for 130 days in 1996 delivered a 45,000-signature petition, as part of a Survival International delegation, to Indonesia's London embassy, protesting at 45,000 deaths in West Papua, and calling on the Indonesian Government to end human rights abuses and recognise the land rights of the tribal peoples.

On handing in the petition, Daniel Start said: "In the living memory of most West Papuan peoples, they have seen their country invaded by one of the most brutal armies in the world, and tens of thousands of their fellow countrymen killed".

[Daniel Start's book of his experiences, *The Open Cage: The Ordeal of the Irian Jaya Hostages* will be reviewed in the forthcoming *Bulletin*].

Journalist killed after exposing corruption

Muhammad Sayuti Haji Bochari aka Sanrego, a journalist with the South Sulawesi weekly journal, *Pos Makassar*, died in hospital in the provincial capital, Ujungpandang, on 11 June with bruises and injuries indicating he had been beaten to death.

The journal's chief editor said Sanrego's death was related to reports in the latest issue on corruption and embezzlement by local officials. The local police allege that Sanrego died in a traffic accident that had nothing to do with the reports, but relatives insist he was murdered.

The Committee to Protect Journalists, based in New York, has written to President Suharto, urging him to carry out a thorough investigation into the death. *Pos Makassar* and the Association of Independent Journalists have already launched their own investigation.

Sanrego's death comes less than a year after the murder of Yogyakarta journalist Fuad Muhammad Syafruddin, similarly linked with his reports on corruption by local officials. That case remains unresolved.

Prisoners riot in Surabaya

Prisoners at the Medaeng Prison on the outskirts of Surabaya, East Java, went on the rampage for two days in protest against numerous violations of their rights. Among

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The Banjarmasin tragedy

The worst incident to occur during the election campaign happened in Banjarmasin when no fewer than 124 people died. The provincial capital of South Kalimantan was engulfed in flames, providing evidence yet again of the severity of the regime's political and economical problems.

The tragedy happened on 23 May, the last day of the election campaign. A conflict between GOLKAR and PPP followers rapidly erupted into the biggest conflagration ever. Troops had to be flown in from Java as the local security forces were unable to control the situation.

Trivial spark

As with the other disturbances, the tragedy was triggered by a rather trivial event. A GOLKAR rally passed through a Muslim neighbourhood immediately after Friday afternoon prayers. The noisy crowd, many of whom were riding motor bikes, provoked the Muslim community. In no time a huge crowd of people, coming from all directions, had gathered and started attacking the GOLKAR rally. Within minutes, the situation went out of control. Anybody wearing yellow was targeted. The streets were soon littered with t-shirts and blouses that had been hastily discarded. Hundreds of women rushed home half naked after being forced to take off their yellow GOLKAR uniforms.

Then the crowd attacked and burned down the GOLKAR district office. Several government buildings were severely damaged and all the major shopping precincts went up in flames, including many shops, the Hero supermarket, the 21 Cineplex movie house and the Mitra Plaza shopping centre. The interior of the Roman Catholic Cathedral was vandalised while the Protestant HKBP church was reduced to ashes. An entire kampung, predominantly inhabited by ethnic Chinese, was also gutted.

The previous day, GOLKAR had held a big show of force in Banjarmasin which was attended by several cabinet ministers from Jakarta and the ABRI commander-in-chief, General Feisal Tanjung. In fact, most Jakarta luminaries were still in Banjarmasin when their hotel went up in flames. It was rumoured that KH Hasan Basri, chairman of

the Muslim Ulama Council, had been killed in the fire. In fact he had escaped through an emergency exit and was rushed to safety by security guards.

Mitra Plaza tragedy

Later on Friday evening, the charred remains of 123 people were found in the ashes of Mitra Plaza building, all of them unrecognisable. The national police chief, General Dibyo Widodo, alleged that the majority of the victims were looters because of all the consumer goods that were scattered nearby; he also claimed that some of the dead were clutching fans. But other accounts say that many of the bodies bore signs of bullet wounds. According to one theory, the police shot into the crowd at random and some of the fatally wounded corpses were dumped by security officers in the middle of the Mitra Plaza fire.

The Banjarmasin tragedy follows the pattern of all the recent riots. Smouldering anger and frustration among the general public was ignited by a GOLKAR show of force. Banjarmasin is overwhelmingly Muslim and reflects the tensions between GOLKAR followers, mostly government officials, and the general public.

Since the beginning of the year, Kalimantan has been the scene of many ugly conflicts during which the Madurese settler community has suffered tremendously. Thousands were killed and many thousands more have been rendered homeless following a conflict with the native Dayak community. There is a deep sense of frustration among the Madurese, who feel that they have been abandoned by government officials. The Madurese community in Banjarmasin is quite large and according to some reports, many of those involved in the 23 May riot were Madurese. *

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good offices mission for achieving a just, comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution to the question of East Timor and in this framework to encourage the all-inclusive Intra-East Timorese dialogue to continue under the auspices of the United Nations.

The resolution was adopted by 20 votes to 14, with 18 abstentions. Lining up with the European Union were Algeria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Cape Verde, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mozambique, the US and Uruguay. Lining up with Indonesia were all the Asian countries on the Commission (Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka), as well as Cuba, Egypt, Madagascar and Zimbabwe.

Discrediting Ramos-Horta

Indonesian diplomats attending the session went out of their way to discredit Jose Ramos-Horta, as Jakarta has been doing ever since he was named the 1996 Nobel Prize Laureate, along with Bishop Belo. When he was called to address the session from the podium, an honour granted to other Nobel Laureates, the Indonesian delegation protested. Asked to deliver his address from the back of the hall, Ramos-Horta refused to comply and did not deliver his address..

Shortly before the resolution was tabled, Ramos-Horta put on display a set of gruesome photographs of East Timorese victims of torture. Although Indonesian diplomats alleged that these were fabrications, they were widely disseminated by *Reuters* and reproduced in many newspapers around the world. *

UN resolution condemns Indonesia

The UN Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva in April adopted a strongly-worded resolution on the human rights situation in East Timor, despite frantic efforts by Indonesian diplomats to prevent this. The resolution was co-sponsored by the European Union, the US, Canada as well as Angola and Cape Verde.

The last time the Commission adopted a resolution on East Timor was in 1993. Since then it has confined itself to adopting watered-down consensus chairman statements, the provisions of which have been almost entirely ignored by Jakarta even though they had been drafted and adopted in consultation with the Indonesians.

This year's resolution expressed deep concern:

(a) At the continuing reports of violations of human rights in East Timor, including reports of extra-judicial killings, disappearances, torture and arbitrary detention as reported in the reports of the Special Rapporteur on torture the Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances;

(b) At the lack of progress made by the Indonesian authorities towards complying with their commitments undertaken in statements agreed by consensus at previous sessions of the Commission;

(c) That the Government of Indonesia has not yet invited thematic rapporteurs and working groups of the Commission to East Timor, in spite of commitments undertaken to do so in 1997;

(d) At the policy of systematic migration of persons to East Timor.

It called on the Indonesian Government:

(a) To take the necessary measures in order to ensure full respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of East Timor;

(b) To ensure the early release of East Timorese detained or convicted for political reasons and to clarify further the circumstances surrounding the violent incident that took place in Dili in November 1991;

(c) To ensure that all East Timorese in custody are treated humanely and in accordance with international standards, and that all trials in East Timor are conducted in accordance with international standards;

(d) To co-operate fully with the Commission and its thematic rapporteurs and working groups and to invite these rapporteurs and working groups to visit East Timor, in particular the Special Rapporteur on torture, in line with the commitment undertaken to invite a thematic rapporteur in 1997;

(e) To undertake all necessary action in order to upgrade the memorandum of intent of 26 October 1994 on technical cooperation into the envisaged memorandum of understanding, and requests in this regard the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to report on the follow-up to the memorandum of intent;

(f) To bring about the envisaged assignment of a programme officer of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at the Jakarta office of the United Nations Development Programme, as a follow-up to the commitment undertaken, and to provide this officer with unhindered access to East Timor;

(g) To provide access to East Timor for human rights organisations.

It also decided:

(a) To consider the situation in East Timor at its fifty-fourth session under the agenda item entitled "Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world" on the basis of the reports of special rapporteurs and working groups and that of the Secretary-General;

(b) To encourage the Secretary-General to continue his

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