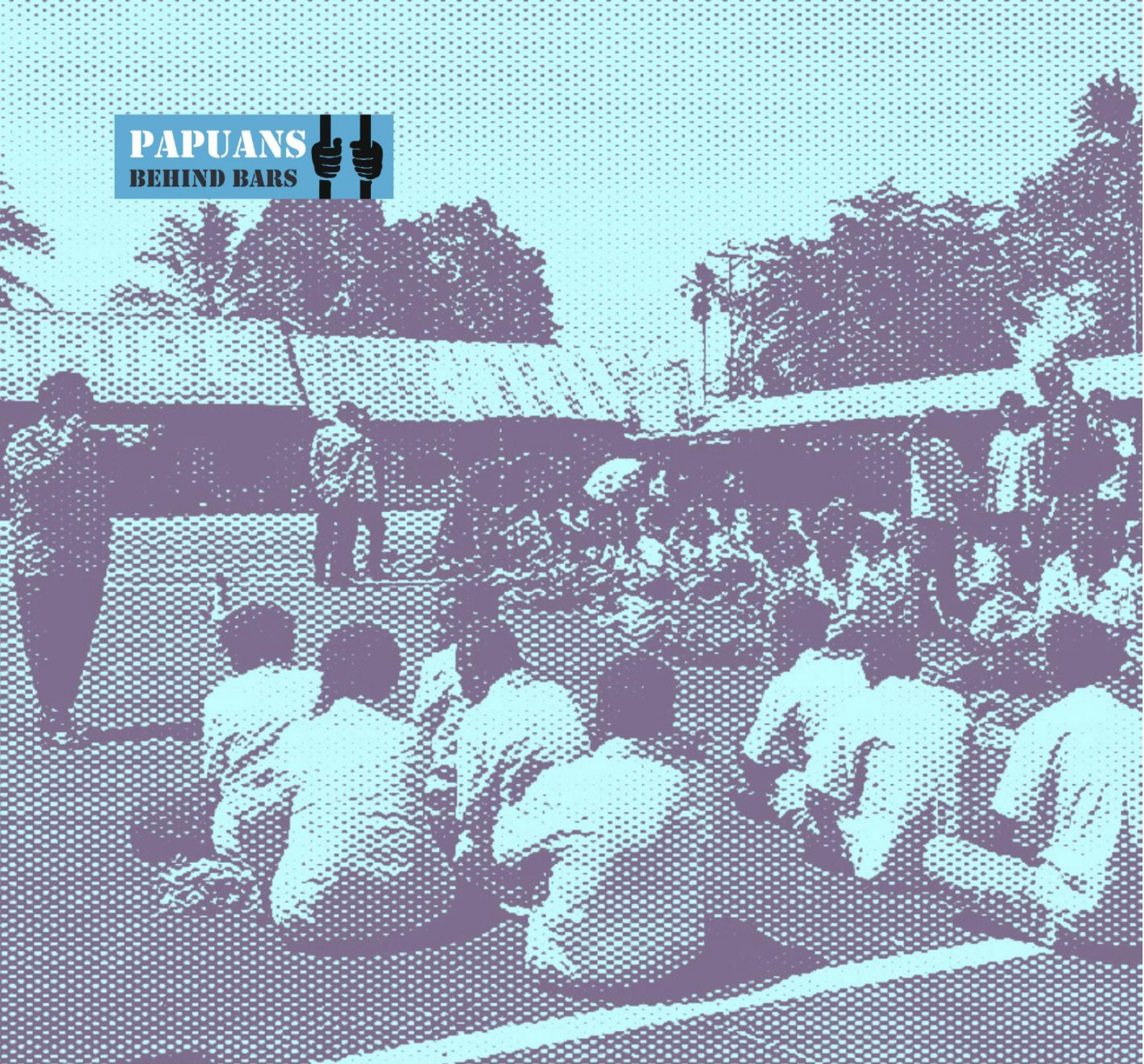


PAPUANS
BEHIND BARS



Papuans Behind Bars

QUARTERLY

UPDATE

January–March 2025

First published in 2025
by Papuans Behind Bars and TAPOL
papuansbehindbars.org | tapol.org

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Cover: Dozens of high school students at Nabire police headquarters, Nabire district, Papua Tengah province,
after their demonstration against the Free Nutritious Meal programme was dispersed, 17 February 2025.
Source: Jubi/Hengky Yeimo

Papuans Behind Bars

Quarterly Update

January–March 2025

Summary

During the first quarter of 2025, Papuans Behind Bars recorded at least 75 cases of arbitrary arrest and two cases of arbitrary detention out of a total of 78 political arrests. Most of those arrested have since been released, with the exception of five who are being prosecuted further and seven whose progress is unknown. At least six people were victims of torture or ill-treatment, two of whom died.

During this period, we also noted that there were at least nine cases from previous arrests that had received court judgements. One person was acquitted, while the others received sentences ranging from one to seven years in prison. Four were convicted of the offence of 'knowing and failing to prevent conspiracy to commit rebellion', while the other five were convicted of a variety of offences, ranging from racketeering, extortion, and endangering public security, to murder.

Background

In January, there was a proposal from the Government under Prabowo Subianto's Presidency to give pardons or amnesties to Papuan political prisoners.¹ Some ministers then made public statements that amnesties would only be given for Papuan political prisoners who were not involved in armed struggle. Furthermore, the Minister of Law identified 18 Papuan prisoners who would receive amnesties.² Both official sources and Papuan prisoners have confirmed the existence of this initiative, according to lawyers from the Papuans Behind Bars network. This move was similar to one by the previous administration under President Joko Widodo in 2015 who issued clemency (*grasi*) to five Papuan political

¹ BBC, *Prabowo berencana beri amnesti kepada kelompok pro-kemerdekaan Papua – Apa itu amnesti dan apa pengaruhnya bagi penyelesaian konflik di Papua?* [Prabowo plans to grant amnesty to pro-Papuan independence groups – What is amnesty and how does it affect conflict resolution in Papua?], 24 January 2025, available at <https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/articles/c93qle3639eo>.

² Antara, *Prabowo akan beri amnesti napi pengguna narkoba hingga kasus Papua* [Prabowo will give amnesty to drug users including Papua cases], 13 December 2024, available at <https://www.antaranews.com/berita/4527820/prabowo-akan-beri-amnesti-napi-pengguna-narkoba-hingga-kasus-papua>.

prisoners.³ However, by the end of March, there had been no follow up on this new amnesty proposal.

Also in January, Prabowo's administration started the populist Free Meal Programme (*Makan Bergizi Gratis*/MBG) across the country, including in West Papua, which had been one of his administration's main stated priorities during his presidential campaign. The MBG took a cost of IDR 71 trillion (about USD 4.358 billion) amid a budgetary deficit.⁴

On 20 March, the national Parliament (DPR RI) passed an amendment to the 2004 Military (TNI) Law, despite facing nationwide mass protests from university students and other civil society groups. The amendment provides a bigger social and political role for the military, beyond their traditional role in defence. Under the new Military Law, active military personnel can be appointed to 14 additional official posts, including some in law enforcement. Unfortunately, the changes to the law did not follow up on efforts to reform the military justice system, and this has prevented public courts from prosecuting military personnel who commit criminal offences, thus perpetuating impunity. A proposal to allow military personnel to enter business sectors was rejected due to the large public protests nationally.



Image 1. The demonstration against the revision of the TNI Law in front of the Yogyakarta Provincial House of Representatives building. Source: Rafael Christopher and Vanesh De Gabze

³ BBC, *Presiden Jokowi beri grasi untuk lima tapol di Papua* [President Jokowi grants clemency to five political prisoners in Papua], 9 May 2015, available at https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/berita_indonesia/2015/05/150509_papua_grasi_jokowi.

⁴ Ministry of Finance, <https://mediakeuangan.kemenkeu.go.id/article/show/menilik-eksistensi-program-mbg-atau-makan-bergizi-gratis>.

In February, the Global Legal Action Network (GLAN) and the London Mining Network (LMN) sent a complaint to the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the London Metal Exchange regarding the trade of 'dirty copper' produced at the Grasberg Mine, in Mimika, West Papua. Mining waste from the Grasberg Mine has polluted nearby rivers and destroyed the environment on land belonging to the local indigenous Papuan people. The trade could constitute "criminal property" under the UK Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and both the complainants called for an end to the trade.⁵

In mid-February, the Constitutional Court ruled that some of the local elections in West Papua should be reheld, including for the whole of the Papua province, after the Court dismissed the winning Vice Governor there for administrative fraud. In March, the local Election Commission (KPU Provinsi Papua) announced that the local elections would take place on 6 August 2025.⁶ During the campaign for the election in Papua Province's Governor there have been reports of hate speech and some candidates are reported to have made inflammatory speeches that have caused inter-Papua ethnic and religious tensions.⁷



*Image 2.
A campaign rally
for regent and
deputy regent
candidate pairs in
Tolikara Regency,
Papua Pegunungan
Province,
November 2024.
Source: AIDP*

On 7 March, nine UN Special Procedures under the UN Human Rights Council sent a joint letter to the Government of Indonesia raising their concern about allegations of human rights violations against indigenous Papuans affected by the National Strategic Project (PSN) of the Merauke Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE).⁸ Their concerns included the absence of

⁵ GLAN & LMN, GLAN and London Mining Network take action over 'dirty copper' traded on the London Metal Exchange, available at <https://www.glanlaw.org/dirty-metals>.

⁶ Jubi, KPU tetapkan tanggal pemungutan suara ulang pilgub Papua, kampanye 130 hari, 27 March 2025, available at <https://jubi.id/mamta/2025/kpu-tetapkan-tanggal-pemungutan-suara-ulang-pilgub-papua-kampanye-130-hari/>.

⁷ IPAC, Potential Fraud and Violence in Papua's Approaching Elections, 15 November 2024, available at <https://understandingconflict.org/en/publications/IPAC-report-98-Potential-Fraud-and-Violence-in-Papuas-Approaching-Elections>.

⁸ See <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TmSearch/Mandates?m=22>. The nine UN Special Procedures consisted of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food; the Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises; the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; the Special Rapporteur on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment; the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders; the Working Group on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas; the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation.

free, prior and informed consent from the local indigenous Papuan Yeinan and Malind people who own the land affected by the PSN Merauke. The joint UN Special Procedures also raised their concern that the local indigenous Papuans would not only face environmental destruction covering about two million hectares, but also a potential loss of cultural sovereignty and diverse endemic species.

On 8 March, the Vatican Catholic Church appointed Father Bernard Baru as the new Bishop of the Timika Diocese. He is the second Papuan indigenous bishop after Mgr. Yanuarius Theofilus Matopai You of the Jayapura Diocese. Father Bernard Baru is a former Chair of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation of the Order of Sancti Augustini (SKPKC OSA) in Sorong.

New Cases

There were 78 new arrests between January and March 2024. In this period we documented 50 new cases involving arbitrary arrest against Papuan youth (aged between 15 and 17). Almost all of them were high school student protesters in Nabire, Papua Tengah Province, who were arrested on 17 February for protesting against the MBG Programme. The high school students in Nabire named their coalition *Solidaritas Pelajar West Papua* (SPWP, or Solidarity of West Papuan School Students). The protesters gathered in a local market in Nabire city and started to march to the local Education Ministry Office to raise their concern that some media had reported many cases where students had become sick from the MBG and they demanded that the MBG should be changed to a free school programme. After marching less than a kilometer, the students were intercepted by the Nabire Police Force and 48 of them were arrested and brought to the Nabire Police Headquarters (Mapolres). The police claimed that the protest was provoked by KNPB (*Komite Nasional Papua Barat* or National Committee for West Papua).⁹ After being interrogated, all the students were released without charges.

Image 3. Dozens of high school students at Nabire police headquarters, Nabire district, Papua Tengah province, after their demonstration against the Free Nutritious Meal programme was dispersed, 17 February 2025. Source: Jubi/Hengky Yeimo



⁹ Jubi, *Unjuk rasa tolak makan bergizi gratis, pelajar di Nabire diangkut ke mapolres*, 17 February 2025, available at <https://jubi.id/meepago/2025/unjuk-rasa-tolak-makan-bergizi-gratis-pelajar-di-nabire-diangkut-ke-mapolres/>.

The other cases involving the youth were in Yahukimo, Papua Pegunungan Province. On 3 January the Yahukimo police force, including their Mobile Brigade Unit (Brimob), arrested two minors YM (14) and HS (17) in Kali Bonto, Yahukimo Regency, during a patrol and sweeping operation. The police conducted this operation after there had been a shooting incident two days earlier, on 1 January. As at the end of March 2025, there was no further information about the two minors.

Another incident of mass arrests was carried out by the Jayapura Police Force against 12 Papuan activists from the People's Movement for the Liberation of West Papua (GR-PWP) on 18 March in Sentani Old Market, Jayapura Regency. The arrests were made when the activists were distributing leaflets calling for a boycott of Indonesian products and investments, and amplifying their support for a similar initiative about to take place in London two days later, on 20 March, also organised by the GR-PWP.¹⁰

In this period, we documented nine cases of arrest and detention with regards to people accused of collaborating with armed pro-Papua independence groups. On 31 January, Satgas Damai Cartenz¹¹ arrested Yantis Murib alias Nosin Murib in Sentani, Jayapura Regency. The arrest was made because Yantis was allegedly involved in the shooting of a civilian in Ilaga, Puncak Regency, in 2024.¹² Subsequently, he was charged with murder and possession of firearms and sharp weapons under Indonesia's Criminal Code (KUHP) and Emergency Law.

On 3 February, police personnel from the Satgas Damai Cartenz reportedly arrested a suspected TPNPB member, Iyoktogi Telenggen, at Nop Goliat Airport, Yahukimo Regency. After being arrested at the airport, he was immediately taken to the Yaukimo Police headquarters. The police claimed that Iyoktogi was involved in several cases of murder against dozens of civilians, including 13 gold miners in Kali El, Seradala, Yahukimo Regency.¹³ As at the end of March, there was no update on him. On 19 February, several Papuan police forces and Satgas Damai Cartenz arrested former police (Polri) officer Aske Mabel in Abenaho District, Yalimo Regency. Aside from desertion, Aske was wanted for allegedly stealing four AK-type long-barrelled guns and dozens of ammunition from Yalimo police station in early June 2024. The police also claimed that Aske was involved in a number of acts of violence between November 2024 and January 2025.¹⁴

On 6 March, Satgas Damai Cartenz personnel arrested a former military (TNI) soldier, Yuni Enumbi alias Yuni Masok, at KM 76, Keerom District, Papua Province. Yuni was alleged to be

¹⁰ See <https://westpapuanews.org/kapolres-jayapura-melakukan-penangkapan-ilegal-12-activis-gerakan-rakyat-pembebasan-west-papua-di-sentani>.

¹¹ It was formed in January 2022, replacing the previous task force, Satgas Operasi Nemangkawi, to deal with pro-independence armed groups in West Papua. Satgas Damai Cartenz consists of nearly 2000 police personnel and 101 TNI personnel. It operates in the regencies of Pegunungan Bintang, Yahukimo, Nduga, Intan Jaya, Puncak, Mimika, Dogiyai, Jayawijaya and Jayapura.

¹² Kompas, *Satgas Damai Cartenz Tangkap DPO KKB di Sentani, Jayapura*, 31 January 2025, available at: <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2025/01/31/194203078/satgas-damai-cartenz-tangkap-dpo-kkb-di-sentani-jayapura>.

¹³ CNN, *Anggota KKB Iyoktogi Ditangkap Terkait Pembunuhan 13 Penambang Emas*, 4 February 2025, available at <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20250204124614-12-1194371/anggota-kkb-iyoktogi-ditangkap-terkait-pembunuhan-13-penambang-emas>.

¹⁴ Jubi, *Desertir polisi Aske Mabel ditangkap tim gabungan di Yalimo*, 19 February 2025, available at <https://jubi.id/polhukam/2025/desertir-polisi-aske-mabel-ditangkap-tim-gabungan-di-yalimo/>.

a supplier of weapons and ammunition to armed pro-Papua independence groups in Puncak Jaya Regency. Police claimed to have confiscated two SS1 rifles, four pistols, four SS1 magazines, five pistol magazines, 600 rounds of 5.56mm/5TJ calibre ammunition, and 250 rounds of 9mm calibre ammunition. In addition, police also confiscated bags, ATM cards, and money worth IDR 369.9 million (USD 22,763).¹⁵ As well as Yuni Enumbi, the police claimed to have arrested a number of other people from both civilian and active military personnel in Java allegedly involved in this case.

Ongoing Case Updates

We recorded updated legal processes that ended with conviction against nine Papuan prisoners. In March, three separate cases involving Arkelaus Lokon, but under the same charges of arson [Article 187(1) of the Criminal Code] were ruled by the Jayapura District Court. The Judges from different panels in the Jayapura District Court all convicted Lokon guilty of setting fire to a number of buildings in the Jayapura Regency Government office complex between September and November 2023. The various panels of judges sentenced Lokon to between three and four years' imprisonment.



Image 4. Petrus Madai after his trial at Nabire District Court, 23 January 2025. Source: Jubi/Hengky Yeimo

On 3 March, the panel of judges accepted the objection of the defendant Petrus Madai or his lawyers and cancelled the indictment of the public prosecutor. Madai had been charged with possession of sharp weapons under the Emergency Law (No.12/1951). However, on 4 March, the prosecutor re-registered Petrus Madai at Nabire District Court for the same case. Petrus Madai had been arrested by the Nabire Police Force on 15 August 2024 during demonstrations in a number of places in Nabire city organised by KNPB activists to commemorate the 1962 New York Agreement.¹⁶

¹⁵ Jubi, *Satgas Damai Cartenz tangkap mantan prajurit TNI, sita senjata dan uang Rp 369,6 juta*, 8 March 2025, available at <https://jubi.id/mamta/2025/satgas-damai-cartenz-tangkap-mantan-prajurit-tni-sita-senjata-dan-uang-rp3696-juta/>

¹⁶ See Papuans Behind Bars (PBB) Q3 (July-September) 2024, available at <https://papuansbehindbars.org/q3-2024/>.

An important case update in this period was related to that of the burning of the Kramongmongga school and district office as well as the murder of the District Head on 15 August 2023. A day after the incidents, a joint security operation was launched to hunt down the perpetrators. During the subsequent raids in August and September 2023, police personnel shot dead five people for resisting arrest. Local witnesses stated that rather than firing warning shots, officers instantly shot at the victims.¹⁷ The police also arrested 12 villagers and then charged seven of them, with the rest released after being interrogated.¹⁸ In June 2024, the Public Prosecutor in Fakfak charged Alex Kramandondo alias Tete Peh, Ferdinandus Kramandondo, Hariyanto Iba, Vridolin Petrus Yoris Kramandondo and Yohanes Kramandondo all with premeditated murder and arson under the Criminal Code and demanded they be sentenced to life imprisonment.

On 1 August 2024, the judges of the Fakfak District Court sentenced Ferdinandus Kramandondo to seven years' imprisonment under Article 187 of the Criminal Code on Crimes Endangering Public Security, and the rest defendants to between 14 and 15 months' imprisonment for committing a crime against public order, Article 164 jo. 108 of the Criminal Code. The Prosecutor then appealed all the Fakfak District Court's decisions. On 7 October 2024, the Manokwari High Court upheld the conviction and sentenced Ferdinandus Kramandondo, but increased the sentences of the other convicts to 18 months' imprisonment. The Prosecutor again appealed the Manokwari High Court decisions. Eventually, between January and February 2025, the Supreme Court upheld all the Manokwari High Court decisions and rejected the Prosecutor's appeal.¹⁹

On 14 January 2024, a panel of Nabire District Court judges found Anan Nawipa guilty of premeditated murder and stealing, and sentenced him to 10 years' imprisonment. The sentence was 10 years less than the Prosecutor's demands. Nawipa was arrested by Satgas Damai Cartenz on 11 May 2024 in Bapauda Village, East Paniai District, Paniai Regency. He was allegedly involved in the murder of Danramil (local military commander) Aradide on 11 April 2024, in Eladide District, Paniai Regency. Nawipa was allegedly at the scene and was carrying the victim's mobile phone. Both the Prosecutor and the defendant appealed the verdict. On 10 March 2025, the Jayapura High Court ruled in favour of the Nabire District Court's verdict, but the Prosecutor again appealed to the Supreme Court.

¹⁷ Human Rights Monitor, Joint security forces kill five indigenous Papuans in Fakfak – Human rights organisations demand independent investigation, 21 September 2023, available at <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/news/joint-security-forces-kill-five-indigenous-papuans-in-fakfak-human-rights-organisations-demand-independent-investigation/>

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ See different Court's decisions on the 2023 Kramongmongga Case, https://kepaniteraan.mahkamahagung.go.id/perkara/perkara_detail.php?id=2db7b631-b2f7-429e-82ba-9f29392bd1cc; https://kepaniteraan.mahkamahagung.go.id/perkara/perkara_detail.php?id=7b963bd7-4f4b-4d72-aa8c-a2f58cd0ae40; https://kepaniteraan.mahkamahagung.go.id/perkara/perkara_detail.php?id=95d5b70d-18d5-4076-8671-de581dd89f33; https://kepaniteraan.mahkamahagung.go.id/perkara/perkara_detail.php?id=23632017-d698-4f3d-9670-4b26f0327a7e; <https://putusan3.mahkamahagung.go.id/direktori/putusan/zaef8489921a8a6a8608313535333036.htm>

Issues of Concern

During this period, we documented other serious human rights violations against Papuan political prisoners, such as death in custody and torture or other ill-treatments.



Image 5. Goliath Sani's body at Yokatapa Hospital, Intan Jaya Regency, 28 February 2025. Source: Supplied

On 27 February, military personnel reportedly arrested two Papuans, Goliath Sani and his friend (name unknown), in Kampung Mamba, Sugapa District, Intan Jaya Regency. While the friend was released shortly after his arrest, Sani was detained until the following day. The family believes that Sani was tortured to death during his detention. The next day, a number of TNI personnel were seen delivering Sani's body to Yokatapa Hospital in Sugapa. Since October 2024, there have been armed clashes between Indonesia's military forces (TNI) and the armed pro-Papua independence group (TPNPB) in Sugapa District.²⁰

²⁰ Human Rights Monitor, Military members alleged of executing Papuan civilian in Mamba Village, Intan Jaya, 3 March 2025, available at <https://humanrightsmonitor.org/case/military-again-alleged-of-executing-papuan-civilian-in-mamba-village-intan-jaya/>.

On 22 March, military members arbitrarily arrested Abral Wandikbo at his home in Yuguru Village when he was caring for his ill father. Wandikbo, who could not speak Bahasa Indonesia, was interrogated at gunpoint and handcuffed. He was forced to give information about the supposed hide-outs area of TPNPB. Brought to Yuguru Airstrip, he refused to give the information and got tortured. His body was dumped and found three days later near a gardening area, 200 meters from a military post. Arabal Wandikbo was an indigenous resident of Yuguru Village, Nduga Regency.

On 13 March, military personnel reportedly arbitrarily arrested, detained and tortured EW along with two other indigenous Papuans, PW and LA (names withheld for security reasons), in Puncak Jaya Regency for more than two hours at Kodim 1714 military base. Indonesian military personnel collectively delivered beatings during both transport and detention at the base. They repeatedly accused the victims of involvement in the murder of a comrade during the electoral conflict in that regency. The commanding officer later apologised and offered a compensation of IDR 300,000 (USD 18.5), after which they were released and returned to their house without receiving any medical aid.



Image 6. Residents carry the body of Abral Wandikbo who was found in a field, 23 March 2025, after being arrested by military personnel the day before. Source: Supplied

Papuans Behind Bars aims to provide accurate and transparent data, published in English and Indonesian, to facilitate direct support for prisoners and promote wider debate and campaigning in support of free expression in West Papua.

Papuans Behind Bars is a collective effort initiated by Papuan civil society groups working together as the Civil Society Coalition to Uphold Law and Human Rights in Papua. It is a grassroots initiative and represents a broad collaboration between lawyers, human rights groups, adat groups, activists, journalists and individuals in West Papua, as well as Jakarta-based NGOs and international solidarity groups.

Questions, comments and corrections are welcomed, and you can write to us at info@papuansbehindbars.org

Visit papuansbehindbars.org for the latest information on West Papuan political prisoners.

