

Human Rights day

Kompas survey, 09-12-2013

Now that the second governing period of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has nearly ended, the reality of the human rights situation is a bleak picture. Several human rights violations have taken place with the administration just letting it happen.

During his second election campaign Yudhoyono promised to give more attention to human rights. This promise has not been realized, is the conclusion of a survey among 700 respondents, that Kompas carried out in the last week of November. We attach the article in full in Bahasa as a separate attachment.

Impunity

History cannot be wiped out

Kompas, 03-12-2013

The statements of 32 victims of serious human rights violations from several periods and incidents were expressed in the Agenda or Witness Hearings, coordinated by the Koalisi Keadilan dan Pengungkapan Kebenaran (KKPK, the Coalition for Justice and Expression of the Truth), during a meeting from 25-29 November, in Jakarta. They said that the past in fact is not yet behind us. The silencing of the victims makes it possible for the perpetrators to enjoy impunity.

On the other hand, the stigma that is put upon the victims and witnesses makes that they do not have the courage to tell the truth about the violence they have experienced. During their whole life they have endured the suffering at the memory and the injustice, as their rights as a civilian have been torn away.

The physical, mental and sexual violence that was experienced Bu Mamiek (68), in 1965 and some

years after that, is the same as for many women after the political upheaval of 1965. The disappearance of Michael Markus, father of Net Markus (79) originating from South-Central Timor, as a result of the events of 1965, also has not ever yet ended. The dark history that has been the consequence of several incidents of political violence ranging from Sabang to Merauke, in a period of 40 years, from 1965-2005, is still present in today Indonesia and in its future, when there is no effort to change that, at least to acknowledge and be accountable in a legal and moral way, as well as to realize the commitment that it will not happen again.

The data of the KKPK include 938 incidents of serious human rights violations, with 3.189 victims, male and female. However, these data are just exemplary. It may be that there are hundreds of thousands of other violations, of which the victims have chosen to remain silent and to bury their history in their hearts.

Munir Museum in Batu, East Java

Kompas, 09-12-2013



BATU, East Java — The government should solve a number of human rights violations with a special team. Now it seems that the government just lets those violations remain pending. Thus the statement by the chairman of the team for solving violations of the past of the National Human Rights Commission, Komnas HAM, Roichatul Aswidah and the vice-chairman of the Congress (MPR), Lukman

Hakim Saifuddin, last Sunday (8/12), after the opening ceremony of the Human Rights Museum dedicated to human rights activist Munir, in the city of Batu, East Java.

Seven cases of human rights violations should have priority: Trisakti, Semanggi I, Semanggi II, the riots of May 1998, Talangsari (1989), the case of the mysterious killings (early 80s), the violations following 1965, the case of Wasior-Wamena (2001-2003), and the kidnappings of students in 1997/1998.

Freedom of religion

President SBY ignores Sampang Shiites

The Jakarta Post, December 05 2013

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono visited Sampang on Madura Island on Wednesday to inspect Sunni-Shia reconciliation efforts as the displaced Shiites continued to languish in a shelter in Sidoarjo, East Java.

The President met with local Sunni Muslim clerics, community leaders and members of the government-sanctioned team tasked with facilitating the reconciliation talks, in which the Shiites claim never to have been involved.

“The team [led by the rector of Surabaya’s Sunan Ampel State Institute of Islamic Studies, or IAIN, Abdul A’la] reported that although security was currently stable, there had still been disagreements on beliefs,” presidential spokesperson Julian Aldrin Pasha said on Wednesday.

Julian said the President had ordered the team to work harder to speed up reconciliation efforts, but stopped short of saying whether the Shiites could return safely to their homes.

The eviction of the Sampang Shia is just one of numerous cases of religious intolerance that have tarnished the reputation of Yudhoyono’s administration. The government argued that the action was for their own safety because their Sunni neighbors would have otherwise harassed them had they returned to their villages.

Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister Djoko Suyanto, who also attended the meeting, said the government supported the reconciliation program and would keep pushing for the Shiites to return to their homes.

Nevertheless, Djoko said there was no deadline for the process, indicating it could only be followed through successfully if local residents did not show resistance. “The most important thing is that there is no more violence. Communications between the two sides are being maintained,” he said.

Iklil Al Milal, leader of the Sampang Shiites, slammed Yudhoyono for not visiting their shelter in Sidoarjo, saying that doing so would have given him a better picture of the situation. “[The President] only assessed the situation based on one-sided reports. He failed to fulfill his promise of letting us return home before Idul Fitri this year.”

“This is the way it has always been. We have never been involved in the reconciliation process. Suddenly decisions are made that we must adhere to. Religious Affairs Minister [Suryadharma Ali] also still wants us to convert,” Iklil added.

Last month, Suryadharma said there was a possibility that the Shiites would be able to return to their homes in the near future, saying that local clerics in Madura were willing to accept the internally displaced persons.

Yet, some believed that the statement was the result of heavy international pressure on Yudhoyono to solve the problem.

Weekly Update Human Rights in Indonesia – 09-12-2013

In a closed-door meeting at the Grahadi Building in Surabaya in August, Yudhoyono expressed his disappointment in regards to the Sampang incident, asking that the case not be treated lightly as the world was closely following it.

The plight of the Sampang Shiites began in December 2011 when a mob attacked an Islamic school owned by their leader, Tajul Muluk, who had been accused of spreading deviant teachings of Islam. Tajul was convicted of blasphemy on July 12, 2012. After the verdict, a mob attacked and ransacked more than 30 houses owned by Tajul and his followers, killing two people.

In September 2012, the Supreme Court increased his sentence from two to four years in prison for telling his followers that the original version of the Koran was still in the hands of Imam Mahdi.

Around 235 of his followers have been in shelter since the 2012 attack and are living temporarily in a relocation site in Sidoarjo.

National Police backtracks on Islamic headscarf policy

The Jakarta Post, December 03 2013

The National Police is now reconsidering their policy of allowing female officers to wear the Islamic headscarf, or hijab, on duty.

In a confidential internal telegram signed by National Police deputy chief Comr. Gen. Oegroseno on Nov. 28, female members of the force were ordered to stop wearing the headscarf to work until the National Police had issued a regulation on the new type of uniform.

Oegroseno said on Monday that the decision was made after learning that female members of the police had worn scarves of different colors and designs with their official uniforms.

“The wearing of the hijab by policewomen — from Aceh, to Bengkulu and Papua — must be based on

a written regulation. Thus, we should wait for a National Police chief regulation on the uniform hijab,” Oegroseno said at the Air Police Corps headquarters in South Tangerang, Banten. (...)

The deputy police chief said that the new uniform would likely be very simple.

The National Police currently have 20,000 female members, representing only 5 percent of the force’s 400,000 personnel.

According to the IPW, policewomen have little impact on the decision-making processes in the force as most of them are assigned to low-level desk jobs or act as public relations agents to appear on live news programs on national television.

Elections

Financial transactions of DPR candidates to be monitored

Kompas, 09-12-2013

The Centre for Reporting and Analyzing Financial Transactions (Pusat Pelaporan dan Analisis Transaksi Keuangan, PPATK) expects that it will receive the data of candidates for the Parliamentary elections in April 2014. These data are needed to monitor financial transactions of these candidates. This is a preventive measure against money politics. Financial transactions of the candidates tend to intensify in the run-up to the elections.

Social and economic rights

Low quality of education

Inside Indonesia, 09-12-2013

On 3 December, the results of the latest round of internationally-standardised tests of maths,

science and reading skills among 15 year-old students were released. Of the 65 countries that participated in the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) tests, Indonesia ranked 60th in reading skills, and 64th in maths and science. What was really shocking was how very, very low Indonesian students' skills are. Fully 42 per cent of 15 year-olds did not even make the bottom skills level in maths, and three out of four students – 76 per cent to be exact – sat at level one or less (of six levels). That compares with just 14.2 per cent at or below level one in Vietnam, 8.3 per cent in Singapore and 3.8 per cent in Shanghai.



But it's not the international comparisons that really matter. What matters is that three quarters of those Indonesians who are still in school at age 15 don't have the basic maths skills that they need to function in society. Two thirds don't have enough science to get by effectively in the modern world, and one in five can't read well enough to perform basic tasks in the workplace.

And yet Indonesia spends relatively more on education than many other countries. Indeed it is constitutionally obliged to spend a fifth of the public budget on education, at both the national and the local levels. Class sizes are among the smallest of any middle income country; in primary school there's a teacher for every 16 pupils (better than the UK), in secondary schools the ratio is one to 12 (better than the US). So why aren't Indonesian children learning much?

Further reading:

<http://www.insideindonesia.org/current-edition/nation-of-dunces>

Land rights

Shooting in South Sulawesi

MAKASSAR, KOMPAS, 02-12-2013

A land rights conflict broke out between the plantation company PT Perkebunan Nusantara XIV and local farmers in Polongbangkeng Utara, district Takalar, South Sulawesi, Senin (2/12). One farmer was shot in the leg, presumably by police bullets.

Sabri, a member of the Farmers' Union Serikat Tani Polongbangkeng (STP), said that staff members of the company PTPN XIV, together with 5 members of Brimob (Mobile Brigade of the police), approached farmers who were farming their land in Polongbangkeng Utara. "Suddenly we were ordered to stop working on our lands and immediately the Brimob started shooting," he said. Yunus Daeng Empo (30), a farmer, was hit by shooting in his right leg. He was brought to the hospital Bhayangkara, Makassar. "I stood at his side when Yunus was hit," said Sabri.

He added that the lands had been disputed between STP and the PTPN XIV for 10 years. The case is currently under consideration by the Supreme Court. The PTPN XIV sued the farmers claiming that they misused the land. However, the farmers, said Sabri, already planted 2000 ha with rice, based on their right to use the land since 2005. The PTPN XIV tried to make them plant sugar cane. "But as long as the Supreme Court has not decided the PTPN has no authority to manage the land," said Sabri.

Papua

Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM) aiming at dialogue

JAYAPURA, KOMPAS, 03-12-2013

The Organization for Free Papua, led by Lambert Pekikir is committed to start to lay down its weapons and have a dialogue with the Indonesian Government. They think that weapons have not been able to realize their aspirations.

"We cannot use violence when the government wants to be open for dialogue," said Kekerasan tidak akan kami gunakan lagi sepa Lambert Pekikir from Jayapura. (02/12/13).

According to Lambert Pekikir the participants in such a dialogue should be the Indonesian Government, the Dutch Government (as former colonial power of Indonesia), Papuan society leaders, the Indonesian police and army. In this dialogue, he is hoping that the problems of the Papuan society can be tabled and sought for a solution.

The main issues that the OPM will bring forward in this dialogue are the status of Papua Barat, that was given state authority on 1 December 1961, Therefore the presence of the Dutch government is needed. Other issues focus on the guarantees of the rights of Papuan society, which is considered to get less attention than other regions.

The National Papua Army (Tentara Nasional Papua, TNP) supports the OPM with regard to armed resistance, each 1 December commemorating the Papua Liberation Day. Different from earlier, this time there were no casualties, no demonstrations, no flag hoisting. Lambert Pekikir just attended a seminar on human rights in the district of Keerom.

The executive head of the secretariat of the national human rights commission Komnas HAM in Papua, Frits B Ramandey, said that the government

should appreciate the commitment of the OPM to open space for dialogue.

Papuans Behind Bars: November 2013

At the end of November 2013, there were at least 71 political prisoners in Papuan jails. 112 political arrests were made this month in three separate cases, bringing the total number of arrests so far this year to 537. This represents a 165% increase in the number of political arrests as compared with the same period in 2012, signalling a significant deterioration in the environment for free expression and assembly in Papua.

The police response to increasingly organised and coordinated demonstration activities across Papua is of concern this month, including several mass arbitrary arrests, repeated use of excessive force, blocking lawyers from accessing detainees, cruel and degrading treatment of detainees, and arrest and coercion of student activists to sign agreements to stop demonstrating.

Students of Cenderawasih University (UNCEN) have become locked in a bitter battle with university authorities over the involvement of lecturers in the drafting of a controversial revamp of the Special Autonomy bill. University authorities appear to be actively inviting police to suppress political activity on campus, leading to numerous arrests and beatings of students. A number of Papuan leaders have expressed concern at what they perceive as police efforts to systematically close down political space, particularly ahead of significant dates such as 1 May and in this case 1 December.

On 26 November 80 people were arrested in four different cities during demonstrations in support of the opening of a Free West Papua Campaign office in Papua New Guinea and the Sorong to Samarai campaign. One demonstrator was killed and three others have disappeared.