

Human Rights Update West Papua – July 2021

covering April – June 2021



Summary

Similar to previous reporting periods, human rights statistics between April and June 2021 continue to mirror the effects of the armed conflict and political tensions for Papuan civil society.

The number of arbitrary arrests, political and non-political, continue to be high as the police firmly restrict the freedom of peaceful assembly and other civil-political rights. Nevertheless, Papuans voiced their discontent over the Papuan special autonomy and

aspirations for self-determination in peaceful demonstrations. Papuan activist and human rights advocate, Victor Yeimo, was arrested in early May 2021 and charged with multiple criminal charges, among them treason. The police accused him of masterminding West Papua-wide protests against racism and civil unrest between August and September 2019.

Three out of six reported victims of extra-judicial executions died in the context of security force raids in the Puncak Regency. All were indigenous Papuans. Observers estimate at least 31,833 indigenous Papuans internally displaced in the Puncak Regency due to the armed conflict between the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPN PB) and Indonesian security forces. Only a few of them have access to medical treatment and other humanitarian aid.

The armed conflict in Puncak escalated after [TPN PB members killed the Papuan intelligence chief](#) on 25 April 2021 and [executed two school teachers](#) in mid-May 2021. Following the incident, President Joko Widodo ordered the national police and the military to find and arrest all members of armed criminal groups in West Papua. In late April 2021, joint [security forces launched a massive operation in the Puncak Regency](#), which has reportedly caused the widespread [displacement of thousands of indigenous Papuans](#). On 29 April 2021, Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs, Prof. Mahfud MD, announced that the Indonesian government would categorise armed separatist groups in West Papua - including their associated organisations and individuals - as [terrorist organisations](#). The [Papuan Governor](#) and [human rights observers criticised the move](#), arguing that the label narrows space for dialogue, allows authorities to stifle the freedom of expression and perpetuates the cycle of violence in West Papua.

Whilst the conflict in Puncak aggravated, the [internet in the regencies Jayapura and Sarmi broke down](#) between 30 April and 8 June 2021. Media observers presume that the disruption was a [deliberate measure](#) to hamper the flow of information, as happened in the past. A representative of the government-owned

number of victims	Q3 '20	Q4 '20	Q1 '21	Q2 '21
Extra-judicial executions or killings (+ Enforced disappearances/allegations)	9+1	6+2	7+1	5+1
Torture / Ill-treatment	33	21	2	10
Assaults against / obstruction of journalists	2	-	-	1
Violations of right to health (fatalities)	-	-	26	1
Violations against / obstruction of HRDs	7	2	-	1
Environmental crimes	N/A	2	1	-
Violations of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC)	1	1	1	-
Non-political arbitrary arrests	17	-	26	28
Political arrests	210	155	14	180
Treason & conspiracy charges (articles 106 & 110 KUHP) no. of accused	4	20	-	1
Violations of the right to fair and impartial trial & independence of judges	-	3	4	1
Internally displaced persons (Conflict)	N/A	60,000	> 3,600	>31,833

telecommunications company PT Telkom, claimed that the disconnection of a submarine cable was responsible for the disruption.

Meanwhile, the Indonesian parliament discussed amendments to the Papuan special autonomy law. It came up with the first draft of the amended law (Rancangan Undang-undang) without prior consultation of the Papuan Peoples Assemblies (MRP & MRPB) and the provincial parliaments in Papua and Papua Barat. In response, the [MRP and MRPB filed a complaint about the bill to the constitutional court](#). Both MRPs consider that Jakarta has violated the procedure for the amendment of the special autonomy law.

A further conflict of interest between Papua and Jakarta arose in late June concerning the [temporary replacement of Papuan Governor](#) Lukas Enembe, who has been undergoing medical treatment in Singapore since 9 May 2021. The Ministry for Home Affairs reacted upon Enembe's absence on 24 June 2021. It appointed the Papuan secretary-general, Dance Yulian Flassy, as Enembe's temporary representative. The ministry's intervention challenged Lukas Enembe's decision to appoint the regional secretary general assistant, Dr Muhamad Ridwan Rumasukun, as the new secretary-general of the Papua Province. The West Papuan Council of Churches ([WPCC](#)) [criticised the ministry's move](#), saying it is a part of a larger government agenda to carry out divisive politics between Papuans and perpetuate the Special Autonomy Status. In early April, the [WPCC had already called upon the Indonesian President](#) to enter into a negotiation with Papuan pro-independence groups to end the long-lasting armed conflict in West Papua.

Read what [UN mechanisms observe and recommend](#) regarding human rights in West Papua.

The information in this report is collected by local human rights defenders. As human rights defenders face hostile working conditions and legal aid services lack remote areas, this compilation of cases cannot be regarded as complete.



The KNPB activists shortly after being released

Update on the prosecution of 12 KNPB activists in Merauke – Activists provisionally released from police detention

The Merauke police provisionally released 12 West Papua National Committee (KNPB) activists on 2 April 2021. The police claimed that the suspects were released to celebrate Easter with their families. Lawyers argued that the statement was a pretext to distract the public from the remaining period of detention because they did not come up with sufficient evidence for further processing of the case. They demanded the police to issue a letter confirming that the criminal investigation in the case will be stopped once the detention period has expired.

[Read more details](#)

Students launch peaceful protest against Freeport Mine in Jayapura – Police disperse the crowd and arrest three protesters

On 7 April 2021, Cenderawasih University students in Jayapura protested against Freeport's gold and copper mine in the Mimika Regency, Papua Province. The protesters demanded the government ban PT FI from operating in West Papua, as the company's presence has been a driver of armed violence, land rights abuses, and environmental destruction for more than five decades. Joint security force members reportedly dispersed the crowd, although the protest was allegedly registered. The officers arrested and temporarily detained three protesters.

[Read more details](#)

Resistance fighters execute two teachers and a pupil in Puncak Regency

TPN PB members claimed responsibility for killing two teachers in the Puncak Regency, in early April 2021. The TPN PB alleged the three victims were undercover agents for the military. The police denied the claim that the teachers were working for the army. Oktovianus Rayo and Yonathan Renden were shot dead in the Beoga

District. Their bodies were flown to Timika and later delivered to their hometowns outside of West Papua. The killing of Papuan pupil Ali Mom occurred on 15 April 2021.

[Read more details](#)



Moses Yewen talking about the torture

Soldier torture Papuan man in Tambrau Regency – Victim dies only weeks after the incident

Two military members tortured Mr Moses Yewen, 45, on 9 April 2021 as he wanted to buy food in a small restaurant in the Wayo Village, Tambrau Regency. The military members dragged him inside the nearby military post and tortured him. Moses Yewen sustained bruises on his torso, as well as injuries on the feet and hands. Moses Yawan and a lawyer reported the incident to the local military police (POM). On 7 May 2021, Moses Yewen suddenly passed away in the Wayo Village, Fef District. Observers believe that his death is related to the torture he experienced.

Read more details [here](#) and [here](#)

Police officers torture Papuan during custody in Nabire

On 22 February 2021, police officers reportedly arrested Rupinus Nabelau in front of the Jepara Wadio Hotel in Nabire without showing a warrant. He was suspected of buying illegal firearms. Rupinus' relatives claim the officers brought him to an unknown location and tortured him for several hours. The relatives tried to find Rupinus Nabelau at the Nabire police station and the local hospital. In the late evening, family members were informed that he was admitted to the Siriwini Hospital. Rupinus Nabelau's face was allegedly bruised due to physical torture as they visited him at the hospital the following morning.

[Read more details](#)

Papuan journalist subjected to intimidation – Activists urge the police to prosecute perpetrators

Papuan journalist Victor Mambor was reportedly intimidated on 21 April 2021. The perpetrator(s) smashed the windshield and two side windows and defaced the car with spray paint. Activists believe the attack aimed to intimidate Victor Mambor because he wrote several critical articles on the human rights situation in West Papua for the Papuan news outlet Jubi. Mr Mambor officially reported the case to the local police. The Association of Independent Journalists (AJI) condemned the attack and called upon the police to conduct an efficient investigation.



Damaged windshield of Victor Mambor's car

[Read more details](#)

Verdict in the trial against political activist – Judges sentence Soon Tabuni to 1 year and € 57,000 fine

On 23 April 2021, judges at the Timika District Court found Soon Tabuni guilty of violating Article 45A (2) on hate speech of Law No. 19 /2016 about the amendment of Law No. 11/2008 on Electronic Information and Transaction. Mr Tabuni was sentenced to one year imprisonment and a fine of one billion rupiahs (about € 57,000), substitutable by six months detention. Soon Tabuni is a member of the West Papua National Committee (KNPB), a movement organisation that promotes decolonisation and political self-determination through peaceful civil resistance activities. The police accused him of posting hate speech content against the former Papuan Police Chief, Paulus Waterpauw, on a social media account.

[Read more details](#)

Update on the situation of Papuan IDPs



IDPs seeking shelter in Puncak's largest town, Kimak

Information published by human rights observers and local media outlets indicates a lack of commitment from the local governments towards the IDPs in the Papuan regencies Nduga, Intan Jaya and Puncak. Particularly, the IDPs from Nduga already have to live under these uncertain conditions for more than two years, without access to adequate healthcare, education and humanitarian government services.

The most recent displacements were reported from the Puncak Regency, where the aggravation of armed conflict in late April 2021 caused the internal displacement of thousands of indigenous Papuans in various waves. Human rights observers estimated about 31,000 civilians fled to Puncak's largest town

of Kimak and the surrounding areas in the Ilaga District. The head of the Komnas HAM representative office in Papua confirmed that 3,019 IDPs from 23 villages had sought shelter in multiple tents erected at a government office in Kimak. They have difficulties accessing clean water. Moreover, there are not enough health workers in Puncak available to provide medical aid to the IDPs. About 833 IDPs from Puncak have fled to the Mimika Regency.

Read more details [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#)

Papuan man arrested for alleged weapon trade – Lawyers rise allegation of torture against police

The Association of Human Rights Lawyers for Papua (PAHAM Papua) criticised the police for disregarding international human rights standards and criminal procedures during the arrest and detention of Papuan suspect Peniel Kogoya in the town of Nabire on 19 April 2021. According to PAHAM Papua, the police officers allegedly arrested Mr Kogoya without showing a warrant. They later tortured him during detention to force a confession. The police accused Peniel Kogoya of supplying the TPN PB with firearms.

[Read more details](#)

Police press charges against Papuan student for social media post

Police officers arrested Ferry Pakage and Gerius Wenda in Sentani, Papua Province, on 23 February 2021. Ferry was charged with Article 28(2) on hate speech (SARA) of the Electronic Information and Transaction Act for posting a video showing a group of Papuan university students demanding to burn an Indonesian flag. The police allege him of provoking Cenderawasih University students to participate in a protest against the prolongation of the special autonomy status for the provinces Papua and Papua Barat.

[Read more details](#)

Healthcare and education system in Yalimo in devastating condition

A recent visit by the Papuan parliamentarian to the Yalimo area has revealed the devastating condition of the healthcare and the education system in the Papuan regencies Yalimo and Yahukimo. Schools in Yalimo have been closed since the Covid-19 pandemic took on West Papua in early 2020. All teachers have moved to the surrounding towns or larger coastal cities, continuing to receive their salaries. The few health facilities lack medication and medical equipment, while health workers only pay occasional visits to the villages. Again, health officials fail to monitor and react to the situation.

[Read more details](#)

KNPB Spokesperson Victor Yeimo arrested and charged with treason

On 9 May 2021, members of the Nemangkawi task force arrested Victor Yeimo in Jayapura. He is the West Papua National Committee (KNPB) international spokesperson, an organisation promoting the right to self-determination. The police are currently investigating Yeimo's involvement in civil unrest across West Papua in August and September 2019. According to the Head of Papua Regional Police (Polda Papua) the police raised multiple charges against the Papuan activist, including treason, criminal conspiracy and incitement. Criminal investigators submitted the case files of Victor Yeimo to the public prosecutor in Jayapura on 8 June 2021. Yeimo's lawyers expressed concerns regarding multiple procedural violations during arrest and detention and reported the alleged maladministration to the Indonesia Ombudsman's office. TAPOL has reported Yeimo's arrest to the Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council.



KNPB spokesperson, Victor Yeimo

[Read more about the law enforcement process](#)
Read more about detention conditions [here](#) and [here](#)

Joint security forces arrest three IDPs, including one minor

Joint security forces reportedly arrested three indigenous Papuans in the Tanah Merah Village on 16 May 2021, among them 16-year-old Nelius Magai. The three arrestees had fled after being displaced from their homes in the Tegelobak Village. They were detained at the Gome Military Post in the Puncak Regency.

[Read more details](#)

Six Papuans protesters standing trial in Sorong accused of treason

On 18 May 2021, judges at the Sorong District Court launched two trials against six Papuan defendants who had been arrested on 27 November 2020 during a peaceful demonstration in Sorong. The protestors were calling upon the Indonesian Government to recognise the proclamation of the Republic of West Papua New Guinea by a Papuan independence group at the European Parliament in Brussels on 27 November 1997.

[Read more details](#)

Update on Killing of Rev Yeremia Zanambani in Intan Jaya – Forensic specialists conduct an autopsy

A forensic team from Labuan Bajo, Nusa Tenggara Timur Province, has conducted the autopsy of Rev. Yeremia Zanambani's body in the Hitadipa district on 5 June 2021. The team took samples for examination. The autopsy was witnessed by relatives as well as members of the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM), the National Police Commission (KOMPOLNAS), the Agency for Protection of Witnesses and Victims (LPSK), the Indonesian Fellowship of Churches (PGI) and the Papua Regional Police (Polda Papua).

[Read more details](#)

New protests against special autonomy and for the release of Papuan political prisoners – 146 protesters arrested in Manokwari

On 25 May 2021, hundreds of people from the Papua Barat province join two public demonstrations in Manokwari, the provincial capital of the Papua Barat. The protesters expressed disagreement with the continuation of the Papuan special autonomy funding. They also demanded the immediate release of all Papuan political prisoners. Joint security forces dispersed the protest - 146 protesters were arrested and temporarily detained. Some protesters reportedly sustained injuries due to excessive use of force by police members during the arrest. The police claimed some protesters violated COVID-19 health protocols.



Protesters being detained at the Brimob headquarters in Manokwari

[Read more details](#)



Rev Laban Hagabal, 59 years

Security force members torture indigenous villager and kill Papuan pastor in Puncak Regency

Joint security force members reportedly arrested and subsequently tortured Papuan student Jesius Wenda in the Maki Village on 27 April 2021. The security force members released Mr Wenda after finding an identity card and a student card in his net bag. On 16 May 2021, security force members allegedly shot dead Rev Laban Hagabal during an attack in the Demaju village. Both incidents occurred in the Ilaga Utara District of Puncak Regency. He was shot dead as security forces opened fire at TPN PB members who had slept in the same house with Rev Hagabal.

[Read more details](#)

Joint security forces execute three indigenous Papuans in Puncak Regency – Three others injured by bullets

Members of the Nemangkawi joint security task force allegedly killed village head Patianus Kogoya, his wife Paitena Murib, and Erialek Kogoya during a security force operation against the TPN PB in Nipuralome Village, Ilaga District, on 4 June 2021. According to witnesses, Patianus Kogoya, Paitena Murib and Erialek Kogoya were approached by security members in front of the village office. As Patianus showed his ID card, the security force officers reportedly broke it, executed the three civilians with firearms and indiscriminately opened fire at other villagers. Three villagers, including a minor, were injured and later received medical treatment at a clinic in the Kago Village.

[Read more details](#)



Mendinus Murib during medical treatment at the Kago clinic

Military member kills Papuan man during a shooting at Jibama Market, Jayawijaya Regency

A military member reportedly killed indigenous Papuan, Mr Durias Tabuni, during a brawl at the Jibama Market in Wamena, Jayawijaya Regency, on 4 June 2021. Mr Eliur Kogoya sustained a bullet injury in the left knee during the incident. The police found clear evidence that a military member was the shooter. On 6 June 2021, the Jayawijaya District Police submitted the first criminal investigation results to the military police. Despite the obligation to further investigate, military officials convinced the victims' relatives to settle the issue outside of the law.

[Read more details](#)

Police intimidate participants during a book launch at P3W Padang Bulan in Jayapura



Armed police officer during the book launch at P3W in Jayapura

Fully armed police members came to the launching of "Papuans prosecuted for demanding dignity" (see photo, source: Jubi), a book written by former church worker and human rights defender Theo van den Broek. The book launch was organised by the Papuan Council of Churches (Dewan Gereja Papua) at the Centre for Empowerment and Development of Women (P3W) in Padang Bulan, Jayapura, on 11 June 2021. The participants understood the police presence as an act of intimidation.

[Read more details](#)

32 KNPB members arbitrarily arrested in Jayawijaya Regency



Human rights defender Theo Hese gem visits the KNPB activists during police detention

Members of the Jayawijaya district police reportedly arrested 32 members of the West Papua National Committee (KNPB) in the Ilelkma Village of Napua District, Jayawijaya Regency, on 18 June 2021. The officers brought the activists to the Jayawijaya district police headquarters in Wamena and interrogated them there. The police detained the activists until the following day. They were released because investigators could not find sufficient evidence for the involvement in any criminal offence.

[Read more details](#)



Yosua Kotouki sustains multiple bruises in the face as a result of police violence

Police officers forcefully disperse peaceful protest at Freeport Mine – at least one worker tortured

Police officers forcefully dispersed a peaceful protest by Freeport workers at the Freeport mine in the Tembaggapura District of Mimika Regency on 27 June 2021. According to the 'Reconciliation and Prayer Network for the Recovery of Papua' (JDRP2), Freeport employees had set up a roadblock at Mile 72. They voiced their rejection against a forced vaccination with the Covid-19 vaccine Sinovac. The police officers ill-treated an employee named Yosua Kotouki as they dispersed the crowd using excessive force and arrested twenty other protesters. Other workers sustained minor injuries as police officers punched and kicked the protesters.

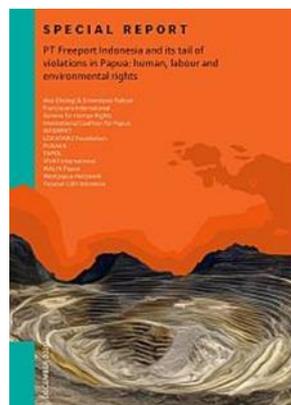
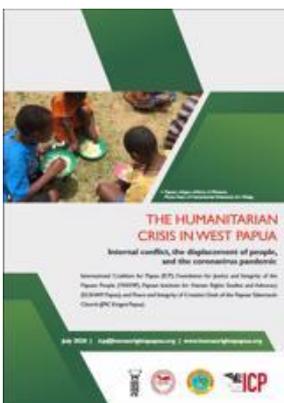
[Read more details](#)

Police officers in Biak alleged of torturing suspect with boiling water

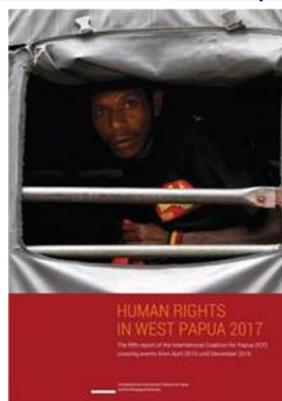
On 23 June 2021, police officers tortured Yohan Ronsumbre during detention inside an interrogation room to force a confession. The officers reportedly punched him and spilt four cups of boiling water over his right arm, causing the skin to peel off. Mr Ronsumbre's relatives and the two other suspects were at the police headquarters. They say they could hear Yohan Ronsumbre calling upon the police officers to have mercy.

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About the ICP: The International Coalition for Papua (ICP) of faith-based and civil society organisations works to address the serious human rights situation in West Papua and supports a peaceful solution to the conflict there. The Coalition and its partners support advocacy work and networking at the international level for Papua as a land of peace and document human rights violations in the region in cooperation with local sources. The ICP recognises all human rights and their fulfilment through active participation of civil society. Therefore, the Coalition sees the need to support partners striving for the recognition of basic human rights and seeking peaceful solutions to the implementation of the right to self-determination. The Coalition supports all human rights including the freedom to express political opinions peacefully, the right to self-determination and the critical role of human rights defenders in a peaceful transformation of the ongoing conflict.

ICP Secretariat, Rudolfstrasse 137, 42285 Wuppertal, Germany,
Tel: +49 202 89004-170. Email: icp@humanrightspapua.org