

## ***'The whole essence of our humanity is being reduced to nothing' Free West Papua campaign leader Benny Wenda said***

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<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/west-papua-flag-day-indonesia-independence-separatists-illegal-oxford-raised-world-locations-support-a8085286.html>

*The Independent Online*



*Protesters in Vanuatu join demonstrations around the world in support of West Papua's fight for independence on Friday*

In West Papua, simply raising the Morning Star flag – a symbol of the island's fight for independence from Indonesia – can result in 15 years of imprisonment.

But more than 12,000 kilometres away in the UK, the forbidden flag was raised this morning outside Oxford's town hall for the tenth year in a row.

Oxford is one of more than 250 locations across 50 countries worldwide expected to raise the Morning Star flag today in a show of solidarity with tens of thousands of West Papuans calling for international intervention in the fight for independence from Indonesia.

"In West Papua, the whole essence of our humanity is being reduced to nothing. We are treated like animals and endure what some have described as an 'apartheid-like' military occupation," exiled Free West Papua campaign leader Benny Wenda, who was granted political asylum in the UK in the early 2000s, and lives in Oxford, told The Independent.

"Tens of thousands of us have been forced to flee as refugees and those that stay live under constant terror. Almost every day, people are arrested without reason, tortured and killed at the hands of the Indonesian government."

An undated document published on the UNHCR website states that Papua New Guinea alone has taken in as many as 10,000 refugees from West Papua since 1985.









