

**COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN INDONESIA:  
LESSONS FROM KALIMANTAN**

27 June 2001

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## **COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN INDONESIA: LESSONS FROM KALIMANTAN**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Long-simmering tensions between indigenous Dayaks and immigrant Madurese suddenly exploded in the town of Sampit, Central Kalimantan, in the middle of February 2001. Within days, isolated killings perpetrated by both sides had developed into a one-sided massacre of Madurese by enraged Dayaks. In the following weeks the killings spread to other areas in the province and by early April almost the entire Madurese population had fled the province. The massacre of about 500 – and possibly many more – Madurese by Dayaks and the flight of virtually the entire Madurese community closely resembled two similar events in the Sambas district in the northern part of West Kalimantan in 1996-7 and in 1999 and highlighted the danger of violence spreading to West and East Kalimantan.

The violence in Central Kalimantan followed several decades of dislocation of the Dayak community – which makes up more than half of the province's population. The demographic composition of the province has been transformed, especially during the last two decades, by the Soeharto government's transmigration program and the influx of so-called 'spontaneous' migrants from other provinces seeking economic opportunities. Dayak society was also disturbed by the Soeharto regime's handing out of vast parcels of Kalimantan's forests to logging companies, many of which were connected to members of the Soeharto family, his cronies or the military, with the result that many forest-dwelling Dayaks were driven from their traditional habitat. A 1979 law providing for uniform structures of local government throughout

Indonesia had the effect of undermining the authority of traditional village leaders and the cohesion of Dayak communities. Overshadowing this dislocation was a widespread feeling among Dayaks that they were often looked down on by other communities as 'backward' and 'uncivilized'.

The dislocation experienced by Dayaks, however, does not fully explain the violence of February and March. If the massacres had been primarily a response to rapid demographic change or the destruction of the forests, it could have been expected that Dayak anger would have been directed against all the migrant communities. But the violence was focused entirely on the Madurese and was eventually turned into a campaign to drive them out of the province. The Madurese community was not only small compared to the Dayaks but was also outnumbered by other migrant groups, especially the Javanese and Banjarese. Why were the Madurese in Central Kalimantan – like the Madurese in West Kalimantan several years earlier – the sole target? How would the 'ethnic cleansing' of the Madurese benefit the Dayak community? Why were other migrant communities untouched?

There are no straightforward answers. The most popular explanations are expressed in terms of common stereotypes. Dayaks often view the Madurese as arrogant, exclusive, prone to violence and untrustworthy. Dayaks, on the other hand, have been portrayed – especially in the international press – as barbarian warriors bent on reviving their ancient headhunting

traditions. As is usual in ethnic conflicts, there is no agreed explanation of how the violence began. According to the Dayak version, Dayak grievances against Madurese had been accumulating for years until Madurese attacks on Dayaks in Sampit on 18-19 February triggered the spontaneous massacre of hundreds of Madurese. On the other hand, the Madurese explanation claims that certain Dayak interests provoked small-scale clashes as a pretext for the massacre that followed. But, so far, there has been no complete explanation of the alleged motives of these Dayak interests.

On one point, however, there is substantial agreement. Almost all sides note the failure of the security forces to prevent the conflict. The police are widely blamed for the failure of their intelligence network to anticipate the violence and their inability to take firm early action to prevent its spread. By the time that the massacre had got underway the police were overwhelmed and often stood by watching Dayaks burn Madurese houses and parade around Sampit with human heads. Assigned to guarding refugees after failing to prevent the killing, many police seemed more interested in making the most of opportunities to extort money from desperate Madurese. Co-operation with the military was by no means smooth and in an extraordinary incident police and army troops actually exchanged fire at Sampit's port. Despite their poor performance in Sampit, the police and the military were nevertheless able to at least minimize - although not entirely prevent - the spread of violence to other major centres including Palangkaraya, Kualakapuas and Pangkalanbun. Their task, of course, was made easier by the fact that most Madurese had fled rather than put the police and military to the test. Nevertheless, the security forces succeeded in protecting the lives of as many as 100,000 fleeing refugees.

The Indonesian government and courts now face the classic dilemma that often arises after ethnic conflict: how can accountability be pursued without further exacerbating tensions? In principle, the rule of law should be upheld and those responsible for murder, assault and arson should be tried in the courts. The failure to convict those responsible for ethnic violence creates a sense of impunity that could encourage

renewed violence at later times and in other places. It can also stand in the way of long-term reconciliation. But, aside from the inherent difficulties in finding sufficient evidence, the judicial settlement of cases of communal violence not only ignores the fundamental causes of the conflict but can in itself create new problems. The perpetrators of communal massacres are usually convinced that their actions were justified and they are often regarded as heroes in their own community. Their incarceration can then become not only an obstacle to eventual reconciliation but more immediately can trigger renewed violence. The goal should still be to uphold the law but not regardless of circumstances. In some cases, a stark question cannot be avoided: how many lives are the upholders of the law prepared to sacrifice in order to uphold the law? The law should be upheld but not at any cost. Ultimately the authorities have to make fine judgements based on local conditions. Legal measures should therefore move forward in concert with efforts to address the legitimate grievances of the Dayaks - all toward the broader goal of improving security, promoting reconciliation between the Dayak and Madurese communities and creating conditions conducive to the return of refugees.

Many of the following recommendations are concerned specifically with the ethnic violence in Central Kalimantan. Nevertheless, despite the unique circumstances of Central Kalimantan, some aspects of the province's experience suggests lessons that are relevant for other regions in Indonesia.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendations for Central Kalimantan and Madura**

1. All refugees have the right to return to their homes under broadly accepted standards of international law. However, the return of Madurese to Central Kalimantan will need to be delayed until the authorities can guarantee their safety and can then only take place gradually. It is unrealistic to expect that all Madurese will be able to return.

2. Encouragement should be given to the Dayak community to accept the early return of Kalimantan-born Madurese, those with family ties in Central Kalimantan and those who had lived for many years in the province.
  3. The immediate need of Madurese refugees is for assistance in adjusting to a new life outside Central Kalimantan. Foreign governments and NGOs can provide humanitarian assistance.
  4. Government-sponsored 'peace meetings' between community leaders can create an atmosphere that reduces ethnic tensions but cannot in themselves bring about reconciliation.
  5. The principle of upholding the law should not be abandoned but, in doing so, the authorities should adopt a flexible approach in order to avoid measures that could further inflame ethnic passions and make ultimate harmony more difficult to achieve. The authorities should be sensitive to possible negative consequences of the strict application of the law.
  6. Both Dayaks and Madurese involved in the initial murders on the night of 17-18 February should be investigated and charged if evidence is sufficient.
  7. If there is evidence to show that the killings were planned and organized by certain Dayak leaders, those leaders should be arrested and tried.
  8. The police needs to be able to take early action to nip ethnic eruptions in the bud. This requires a greatly improved intelligence capacity and a willingness to take firm action against rioters. ICG supports the National Human Rights Commission's call to 'immediately create security forces that are adequate both qualitatively and quantitatively to carry out their duties'.<sup>2</sup>
  9. The police force should recruit more local personnel, especially Dayaks.
  10. Minority communities, as victims, do not bear the blame for massacres. However, the leaders of such communities should be aware of cultural and other traits that create tension with indigenous communities and should help members of their community to become more sensitive to local norms and concerns.
  11. In the new democratic atmosphere, Dayak leaders should use democratic channels to express community complaints and resolve grievances rather than allow festering resentments to build up and explode in violence. Dayak leaders should emphasize the need to resolve conflict by non-violent means.
  12. Major measures have to be taken to improve the socio-economic position of the Dayak community. These measures should include steps to ensure that the logging industry is more sensitive to the needs of local communities and efforts to ensure wider participation of Dayaks in education and employment in the modern sector of the economy.
  13. The decision of the National Commission on Human Rights to establish a commission to investigate human rights violations in Central Kalimantan should be welcomed. In presenting the results of its investigations it should take care that its findings do not further aggravate antagonisms between the two communities.
- Recommendations for the Government of Indonesia**
14. More attention should be given in all parts of Indonesia to the grievances of 'indigenous' communities which have been dislocated, deprived and marginalised in the process of development. Special measures should be taken to compensate them for the loss of land, forests and other resources caused by development projects that have primarily benefited others.
  15. The Central Kalimantan experience shows once again that it is necessary to create professional security forces capable of

<sup>2</sup> Statement of the National Commission on Human Rights, 6 March 2001.

dealing with outbreaks of ethnic and religious conflict. This requires adequate funding of both the police and the military. In regions with substantial 'indigenous' populations, such communities should be adequately represented in the security forces.

16. In ethnically divided regions, an acceptable balance between ethnic groups in the regional bureaucracy needs to be preserved. Careful attention should be given to the possible impact on inter-communal relations of the reorganisation of local government as part of the regional autonomy program introduced in January 2001.

**Jakarta/Brussels, 27 June 2001**



## **COMMUNAL VIOLENCE IN INDONESIA: LESSONS FROM KALIMANTAN**

### **I. CENTRAL KALIMANTAN: THE SETTING**

Central Kalimantan's population of 1.8 million is largely made up of indigenous Dayaks estimated to make up between half and two-thirds of the population.<sup>3</sup> The Dayaks are the original peoples of Kalimantan (Borneo) and continue to make up a substantial part of the population not only in Central Kalimantan but also in West Kalimantan and East Kalimantan - although they have become a small minority in South Kalimantan. Dayaks also make up a substantial part of the population in Eastern Malaysia.

The Dayaks, however, are not a single ethnic community but consist of more than 200 distinct tribes with their own languages, customs and cultures. While most live in isolated villages in the remaining rain forests and practise shifting cultivation, many young Dayaks are now receiving modern education and moving into urban occupations. Unlike in West Kalimantan where Dayaks are distinguished from so-called "Malays" by being non-Muslim, at least half - and possibly as many as 70 per cent - of Central Kalimantan's Dayaks are Muslim.<sup>4</sup> The dominant tribal group in Central Kalimantan is the Ngaju whose language has become the lingua franca of the province.

Central Kalimantan's non-Dayak population consists mainly of migrants and descendants of migrants from other parts of Indonesia, especially Java and South Kalimantan (Banjarese). Many of the migrants from Java originally came to Central Kalimantan under the government's transmigration program - designed to relieve population pressure in Java - but a substantial number migrated spontaneously in search of economic opportunity. Among those who migrated from Java are the Madurese, who originate from the small island of Madura, just north of Surabaya in East Java. However, the Madurese - who are Muslim - were by no means the largest ethnic group among the migrant communities, although they had become prominent in small-scale trade and transport and as labourers in plantations and logging concessions. It is difficult to estimate exactly the size of the Madurese community before the recent exodus but it is usually thought to have numbered around 120,000-130,000 or about 6-7 per cent of Central Kalimantan's population. Many members of the Madurese community had lived for many years in Central Kalimantan and no longer had close contacts with family and friends in Madura. Many of the younger generation of Madurese had been born in Kalimantan and knew no other home. Some among them had intermarried with other communities, including Dayaks.

The largest concentrations of Madurese were in the town of Sampit where it is usually estimated that they made up about 60 per cent<sup>5</sup> of the

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<sup>3</sup> Until 2000, the Indonesian census did not record ethnic identity. In the 2000 census a question was asked about language spoken at home - a proxy for ethnic identity - but the results have not yet been announced.

<sup>4</sup> Estimates made by various Dayak leaders in interviews with ICG. Interviews for this report were conducted in Central Kalimantan, Madura, Surabaya and Jakarta in April and May, 2001.

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<sup>5</sup> Other sources suggest that the Madurese population may have been as low as 30-40 per cent (e.g. Tempo, 4 March 2001, p.2) and that the Dayak population was much higher



population and controlled much of commerce and the timber industry. Roughly 20 per cent of Sampit's population were Banjarese, 10 per cent Javanese and 10 per cent Dayaks. Madurese also made up 30-50 per cent of the population of Pangkalanbun. The Madurese population in the provincial capital, Palangkaraya, was only about 12,000 -- or about 7-8 per cent.

Central Kalimantan is Indonesia's third largest province in area but accounts for less than one per cent of the country's total population with 1.8 million people. Its population density is about one-tenth the national average, and only one-hundredth that of Java. More than half the province is still covered by forests which, however, are shrinking rapidly as the logging industry expands. Central Kalimantan supplies about 60 per cent of Indonesia's logs while its small manufacturing sector is made up largely of sawmills. In 1998-99, 49 per cent of Central Kalimantan's log production came from the Kotawaringin Timur district of which Sampit is the capital.<sup>6</sup>

The ethnic cleansing of Central Kalimantan in 2001 followed similar massacres of Madurese by Dayaks in 1996-7 and 1999 in the neighbouring province of West Kalimantan. The Dayaks of West Kalimantan were subjected to the same pressures - migration from other parts of Indonesia, the destruction of the forests, the opening of plantations and transmigration sites, relative exclusion from political power, and the non-Dayak perception that they were 'backward' - that were felt in Central Kalimantan. And like in Central Kalimantan, their rage was directed at the Madurese minority which, at less than 3 per cent of the provincial population, was even smaller than in Central Kalimantan. In contrast to Central Kalimantan, however, West Kalimantan's Dayaks are virtually entirely non-Muslim.<sup>7</sup> Both outbreaks

of violence started in the northern district of Sambas. Estimates of the total number of deaths in the 1996-7 massacres ranged from 300 to 3,000 but a Human Rights Watch report concluded that the number was probably around 500, mostly Madurese.<sup>8</sup> The official count of the number of Madurese killed during the first three months of 1999 was 186 but unofficial estimates are much higher. In the 1999 killings the initial conflict had been between Madurese and Malays - both Muslim communities - with the non-Muslim Dayaks joining in later on the Malay side.<sup>9</sup> It was only after virtually all Madurese had fled from Sambas that order was restored. By the year 2000 the number of Madurese refugees in various refugee centres in West Kalimantan exceeded 50,000 while many others had returned to Madura.<sup>10</sup>

There is no evidence to indicate a direct connection between the anti-Madurese campaign in Central Kalimantan and the earlier massacres in West Kalimantan but the 'success' of ethnic cleansing in the Sambas district may have shaped the thinking of some Dayak leaders.

## II. THE MASSACRE AND THE FLIGHT OF REFUGEES

### A. PRELUDE: EARLIER CLASHES

The Sampit massacre was preceded by signs of rising tension between Dayaks and Madurese for at least two decades, particularly in the two westernmost of the province's five districts - Kotawaringin Timur and Kotawaringin Barat - and the provincial capital, Palangkaraya. Conflicts involved fights between individuals, occasional murders and several rapes. However,

than 10 per cent. The true composition will only be known when the 2000 census figures are released.

<sup>6</sup> Anne Casson, 'Ethnic violence in an era of regional autonomy: A background to the bloodshed in Kotawaringin Timur', RMAP Occasional Paper, Resource Management in Asia-Pacific Project, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 2001. P. 4.

<sup>7</sup> In Central Kalimantan, indigenous Muslims, Christians and followers of traditional religion all continue to identify themselves as Dayaks. In West Kalimantan, however, Dayaks who converted to Islam in the past were usually

absorbed into the Malay community which had its origins in Muslim migrants from Sumatra, Sulawesi and the Malay peninsula who had settled over the centuries along the Kalimantan coast.

<sup>8</sup> Human Rights Watch/Asia, *Indonesia: Communal Violence in West Kalimantan*. Vol. 9, No 10(C), December 1997.

<sup>9</sup> A detailed account can be found in Edi Peterbang and Eri Sutrisno, *Konflik Etnik di Sambas*. Jakarta: Institut Studi Arus Informasi, 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Kompas, 'Warga Pontianak Terperangkap Purbasangka Negatif', Kompas 29 October 2000.

these clashes were isolated incidents and did not spark major riots.<sup>11</sup>

In interviews with ICG many Dayaks mentioned the murder of a Dayak by a Madurese at Bukit Batu, Kasongan, in 1983 which led to a peace settlement between leaders of the Dayak and Madurese communities in which the Madurese agreed that if any Madurese 'spilt the blood' of a Dayak, the Madurese would voluntarily leave Central Kalimantan.<sup>12</sup> However, this peace agreement failed to prevent later conflicts.

More recently a quarrel involving a motorcycle taxi driver in January 1999 led to an inter-communal brawl at Kumai, the port of Pangkalanbun, in which two men were killed and several others severely injured.<sup>13</sup> In September 1999 a Dayak and his wife were stabbed by Madurese at Tumbang Samba.<sup>14</sup> In July 2000 more fighting broke out at Kumai following a quarrel between a timber trader and a labourer, one of whom was Madurese and the other an indigenous Malay. The ensuing fighting involved Madurese and local Malays and resulted in three people being killed and several houses burnt.<sup>15</sup>

The Sampit massacre of 2001 can be more directly traced to events in the shanty town of Kereng Pangi in December 2000. Kereng Pangi is halfway along the 220-km highway linking Sampit and Palangkaraya on the fringe of the violence-prone Ampalit gold mining area. In 1986, the award of a 2,500-hectare gold-mining concession to PT Ampalit Mas Perdana, a joint venture between the Jakarta-based Gajah

Tunggal Group and an Australian mining company, created tensions with traditional miners who continued their operations illegally. By the 1990s, the number of these miners had swollen to around 3,000 - mainly migrants from Java, Madura and South Kalimantan. From time to time the company tried to clear the illegal miners from the area but they always returned. In January 1997 more vigorous action was taken, including the destruction of equipment used by the illegal miners. In response, hundreds of miners burnt down the main office of the company and destroyed several trucks. Three employees of the company suffered wounds inflicted with machetes. Although this conflict did not take the form of an ethnic clash, it nevertheless involved migrants<sup>16</sup> And despite the company's efforts, illegal mining continued in the area.

On the evening of Friday 15 December 2000, a brawl broke out at a karaoke bar in a brothel area near Kereng Pangi. In the fight, a Dayak died after being stabbed by three Madurese.<sup>17</sup> At around midnight, several hundred Dayaks arrived in search of the three Madurese who by then had fled. The disappointed Dayaks then wrecked or burnt at least four Madurese-owned karaoke bars and nine houses. Although 150 police reinforcements were sent to the area from Palangkaraya and Sampit at dawn the next day, they were unable to prevent Dayaks from attacking and burning houses, cars and motorbikes of Madurese migrants while shops and stalls in the local market were looted and destroyed. On 17 December, Dayaks continued to search for Madurese and four buses owned by a Madurese businessman were set on fire. By 18 December, hundreds of police reinforcements had arrived as well as a company-sized army unit and later in the week the Kereng Pangi market was reopened. According to a local official, three people were killed, 28 houses were burnt and another 10 destroyed, and more than a dozen cars and motorbikes were damaged.<sup>18</sup> However, some sources claim that dozens of Madurese were

<sup>11</sup> A list recording fifteen clashes between 1982 and 2000 has been prepared by the Dayak organisation, Lembaga Musyawarah Masyarakat Dayak dan Daerah Kalimantan Tengah (LMMDDKT). The list and other documents were published in two volumes with red covers and commonly called the Red Book vol.1 and the Red Book vol. 2. Volume One is entitled *Konflik Etnik Sampit: Kronologi, Kesepakatan Aspirasi Masyarakat, Analisis, Saran* (Ethnic Conflict in Sampit: Chronology, Agreement on Social Aspirations, Analysis, Proposals). The second is entitled *Usul Penyelesaian Jalan Tengah Islah/Rekonsiliasi dari Masyarakat Daerah Kalimantan Tengah* (Proposed Solution, the Middle Road, Resolution/Reconciliation from the Society of the Region of Central Kalimantan).

<sup>12</sup> Tempo, 11 March 2001. p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> Kompas, 2 February 1999.

<sup>14</sup> Kompas, 23 February 2001.

<sup>15</sup> Kompas, 7, 8, 9 July 2000.

<sup>16</sup> Jawa Pos, 25 January 1997, Media Indonesia, 31 January 1997, Gatra, 15 February 1997.

<sup>17</sup> This description is taken from Kompas, Jakarta Post and Banjarmasin Post, 17-19 December 2000.

<sup>18</sup> Kompas, 12 January 2001.

killed.<sup>19</sup> In the wake of the rioting about 1,000 Madurese fled into the surrounding jungle while others sought protection at the local police post and were soon evacuated to Sampit and Palangkaraya. Eventually at least 1,335 Madurese, mostly traditional gold miners who had come to Kalimantan during the previous 15 years, were taken back to Madura.<sup>20</sup> The failure of the police to capture the three Madurese accused of killing the Dayak became a continuing cause of resentment among Dayaks both in Kereng Pangi and Sampit. Further, the sense of insecurity felt by Madurese was sharpened by the failure of the police to protect them from the Dayak onslaught.

## B. THE SAMPIT MASSACRE AND ITS AFTERMATH

Sampit, the capital of the Kotawaringin Timur district and the centre of Central Kalimantan's timber trade, was a town of about 120,000 and the only town in the province where the Madurese community - making up about sixty per cent of the residents - was in a majority. It was here that the sense of being marginalised was most strongly felt among indigenous Dayaks. But, while the Dayaks were a minority in the town they formed an overwhelming majority in the surrounding hinterland.

In the weeks after the clash in Kereng Pangi, the Madurese community in Sampit feared that rioting could spread to Sampit. Meanwhile Dayaks claimed that the Madurese were stock-piling home-made bombs to use against Dayaks. This belief was strengthened by an accidental explosion in a Madurese district that wrecked three houses, killed two people and seriously injured four.<sup>21</sup> By January rumours were spreading about imminent ethnic rioting in Sampit. The chief of police in Sampit even admitted that the national police headquarters in Jakarta had telephoned him about such a rumour.<sup>22</sup>

Shortly after midnight on 18 February a group of Dayaks attacked a house and killed five of its

Madurese occupants. Madurese then launched an attack on a nearby Dayak house where they believed that the Dayak killers were hiding. However, the Dayaks were taken into custody by the police who later charged some of them with the murder of the Madurese. The Madurese then burnt down the house of another Dayak who, along with other members of his family, died in the fire.<sup>23</sup> The Dayak Red Book<sup>24</sup> however, claims that the five Madurese were killed in an intra-Madurese quarrel for which Dayaks were blamed.<sup>25</sup>

Following these clashes, Madurese went on the offensive and killed, according to different accounts, between 16 and 24 Dayaks. Expecting a Dayak counter-attack, Madurese guarded the streets which in effect fell under Madurese domination. The next part of the story, however, is also contested. According to the Red Book and other Dayak sources, banners were displayed on 19 February carrying such slogans as 'The town of Sampit is a Second Sampang' (Sampang is a town in Madura), 'Welcome to a Madurese town', and 'Sampit is the Verandah of Mecca'. At the same time Madurese youths paraded around the town on motorbikes shouting 'Where are the Dayak champions?', 'Dayaks are cowards', and 'Where is the Bird Commander?' (a reference to the magical Dayak commander who emerges in times of crisis).<sup>26</sup> Some Madurese, on the other hand, deny that such banners appeared and that the 'victory' parade took place. Others claim that banners

<sup>23</sup> Tempo, 4 March 2001, pp. 27-29. The Indonesian press initially reported that the Dayak attack that killed five Madurese had been preceded by the burning down of a Dayak house. Kompas, 19 February 2001.

<sup>24</sup> See footnote 9 above.

<sup>25</sup> 'Kronologis Konflik Kerusuhan Antar Etnis di Sampit', paragraphs 13-14. Red Book, Volume 1. A Chronology of events from a Madurese viewpoint is presented in *Dari Ratap Menuju Harap. Tragedi Pembantaian Etnis Madura di Sampit* (18 Februari 2001) (From Mourning to Hope. The Tragedy of the Massacre of Madurese in Sampit), issued by Ikatan Keluarga Madura, Kotawaringin Timur, Surabaya, 8 May 2001.

<sup>26</sup> 'Kronologis Konflik Kerusuhan Antar Etnis di Sampit', paragraph 19, and 'Latar Belakang Terjadinya Peristiwa Kerusuhan Etnis di Kalimantan Tengah,' Red Book, vol. 1; Kaukus Kalimantan (Jakarta), letter sent to the Coordinating Minister for Political, Social and Security Affairs, signed by Let. Gen. (ret.) Z. A. Maulani and H. M. Hartani Mukti, SH, dated 11 March 2001. This version is also supported by a non-Dayak member of the national parliament interviewed by ICG.

<sup>19</sup> Don Greenlees, 'Bar-room brawl began slaughter', Weekend Australian, 3-4 March 2001; ICG interview in Palangkaraya.

<sup>20</sup> Kompas, 12 January 2001.

<sup>21</sup> Banjarmasin Post, 21 December 2000.

<sup>22</sup> Banjarmasin Post, 2 January 2001.

were indeed placed in parts of the town but by Dayaks, not Madurese, as a means of provoking Dayaks to violence against Madurese.<sup>27</sup>

Madurese 'control' of Sampit, however, lasted only two days. In reaction to the killings of Dayaks and the threatening attitudes of many Madurese, thousands of Dayaks – and other non-Madurese – fled from the town and spread the news about what had happened to the hinterland villages and to the townships along the road to Palangkaraya. On the evening of 20 February, enraged Dayaks began to return to Sampit with their hinterland supporters in an effort to seize control of Sampit. While police guarded the main roads, many of the Dayaks came along the River Mentaya and through the surrounding jungle and side-roads. Within hours Madurese homes were being set ablaze, Madurese were being killed and often beheaded, and thousands were fleeing into the jungle or to the provincial capital, Palangkaraya, and other havens. On the night of 21 February, truckloads of Dayak youths were seen parading around the town carrying the severed heads of their Madurese victims. With Dayak gangs blocking the roads out of Sampit, as many as 10,000 Madurese had gone into the jungle, while about 23,000 eventually sought refuge at the bupati's (district head) office and in the police headquarters.<sup>28</sup>

The massacre in Sampit served as a signal to Dayaks in surrounding regions to attack Madurese. On Sunday 25, a week after the outbreak in Sampit, hinterland Dayaks brought the conflict to the provincial capital, Palangkaraya. Dayaks began burning Madurese homes but there were few killings as most Madurese had already fled.<sup>29</sup> On the same day, 118 Madurese were massacred at the small town of Parenggean when their police escort fled in the face of a large Dayak mob.<sup>30</sup> About 20,000 Madurese were reported as trapped at the port of Samuda, about 40 km south of Sampit. When a ship arrived to take them to Java, many of the

refugees were killed after getting lost in an unfamiliar town.<sup>31</sup> In early March, large numbers of refugees were waiting for evacuation at Pangkalanbun, Kualakapuas and Muarateweh.<sup>32</sup>

By the end of the first week of March virtually all the Madurese in the affected areas of the province around Sampit and Palangkaraya had been evacuated. After a short lull, new violence broke out as Dayaks from Sampit and Palangkaraya moved toward Kualakapuas in the south of the province where it was reported that 18 had been killed in nearby townships.<sup>33</sup> As a result, within days, virtually all 5,000 of the Madurese in the area had evacuated to Banjarmasin, the capital of South Kalimantan, on their way back to Madura. Finally, at the beginning of April violence broke out in Pangkalanbun and its port, Kumai. Dayak leaders set a deadline for all Madurese to leave Pangkalanbun but this time the government drew the line and declared that it would protect remaining Madurese in the province. However, of the 45,000 Madurese in Pangkalanbun, 20,000 had already left for East Java.<sup>34</sup>

By mid-April it was estimated that about 108,000 refugees, the majority of whom were Madurese, had fled from Central Kalimantan, most heading for Madura or other parts of East Java.<sup>35</sup> The influx of refugees imposed a major strain on that province's resources.<sup>36</sup> The state shipping line, PELNI, mobilised six ships for this task while other refugees were evacuated by naval ships. Apart from those fleeing to Java, others went to South Kalimantan and other nearby provinces.

By early March the number killed in the region had reached 469, among whom 456 were Madurese.<sup>37</sup> According to the police, 1,192 homes had been burnt and another 748 damaged. Sixteen cars, 43 motorcycles and 114 pedicabs had been destroyed.<sup>38</sup> However, it was commonly believed – without hard evidence –

<sup>27</sup> ICG interviews with prominent Madurese in Madura, Banjarmasin, and Jakarta, including a Madurese leader from Sampit.

<sup>28</sup> Tempo, 11 March 2001, p.21.

<sup>29</sup> Kompas, 26 February 2001. Reportedly only six Madurese and one Dayak were killed in Palangkaraya. Red Book, vol.1.

<sup>30</sup> John Aglionby, 'Denial follows Borneo massacre wake', The Guardian, 3 March 2001.

<sup>31</sup> ICG conversation in Samuda, April 2001.

<sup>32</sup> Kompas, 4 March 2001.

<sup>33</sup> Tempo, 1 April 2001, p. 35.

<sup>34</sup> Tempo, 15 April 2001, p. 36

<sup>35</sup> Jakarta Post, 21 April, 2001.

<sup>36</sup> Kompas, 8 March 2001.

<sup>37</sup> Tempo, 11 March 2001, p. 21

<sup>38</sup> Jakarta Post, 8 March 2001.

that many more Madurese had been killed and their remains left in the jungle.<sup>39</sup>

The violence perpetrated on refugees did not end with their departure from Central Kalimantan. Not all refugees were Madurese. Inter-marriage between Dayaks and Madurese was by no means unknown and some Dayak husbands chose to accompany their wives and other family to Surabaya and then to Madura. Two such Dayak men were the target of revenge killings in Ketapang, Madura, where they were not only murdered but, like many Madurese in Central Kalimantan, had their heads chopped off.<sup>40</sup>

### C. EXPLAINING THE MASSACRE

As is common in virtually all cases of ethnic violence, the perpetrators and the victims have radically different explanations of why it took place. One thing is clear, however. Antagonism between the Dayak and Madurese communities was deeply entrenched and relations between the two communities were extremely tense after the killings in Kereng Pangi in December.

Dayaks in general claim that the massacre was a spontaneous response of Dayaks to the events in Sampit on 18-20 February when Sampit was under Madurese 'control'. Between 16 and 24 Dayaks had been killed by Madurese in revenge for a Dayak attack on Madurese. No less provocative, if indeed true, was the display of banners and the shouting of slogans that were deeply offensive to Dayaks. In fear of their lives, thousands of Dayaks fled the town and spread the news in the hinterland where, it is said, Dayak elders consulted ancestral spirits and obtained approval for 'war' against the Madurese. After religious rituals in which they received the spirits of past war commanders, enraged 'traditional' Dayaks, armed with *mandau* (a kind of sword) and *tombak* (a kind of spear) set out to wrest Sampit from Madurese hands.<sup>41</sup> It is claimed that the Dayaks who

descended on Sampit were often in a trance.<sup>42</sup> No distinction between men, women and children was made in their mission to purge the town of Madurese. In smaller towns and villages in the region, Madurese were even more defenceless against the Dayak onslaught.

The 'spontaneous' explanation has been doubted by those who question the speed with which rural Dayaks mobilised in response to the events in Sampit and suspect that the Dayak attack on the Madurese was planned in advance.<sup>43</sup> It has been suggested that certain Dayak politicians had been trying to garner political support by stirring up anti-Madurese sentiments. In mid-April, Professor H. KMA. Usop, a former rector of the University of Palangkaraya, current chairman of the Presidium of the LMMDD-KT and a defeated candidate representing the PDI-P in the gubernatorial election of 2000, was called to Jakarta for interrogation by the police and later arrested in relation to allegations that he had encouraged Dayak hatred of Madurese and thus indirectly instigated the rioting.<sup>44</sup> On 12 May he was placed under city arrest and allowed to return to Palangkaraya where he received a hero's welcome.<sup>45</sup>

The allegations against Usop arose from the interrogation of two Dayak officials in the district government – Pedlik Asser and his brother-in-law, Lewis – who were identified as the 'provocateurs' even before the massacre of Madurese began on 20 February.<sup>46</sup> According to the police, Pedlik and Lewis had been implicated by the group of Dayaks who were accused of carrying out the initial murders of five Madurese on 18 February. The police claim that Pedlik Asser and Lewis paid Rp. 20 million

<sup>42</sup> Madurese informants noted, however, that the Dayaks – whether in a trance or not – were always able to distinguish between Madurese and non-Madurese. ICG interview.

<sup>43</sup> A similar question was raised after the massacre of Madurese by Dayaks in the West Kalimantan district of Sambas in 1997. 'One of the mysteries of the killings in January and February was how quickly the Dayaks mobilized and the coordination they displayed across a large area with poor roads and few telephones'. Richard Lloyd Parry, *What Young Men Do*. Granta. p. 107.

<sup>44</sup> Banjarmasin Post, 20 April 2001.

<sup>45</sup> Banjarmasin Post, 13 May 2001.

<sup>46</sup> Kompas, 20 February 2001, Jakarta Post, 20, 21 February 2001. Pedlik Asser (often spelt as Fedlik Aser in the press) was head of a division in the provincial Development Planning Agency and Lewis was an official of the Forestry Service.

<sup>39</sup> A non-Dayak member of the national parliament suggested to ICG that the true figure was probably closer to 2000. A prominent Madurese leader from Sampit told ICG that 5000 had been killed.

<sup>40</sup> Kompas, 8 March 2001.

<sup>41</sup> Pandaya, 'Dayak Katingan Community offer gesture of peace,' Jakarta Post, 29 April 2001.

(\$2,000) to bring this group from their own home sub-district near the West Kalimantan border to Sampit. After a two-day journey by river, 38 hinterland Dayaks arrived in Sampit and, according to the police, were responsible for the murder of five Madurese. As related above, they made their way to a Dayak house, which was soon surrounded by angry Madurese. On receiving a report that a house was under attack, the police intervened and rescued the residents in the house – whom they were surprised to find numbered as many as 38. For their safety they were taken to Palangkaraya where it was found that not only were they carrying traditional Dayak arms but the arms were covered with fresh blood. The police had stumbled by chance on the Dayaks who had started the round of killings that eventually developed into a massacre after 20 February.<sup>47</sup>

Pedlik Asser, was the secretary of the LMMDD-KT branch in Sampit and associated with the provincial leader, Professor Usop, whose negative attitude towards Madurese he shared. According to the police, Pedlik was also motivated by his disappointment at being passed over in a reshuffle of top positions in the district administration following the nationwide implementation of regional autonomy in January 2001. In the restructuring, the number of positions in the top three civil-service categories was reduced from twenty to ten and, to make matters worse, the ten new appointees were all Muslims, while Pedlik and his brother-in-law are Christians. The ten new officials were to be inaugurated on 19 February, the day after the riot broke out.<sup>48</sup> It has also been claimed by the police that the detained Dayaks wanted to take revenge on Madurese for the killing of the Dayak – who also happened to be a Christian – at Kereng Pangi in December.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the resentment apparently felt by Pedlik at the exclusion of non-Muslims from top bureaucratic posts, it can be stated with full confidence that, among all the possible causes of the conflict in Sampit, the massacre was not primarily motivated by religious sentiments. Anti-Madurese attitudes were common as much among Dayak Muslims – such as the prominent Dayak leader, Professor Usop – as among

Dayak Christians. ICG's visits to areas of Sampit and Palangkaraya after the rioting revealed many untouched mosques amidst the burnt remains of Madurese homes and other buildings associated with the Madurese community. This should not be surprising as a large proportion of the Dayak community is Muslim. In any case, the initial clash in December at a karaoke bar in a brothel area of Kereng Pangi seems an unlikely setting for the beginning of a religious dispute.

The allegations against Pedlik Asser and Lewis, however, have yet to be proven in court but, if true, show that certain Dayak leaders sponsored violence against Madurese. However, it is not obvious that they had in mind the massacre that actually occurred and the eventual ethnic cleansing of the entire province. So far no explanation has been given of the motive for the killing of the five Madurese in the early hours of 18 February. Were they personal enemies of certain Dayak leaders or were they just chosen at random – as a senior police officer claimed to ICG – in order to create an upheaval? And if the goal was to create an upheaval, it seems quite likely that the purpose was to achieve some local political goal – such as the embarrassment of the district or even provincial political leadership – rather than to drive all the Madurese out of the entire province. A planned limited commotion may have run out of control with consequences that none of the 'provocateurs' had imagined.

Whether or not Usop or other Dayak leaders in fact instigated the rioting, it is clear that most did nothing to prevent the massacre after it had commenced. ICG interviews with Dayak leaders reveal no regret about what happened. Whether initially planned as 'ethnic cleansing' or not, many Dayak leaders seem to have welcomed the opportunity to rid the province of its Madurese. Madurese were told that they had no choice but to leave the province as Dayak leaders claimed that they could no longer control the enraged Dayak masses. It is true that some prominent Dayak leaders later supported government attempts to protect Madurese refugees but only on condition that the Madurese would be evacuated from the province.

<sup>47</sup> ICG interview with a senior police officer.

<sup>48</sup> Tempo, 11 March 2001.

<sup>49</sup> Gatra, 17 March 2001.

### III. THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SECURITY FORCES

Since 1999 the police have been entrusted with internal security while the army and the other branches of the military are responsible for defence.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, the police are permitted to call on the military for assistance when they are unable to cope alone with a challenge. In that case army troops are transferred to the command of the local police chief. However, several observers have noted that the police are often reluctant to call on the army for assistance because this would imply that the police lack the ability to handle the situation.<sup>51</sup> On the other hand, police suggest that the military is sometimes slow to respond to police requests for assistance in order to highlight the failure of the police.<sup>52</sup> In Central Kalimantan, the police proved incapable of preventing the Sampit riot from developing into a massacre and reinforcements from the army were slow, for whatever reason, in responding.

In December the police had succeeded in containing the violence in Kereng Pangi. Police reinforcements were sent to the area quickly and a company-sized army unit (about 100 men) arrived three days after the outbreak.<sup>53</sup> In dealing with this riot the police had adopted a persuasive approach. Fearing that the shooting of Dayak rioters would trigger uncontrollable violence, the police concentrated on preventing the spread of the rioting while 'sweeping' the area to collect 'sharp weapons'. Having failed to capture the three Madurese who had murdered the Dayak, the police wanted to avoid provoking the Dayaks further by arresting Dayak rioters.<sup>54</sup>

The police response to the outbreak in Sampit - a much larger town than the township of Kereng Pangi - was far less effective. Police officers themselves admit that their intelligence in regard to the Dayak community was poor. Police intelligence officers are mainly from outside Kalimantan, especially from Java, and lack knowledge of Dayak languages and Dayak society. Caught unprepared, they were unable to prevent the series of killings on 18 February that set the scene for the later massacre. However, as described above, the police more or less inadvertently - 'with God's help' as one officer put it - arrested the 38 Dayaks who appeared to have been responsible for the killing of five Madurese. They were then taken to Palangkaraya where Dayak demonstrators led by Professor Usop of the LMMDD-KT demanded their release. Eventually, in the absence of the provincial police chief who was still in Sampit, his deputy and the provincial government secretary were taken hostage and forced to permit the conditional release of the detainees who soon absconded.<sup>55</sup> Although Dayaks claimed that the police had seized weapons from Dayaks while taking no action against Madurese,<sup>56</sup> in fact about 18 Madurese were arrested, including one who is still being detained in connection with the murder of Dayaks on 18 February.<sup>57</sup>

In Sampit the police soon lost control as Dayaks took over the town. Initially only 300 police were stationed in Sampit and most were spread out in the town's twenty police posts.<sup>58</sup> Early in the week, even after the arrival or reinforcements, the provincial police chief, Brig. Gen. Bambang Pranoto, admitted that the 900 men under his command were hopelessly outnumbered by the thousands of Dayaks who had come into the town from the hinterland.<sup>59</sup> Many observers noted that the security forces

<sup>50</sup> *Indonesia: Keeping the Military Under Control*. ICG Asia Report No.9, Jakarta/Brussels, 5 September 2000. p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> ICG interviews in Palangkaraya. There appears to be little mutual respect between the police and the army in Central Kalimantan. In a conversation with ICG, a middle-ranking police officer in Palangkaraya claimed not only was the army behind the ethnic conflict in Central Kalimantan but was responsible for ethnic and religious conflict throughout Indonesia in order to create conditions favourable for the military's return to political power.

<sup>52</sup> ICG interview with police officer.

<sup>53</sup> Banjarmasin Post, 19 December 2000.

<sup>54</sup> ICG interview with police officer.

<sup>55</sup> ICG interview with police officer.

<sup>56</sup> Statement issued by the Presidium of the LMMDD-KT on 21 February 2001.

<sup>57</sup> ICG Interview with a senior police officer and a Madurese leader from Sampit. The Madurese detained in connection with the murder of Dayaks is a relative of the family killed in the initial Dayak attack.

<sup>58</sup> Police source.

<sup>59</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, 'Savage Attacks Terrorize Migrants on Borneo', Washington Post, 23 February 2001; Kompas, 23 February 2001.

did nothing to stop the violence.<sup>60</sup> Houses were being burnt without obstruction and truckloads of armed Dayaks were permitted to pass through police checkpoints while Dayak roadblocks were not dismantled. Although a night curfew had been imposed, no steps were taken to enforce it. Instead of attempting to stop the violence, during the first few days the police chief concentrated on protecting government buildings where some 13,000 Madurese were taking refuge. The police were also occupied in rescuing Madurese in isolated villages outside Sampit.<sup>61</sup>

Reinforcements were slow in coming from Banjarmasin and Jakarta. On 21 February a company (120 men) of the police paramilitary force, the Mobile Brigade (Brimob) already in Sampit was joined by three more companies while one more company was sent to Palangkaraya.<sup>62</sup> By 22 February the total strength of the security forces in Sampit was nine companies (1,080 men) including two from the army.<sup>63</sup> Major reinforcements seem to have arrived only in the second week when four army battalions and one Brimob battalion were sent to Central Kalimantan.<sup>64</sup> According to the Indonesian National Military (TNI) spokesman, Air Vice Marshal Graitto Usodo, it had been impossible to transport troops quickly to Sampit because the air force had only a few Hercules transport aircraft in service.<sup>65</sup>

Outside Sampit the police performance in protecting Madurese was also weak. As already noted, on Sunday 25, at the small town of Parenggean, a small contingent of about a dozen

police escorting a convoy of Madurese refugees ran for their lives when confronted by an armed Dayak mob who then massacred 118 refugees.<sup>66</sup>

The capacity of the police to contain the violence was clearly limited. According to the national police chief, General Surojo Bimantoro, at the time of the outbreak of violence in Sampit, the total number of police stationed throughout the entire province was only 3000.<sup>67</sup> In the Kotawaringin Timor district - which itself is larger than Central Java - most of the police are spread out in small posts consisting of only 5-6 men in each.<sup>68</sup> The police were hampered in their efforts to obtain intelligence on Dayak movements and to prevent Dayaks coming to Sampit by the Dayak preference to travel via forest trails rather than along the main roads. The security forces also seemed reluctant to take firm action against rioting mobs. Both police and army officers regularly claim that they are reluctant to shoot on crowds for fear of being accused of human rights abuse or provoking angry mobs to even greater violence.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, police fired on rioters on several occasions, including in Palangkaraya where five were shot dead while looting.<sup>70</sup>

Despite the failure to prevent the massacre in Sampit, the police arrested a large number of Dayaks accused of involvement in the rioting. At the beginning of March, 196 had been detained.<sup>71</sup> By early May this number had grown to 233 and 98 cases had been sent to the Attorney-General's office for prosecution.<sup>72</sup> In March Dayak demonstrators had demanded the release of 84 Dayaks who, according to the provincial police chief, had been responsible for 'murder and arson' but this time they were not

<sup>60</sup> The belief that Dayak warriors possess magical powers is widespread in Kalimantan, not only among Dayaks. It is not unlikely that many ordinary police feared 'flying *mandau*' and believed that some Dayaks were invulnerable to bullets. One non-Dayak politician explained to ICG how police had been unable to protect Madurese because the Dayaks sent their *mandau* independently to behead their enemies. A police officer admitted to ICG that his men were sometimes afraid to go into dark areas of Sampit at night.

<sup>61</sup> ICG interview with senior police officer.

<sup>62</sup> Jakarta Post, 22 February 2001, Tempo, 4 March 2001, p. 27

<sup>63</sup> Kompas, 23 February 2001, Tempo, 11 March 2001, p.20.

<sup>64</sup> Jakarta Post, 2 March, 2001. According to a military source, two of the army battalions were from Java, one from Banjarmasin and one already in Palangkaraya.

<sup>65</sup> Kompas, 2 March 2001.

<sup>66</sup> AFP, 28 February 2001.

<sup>67</sup> Kompas, 4 March 2001.

<sup>68</sup> Jawa Pos, 4 March 2001.

<sup>69</sup> ICG conversations with army and police officers.

<sup>70</sup> Media Indonesia, 2 March 2001. Police reluctance to fire on Dayaks was indicated by resistance to the provincial police chief's order to shoot rioters on sight. The local police chief in Kualakapuas admitted that he had been reprimanded by the national police chief for failing to shoot. He reportedly said 'I was surprised that I always missed. I was trained to shoot in the United States. But we managed to arrest five of them'. Jakarta Post, 23 March 2001; Kompas 27 March 2001.

<sup>71</sup> Media Indonesia, 2 March 2001.

<sup>72</sup> Tempo, 6 May 2001.



freed.<sup>73</sup> A senior police officer explained to ICG that it was very difficult to charge rioters on murder charges unless the killing was actually witnessed by the police. Usually the police only found the often headless bodies.<sup>74</sup> Most of the detainees were arrested for carrying weapons.

Members of the security forces were also accused of exploiting the desperation of Madurese refugees to extort money. Refugees complained that to take a truck from Sampit to the port at Samuda 40 km away they had to pay Rp. 1.5 million (\$150) per truck to the police. Payments also had to be made to leave refugee camps and again to enter the harbour area. Police personnel also offered to purchase cars and motorbikes from fleeing refugees at discount prices. One Madurese businessman sold a late-model jeep with a market value of Rp. 200 million (\$20,000) for only Rp. 10 million (\$1,000).<sup>75</sup>

The performance of the security forces reached its nadir on 27 February when the police and army exchanged fire at the Sampit port. An army battalion was entrusted with the security of the port while a joint force - including members of the police, the army and the Sampit civil government - was in charge of transporting refugees to the port. Although the ship was already full, a private jeep carrying a dozen or so refugees under the protection of members of Brimob was stopped by the army guards. As one refugee said, 'We had already paid the police officers to be allowed to board the ship, even though it looked overloaded, but the soldiers wouldn't let us on'. Having been sent back by the military, the Brimob members mobilised their colleagues to launch an attack on the soldiers guarding the ship. Within minutes the army and police were shooting at each other. Shots were still being exchanged later in the afternoon. One soldier died as a result of the shooting and three soldiers and three police were seriously wounded. One unidentified man, probably a refugee, was also killed.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Banjarmasin Post, 12 March 2001.

<sup>74</sup> ICG interview with senior police officer.

<sup>75</sup> Tempo, 11 March 2000, p. 28, Kompas, 25 February 2001.

<sup>76</sup> Kompas, Jakarta Post, 28 February 2001, Kompas 1 March 2001, Tempo 11 March 2001, p.25. A senior police officer claimed to ICG that the Brimob's motives were

To prevent further fighting between the police and the army, the two forces were immediately redeployed. The army was put in charge of Palangkaraya and the police in charge of Sampit.<sup>77</sup>

The Brimob attracted further criticism on 8 March when President Abdurrahman visited Palangkaraya. The president was met by demonstrators, calling themselves the Anti-Madura Movement, who insisted that Madurese not be permitted to return to Central Kalimantan unless, as one of their banners put it, 'they are capable of giving up their culture of violence'.<sup>78</sup> After the president's departure the demonstrators continued to listen to speeches but some threw bottles and pushing and shoving occurred between the police and demonstrators. Suddenly a truck full of Brimob personnel arrived on the scene and opened fire, killing four demonstrators. In retaliation the crowd attacked the police and one local Brimob policeman was killed and two others seriously injured.<sup>79</sup> The Brimob troops responsible for the shooting were reinforcements from Jakarta. Observers at the scene claim that they saw nothing that could justify resort to shooting although some stones may have been thrown<sup>80</sup> and the police offered no explanation for the use of live rather than rubber bullets. The next day an estimated 6,000 demonstrators remained in the streets, some wielding swords. The car of the provincial police chief and a Brimob vehicle were burnt and the police and their families were forced to take refuge in the heavily guarded police headquarters.<sup>81</sup>

In April Brimob troops were again involved in what seemed to be excessive violence. Brimob forces were deployed to prevent Dayaks from Sampit going to Pangkalanbun to drive out Madurese. In one incident on 6 April three Brimob personnel and a Dayak were killed near the 41km post along the road from Sampit to

humanitarian as one of the refugees had been badly wounded by a spear and needed early evacuation.

<sup>77</sup> Jakarta Post, 2 March 2001.

<sup>78</sup> Kompas, 9 March 2001.

<sup>79</sup> 'Kronologis Tragedi Bundaran Besar, Kamis, 8 Maret 2001.' Statement prepared by Rahmadi G. Lentam, Lembaga Advokasi Hukum and HAM, Palangkaraya. 12 March 2001.

<sup>80</sup> ICG interviews in Palangkaraya.

<sup>81</sup> Kompas, 9, 10 March 2001.

Pangkalanbun. Later in the day, Brimob forces returned to the area where they beat up residents and burnt houses in a revenge attack which left at least two Dayaks dead. Even Dayak passengers on passing buses were beaten. Acknowledging that the troops had become 'emotional', the provincial police chief promised to have them withdrawn from the area.<sup>82</sup>

The performance of the security forces came under sharp criticism. The Jakarta human rights activist, Munir, claimed that the Al-Miftah Foundation, a Madura-based Islamic organization with a branch at Sampit, had reported in January to the president, the police and members of the DPR that the Madurese in Sampit were in danger but no preventive action had been taken.<sup>83</sup> Former commander of the armed forces, General Wiranto, who happened to be visiting Palangkaraya for a sports meeting, also criticized the security forces for failing to isolate the conflict quickly.<sup>84</sup> A Western diplomat pointed to deeper causes of the poor performance. According to him, 'The best men are not sent there because it is viewed as a semi-retirement post. It is where they can make money from illegal logging, gambling and prostitution rackets. Internal security is the last thing on their mind'.<sup>85</sup>

Nevertheless, despite their failure in Sampit, the security forces drew some lessons from that experience. Although Dayak attacks on other concentrations of Madurese at Kualakapuas and Pangkalanbun resulted in some Madurese being killed and houses burned, the spread of massive violence was prevented and members of the Madurese community were at least evacuated under police protection in a relatively orderly manner.

#### IV. EVACUATION: TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT?

Government at the provincial level in Palangkaraya and the district level in Sampit is largely dominated by Dayaks. The provincial governor and most of his senior staff are of

Dayak or part-Dayak descent while in Sampit the bupati is of mixed Javanese and Dayak descent (although his political enemies claim he has Madurese blood). Only three members of the provincial parliament, four of the Kotawaringin Timur district parliament and two of the Palangkaraya city parliament were Madurese.

The bupati of Kotawaringin Timur, Wahyudi K. Anwar, had successfully mobilised the support of local community and religious leaders to prevent the spread of the riot at Kereng Pangi in December and initially attempted to do the same thing in Sampit in February. But the influx into Sampit from the hinterland of thousands of Dayaks determined to take revenge on the Madurese meant that established urban Dayak leaders could exercise little restraining influence, even if they had been so inclined.

As the conflict spread, the provincial government decided that all Madurese in the province should be evacuated.<sup>86</sup> In a statement on 2 March, the provincial governor, Asmawi Agani, said that the evacuation policy was adopted after consulting community leaders and was intended to avoid more casualties. He asserted that the policy was only 'temporary' and declared that Central Kalimantan 'continues to be open and ready to accept all ethnic groups who can prove their capacity to live in harmony and peace with local citizens'.<sup>87</sup> In support of this policy, he issued an instruction to district heads to take action to protect the property of refugees and to prevent the transfer of ownership of immovable property.<sup>88</sup> The previous day, the provincial DPRD rejected a proposal that a state of civil emergency be declared in the province on the ground that security had been largely brought under control.<sup>89</sup>

The central government had little choice but to endorse the provincial government's policy

<sup>82</sup> Kalteng Pos, 7, 9 April 2001.

<sup>83</sup> Tempo, 11 March 2001, p. 24.

<sup>84</sup> Media Indonesia, 25 February 2001.

<sup>85</sup> Derwin Pereira, 'Armed forces "misread" Kalimantan clashes', Straits Times (Singapore), 5 March 2001.

<sup>86</sup> This decision is contained in a letter dated 23 February and signed by the Deputy Governor, Nahson Taway. Jakarta Post, 3 March 2001.

<sup>87</sup> Statement by the Governor of Central Kalimantan entitled '*Kebijaksanaan Pemerintah Propinsi Kalimantan Tengah dalam Penyelesaian Pertikaian Antar Etnis di Kalimantan Tengah*', 2 March 2001. Red Book, vol 1.

<sup>88</sup> Kompas, 3 March 2001.

<sup>89</sup> *Pernyataan Sikap Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah Propinsi Kalimantan Tengah*. Red Book, vol.1.

although the Minister of Internal Affairs, Surjadi Sudirdja, reasserted the principle that any Indonesian could live anywhere in Indonesia.<sup>90</sup> However, the Co-ordinating Minister for Political, Social and Security Affairs, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, took the view that the return of Madurese refugees to Central Kalimantan should not take place hurriedly but would depend on local security conditions.<sup>91</sup> Neither the President nor the Vice President questioned the policy publicly.

The policy was rejected by many other Indonesians who regarded it as a form of 'ethnic cleansing'. The governor of South Kalimantan, Sjahriel Darham, said that the Madurese should be allowed to remain in Kalimantan 'under tight security'. This view was supported by Mohamad Noer, a Madurese and former governor of East Java.<sup>92</sup> Several prominent Madurese, including Mohamad Noer, issued a statement on 28 February in which they 'hoped that the policy would not be continued and that efforts would be made to give them the opportunity to "live together" as they had for dozens of years before'.<sup>93</sup>

The Central Kalimantan rioting had spread after President Abdurrahman Wahid had left Indonesia on a visit to the Middle East and Northern Africa. Despite calls that he should interrupt his journey to deal with the Sampit crisis, he remained abroad until early March. The vice president, Megawati Soekarnoputri, had visited Palangkaraya on 1 March but no new initiatives had followed her visit.

The president himself made a short visit to Central Kalimantan on 8 March where he claimed that the rioting had been caused by a 'small number of Dayaks' and announced five measures intended to ameliorate some of the Dayak grievances. The five measures were:

- Return of 'sacred land' to the Dayaks.
- Rehabilitation of public facilities, especially for education and health.

- Provision of scholarships to Dayak children – 100 from primary to high school, and 100 for university.
- Provision of rice to victims of the riots.
- Construction of a public meeting hall.<sup>94</sup>

As noted above, his promises failed to satisfy many Dayak leaders and was followed by a demonstration opposing the return of Madurese refugees.

Two days later he visited refugees in Madura. He promised to guarantee the safety of those who returned to Kalimantan and offered resettlement on 'an island' to those who were unwilling to return. However, he said that the Minister of Forestry would be making an inventory of 'traditional land considered as sacred' by Dayaks and that migrants occupying such land would be offered new land elsewhere.<sup>95</sup> He also attempted to reassure the Madurese refugees who had fled in fear of their lives only a week or two previously that 'It's not true if Dayaks are said to hate the Madurese people ... They even called Madurese migrants the promoters of development out there'.<sup>96</sup> The Madurese were no more impressed with his promises than were the Dayaks in Palangkaraya.

The president's assessment of the situation in Central Kalimantan was treated virtually universally as out of touch with reality. Although government leaders continued to describe the evacuation as 'temporary' and many Madurese themselves expressed the hope that they would soon be able to return, in fact successful ethnic cleansing had taken place. Like the Madurese refugees still languishing in refugee camps in West Kalimantan two years after the 1999 massacre in Sambas, most of Central Kalimantan's Madurese cannot expect an early return 'home'.

In an attempt to promote reconciliation between the two communities, the central government sponsored a peace meeting in Jakarta on 21-22 March. The meeting was attended by 136 representatives from Central Kalimantan, the other three Kalimantan provinces and Madurese from East Java. The participants agreed to a broad statement that recognised the rights of

<sup>90</sup> Jakarta Post, 4 March 2001.

<sup>91</sup> Bernas, 6 March 2001.

<sup>92</sup> Jakarta Post, 4 March 2001.

<sup>93</sup> *Pernyataan Keputusan Tekad Keluarga Besar Masyarakat Madura*, 28 February 2001. Red Book, vol.1.

<sup>94</sup> Kompas, 9 March 2001.

<sup>95</sup> Kompas, 11 March, 2001.

<sup>96</sup> Jakarta Post 11 March 2001.

Indonesians to live anywhere in their country although it also stated that the return of Madurese to Central Kalimantan could only take place gradually after proper preparation.<sup>97</sup> The atmosphere of the meeting, however, was spoilt the previous day during a preliminary meeting with the Minister of Internal Affairs when a Madurese delegate drew a pistol and threatened the prominent Dayak leader, Professor Usop. Usop then withdrew from the meeting and 32 Dayak representatives cancelled their flight to Jakarta.<sup>98</sup> At the end of the meeting, the peace agreement was presented to the Vice President, Megawati Soekarnoputri who expressed the hope that such a tragedy would not be repeated. Meanwhile, as the delegates gathered in Jakarta, Dayaks in Central Kalimantan were burning the homes of fleeing Madurese in the southern district of Kualakapuas.

By May 2001 Madurese remained only in Pangkalanbun where the local government sponsored a mixed Muslim and traditional Dayak ceremony to 'ward off disaster' (*tolak bala*). Not only did Dayaks participate but also Malays and representatives of the Madurese community.<sup>99</sup> In other parts of Central Kalimantan, Dayaks also carried out peace rituals but without the presence of Madurese.

After a series of district congresses, a Kalimantan People's Congress was held in Palangkaraya on 4-7 June. Although dominated by Dayaks the 750 participants included representatives of the migrant communities except the Madurese. A central issue subjected to heated debate at the congress was whether Madurese should be allowed to return to Madura. As Professor Usop, one of the driving forces behind the congress, explained, the participants were divided between 'hardliners' and 'softliners'. The hardliners simply rejected the return of Madurese while the softliners were prepared to accept them provided certain

conditions were met. In the end what Usop called the 'middle road' was adopted. Priority would be given to Madurese with family ties to Dayaks, those who had already lived in Central Kalimantan for at least ten years, and those with permanent jobs and property in the province. But the concessions had a catch. Madurese would also be required to apologise to the Dayaks for the recent ethnic conflict and pay a fine according to Dayak tradition.<sup>100</sup>

It seems unlikely that many Madurese would accept the Dayak conditions, particularly the requirement that they apologise for a massacre in which the Madurese were the main victims. Moderate Madurese have agreed that their return would be selective and gradual but the hostility expressed by Dayak 'hardliners' suggested that Madurese returnees would be facing considerable risks.

## V. THE ORIGINS OF DAYAK RESENTMENT

Ethnic conflict in Central Kalimantan has taken place against a background of dislocation and marginalisation of the Dayak community. Especially during the three decades of President Soeharto's military-backed New Order, Dayaks increasingly found themselves losing their ability to control their own lives. A huge wave of immigration pushed Dayaks aside in their own homeland while the booming logging industry forced forest-dwelling Dayaks either to move or adopt new life-styles. At the same time, Dayak political leadership was displaced by Javanese administrators appointed by Jakarta and traditional authority in the Dayak community was undermined by the central government's quest for uniformity in governmental structures throughout the nation. Dayaks culture was considered 'backward' and, as a final insult, traditional Dayak religion was classified as a form of Hinduism.

### A. MIGRATION

Kalimantan has long attracted migrants who set up trading posts and towns along its coastal regions. In response the original Dayak population has gradually retreated into the

<sup>97</sup> Tekad Damai Anak Bangsa di Bumi Kalimantan, 22 March 2001.

<sup>98</sup> Gatra, 31 March 2001.

<sup>99</sup> Banjarmasin Post, 14 May 2001. In response to the conflict in Central Kalimantan, government-sponsored peace pacts were signed by Dayak, Madurese and other ethnic groups in South Kalimantan (Jakarta Post, 30 March 2001), the Ketapang district in West Kalimantan bordering Central Kalimantan (Kompas, 22 March 2001) and East Kalimantan (Kompas, 8 March 2001).

<sup>100</sup> Kompas, Harian Tempo, 8 June 2001.

interior. Until the end of the 1970s Central Kalimantan continued to have an overwhelmingly Dayak population but rapid government-sponsored migration of 'outsiders' has radically changed the composition of its people. Historically the Dayaks have not resisted the intrusion of 'outsiders' but the huge influx in recent years has threatened to reduce the Dayaks to a deprived minority in their own land.

According to the 2000 census, Central Kalimantan has a population of only 1.8 million, making it one of Indonesia's smallest – but fastest growing – provinces.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, the province's population has almost doubled in the last 20 years.<sup>102</sup>

The very rapid growth of Central Kalimantan, like the other three Kalimantan provinces, has been due to the migration of peoples from other parts of Indonesia. A major part of this growth has been a result of the government's transmigration scheme which brought settlers from 'overcrowded' Java, Madura, Bali and elsewhere to the 'underpopulated' outer islands where they were provided with land to grow rice and various commercial crops. Government-sponsored transmigration has been accompanied by 'spontaneous' voluntary migration as people in Java and elsewhere heard about opportunities in Kalimantan. In many cases 'spontaneous' migrants joined family members or neighbours who had already joined official transmigration projects. The numbers in migrant communities expanded further as the original transmigrants had children and eventually grandchildren in their new home regions.

Government transmigration had begun at the beginning of the 1900s when Indonesia was still under Dutch colonial rule. Initially transmigrants were sent to agricultural projects in Sumatra. It was only after independence that the new Indonesian government began to open projects for transmigrants in Kalimantan. Apart from relieving population pressure in Java, the program was based on the nationalist belief that Indonesians shared a common sense of identity

and that national unity would be strengthened by the mixing of ethnic groups.

The numbers sent to Kalimantan were relatively small before the establishment of the military-dominated Soeharto government in 1966-7. Between 1953 and 1968 only 42,000 transmigrants were placed in agricultural projects throughout Kalimantan, with only about 3,500 transmigrants arriving in Central Kalimantan by 1968. Under the Soeharto government transmigration increased substantially. Between 1971 and 1980, Kalimantan received more than 100,000 transmigrants with about 13,000 going to Central Kalimantan. Despite the growth in numbers, by 1980 government-sponsored transmigrants made up only two per cent of the total Kalimantan population and only one per cent of Central Kalimantan's population.<sup>103</sup>

It was only after 1980 that the national transmigration program was expanded far more rapidly, not only in Kalimantan but in other areas outside Java. In each of the two decades after 1979 the number of transmigrants placed in Central Kalimantan reached almost 180,000. By the time that the transmigration program was abandoned in 2000, transmigrants amounted to about 21 per cent of Central Kalimantan's population. To see the full impact of this migration it is also necessary to add in the children and grandchildren of the earlier generations of transmigrants as well as 'spontaneous' migrants. The overwhelming majority of the transmigrants were placed in three districts - 43 per cent in Kapuas, 24 per cent in Kotawaringin Barat and 22 per cent in Kotawaringin Timur.<sup>104</sup>

Nothing better illustrates the Soeharto government's insensitivity to the potential social consequences of mass migration than the president's grandiose scheme to open a gigantic agricultural project on one million hectares of peat land in Central Kalimantan. Aiming to increase food production to meet the needs of an expanding national population, the project was launched in 1996 and expected to be completed by 2002. According to the plan, rice

<sup>101</sup> Jakarta Post, 4 January 2001.

<sup>102</sup> Kompas, 5 January 2001. Over the two decades the population increased from 954,000 to 1,802,000.

<sup>103</sup> *Indonesia: The Transmigration Project in Perspective*, Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 1988. P.75 and data from Dinas Transmigrasi, Palangkaraya.

<sup>104</sup> Data obtained from Dinas Transmigrasi, Palangkaraya.

and other crops would be grown by 316,000 families (some 1.7 million people) who would be placed in the project over five years<sup>105</sup> – completely swamping the indigenous population. Indeed the planned new transmigrant population would have almost equalled the whole province's population at that time,<sup>106</sup> and turned the Dayaks into a minority community. Fortunately the whole scheme collapsed in the wake of the East Asian economic crisis of 1997 and now caters to only 15,000 families farming 35,000 of the one million hectares.<sup>107</sup>

Available census statistics do not indicate the place of origin of migrants who have come to Central Kalimantan during the last decade. The most recent data comes from the population census of 1990, which recorded 250,000 people living in Central Kalimantan who had previously lived outside the province. Of these, 60 per cent had come from Java and 34 per cent from other Kalimantan provinces. Because Madura is administratively part of East Java, the Madurese are counted as coming from Java. According to transmigration officials, Madurese do not make up an especially large proportion of transmigrants. However, one official told ICG that Madurese have a stronger tendency than others to leave transmigration sites to work on plantations and in logging, as well as in lower-class urban occupations in markets, land and river transport, petty commerce and as port labourers. However, Madurese are not the only migrants involved in these occupations. Some Madurese have also become prominent in business and own timber companies, petrol stations, hotels, retail shops, and sea and land transport companies<sup>108</sup> but Madurese were by no means dominant in the commercial sector, except in the town of Sampit.

Madurese are usually estimated to have made up about 120-130,000 - or about 6-7 per cent of the total population of Kalimantan - before the recent exodus.

## B. LOSS OF LAND

The influx of 'outsiders' has resulted in Dayaks being forced to leave land that they previously occupied and used. In the past most Dayaks lived in traditional communities in the rain forests where they practised shifting cultivation and traded in forest products.

The fundamental Indonesian law on land tenure is the Basic Agrarian Law No. 5, adopted in 1960 during the rule of President Soekarno.<sup>109</sup> The main objective of the law was to provide for land reform by limiting the size of peasant holdings, especially in Java where the communist party was growing in strength. However the law also contains provisions dealing with customary land rights. Article 3 states clearly that customary land tenure only applies to the extent that it does not conflict with 'national and State interests, based on national unity'. In the official explanation attached to the law (Part A.II.3) it is stated that customary communities will be consulted before rights to use land are granted but that such communities are not permitted 'to obstruct the granting of usage rights' when such grants 'are truly necessary for broader interests'. The explanation specifically mentions efforts by customary communities 'to reject the large-scale and orderly opening of forests to implement large projects in the context of increasing food production and migration'. The law, in Article 19, also provides for land registration and the provision of land titles - a concept that cannot easily be adapted to customary rights over forests.

After Soeharto's New Order came to power new laws were adopted which provided the government with legal powers to allocate land for the forestry and mining industries. The Basic Forestry Law of 1967 states explicitly that customary rights 'to obtain benefits from the forests' are only recognized to the extent that they 'do not disturb the achievement of the

<sup>105</sup> Kompas, 24 April 2001.

<sup>106</sup> Kompas, 13 February 1997.

<sup>107</sup> Information provided to ICG by an official at the Dinas Transmigrasi, Palangkaraya.

<sup>108</sup> Kompas, 19 March 2001.

<sup>109</sup> Undang-Undang No.5 Tahun 1960 tentang Peraturan Dasar Pokok-Pokok Agraria. See also Stefanus Masiun, 'National Frameworks Affecting Adat Governance in Indonesia, and Dayak NGO Responses', in Janis B. Alcorn and Antoinette G. Royo, eds., *Indigenous Social Movements and Ecological Resilience: Lessons from the Dayak of Indonesia*. Washington, DC: Biodiversity Support Program, 2000.

purposes intended by this law'.<sup>110</sup> Similarly, the Mining Law of 1968 gave the government power to allocate customary and other land for mining. With the passage of these laws, no legal barriers remained to prevent the government from opening transmigration projects and allocating forestry and mining concessions in areas occupied by Dayaks.

The rapid destruction of Kalimantan's forests by the holders of logging concessions - many of them either members of Soeharto's family, his business associates or corporations linked to the military - has been a fundamental cause of Dayak concern. Although 66.9 per cent of Central Kalimantan was officially classified as forest in 1999, the proportion has declined rapidly from 84 per cent in the mid-1970s. However, not all the 'official forest' is still forest due in part to forest fires and illegal logging as shown by satellite imagery that estimated that natural cover had been reduced to 56 per cent by 1999.<sup>111</sup> In recent years an increasing amount of forest land has been converted to oil palm plantations.

The destruction of the forest has not been caused by the big logging companies alone. Illegal logging is rife in Central Kalimantan - usually protected by elements in the police and the military. Illegal logging had become so widespread in the Kotawaringin Timur district that the local government, incapable of preventing it, issued a regulation in June 2000 which in effect legalised illegal logging by taxing it.<sup>112</sup> According to one source, many of the illegal loggers were Madurese whose behaviour antagonised local Dayaks. Others say that the recognition of illegal logging led to increased rivalry between Madurese and Dayaks who were also involved in the illegal trade. It is not impossible that these factors contributed to the rising tension in Sampit that broke out early the next year. Ultimately, however, the

regulation was disallowed by the central government as it conflicted with national laws.

Dayaks have usually not openly resisted the cutting down of the forest and the conversion of land to transmigration sites, plantations and mines. Provided that they are consulted and given some compensation, they tend to seek the path of least resistance by either moving deeper into the forest or continuing to grow food crops on the edge of the concessions. Some of the concession holders allow local Dayaks to continue to collect rattan and other forest products. One of the most common causes of conflict occurs when Dayaks fell a tree or two for their own use and are then charged with theft of timber, which they consider is rightfully theirs. Elite Dayaks interviewed by ICG in Palangkaraya seemed quite relaxed about the expansion of the logging industry, which provides revenue for the provincial government and possibly payments to individual Dayak politicians. On the other hand, an interior Dayak expressed deep anger at the nonchalance of urban Dayaks. 'Animals are protected, but not people', he complained.<sup>113</sup>

A common grievance among urban Dayaks is not that the forest has been cut down but that the profits have flowed largely to Jakarta without benefiting the local people. Indeed much of the labour on logging concessions consists of members of the migrant communities. This is partly a result, however, of a disinclination on the part of Dayaks to work in these industries.

### C. EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

Official Indonesian statistics do not provide data on the participation of ethnic groups in employment and education. In Central Kalimantan, it is generally accepted that non-Dayak communities are predominant in towns while Dayaks are predominant in the hinterland. It can be assumed, therefore, that Dayaks are heavily concentrated in the 55 per cent of the work force that is employed in the category covering agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing. On the other hand, Dayaks are poorly represented among those with higher educational qualifications. In Central Kalimantan, 63 per cent of the work force does

<sup>110</sup> Undang-undang No 5 tahun 1967 tentang Ketentuan-ketentuan Pokok Kehutanan, Article 17.

<sup>111</sup> See 'Peta Penutupan Lahan Propinsi Kalimantan Tengah' on the Ministry of Forestry and Estate Crops' website

[http://mofrinet.cbn.net.id/e\\_informasi\\_enfi/GIS/vegetasi.htm](http://mofrinet.cbn.net.id/e_informasi_enfi/GIS/vegetasi.htm)

<sup>112</sup> Peraturan Daerah Kabupaten Kotawaringin Timur, Nombor 14 Tahun 2000 tentang retribusi Industri Kayu Bulat, Kayu Gergajian, Kaya Olahan dan Peredaran Hasil Hutan serta Pangganti Nilai Tegakan, 21 June 2000.

<sup>113</sup> ICG interviews in Palangkaraya.

not have post-primary-school qualifications and 80 per cent lack qualifications beyond the junior-high-school level.<sup>114</sup> Nevertheless, it should be noted that Dayaks are among those who have benefited from the expansion of tertiary education and a small but growing Dayak middle class is now employed in administrative positions in local government.

#### **D. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

During the New Order period, the Dayak majority felt largely excluded from the government. It was only during the last few years of the Soeharto regime that more Dayaks were appointed to positions in local government. In any case, civilian government in the provinces under the New Order was usually overshadowed by the military, in which Dayaks were rarely found at higher levels. At the present time, however, Dayaks dominate local politics and the Dayak community can no longer complain that it is under-represented.

After independence Kalimantan was administered as a single province, but on 1 January 1957 it was divided into West, South and East Kalimantan. The plan to include the area that is now Central Kalimantan as part of South Kalimantan led to Dayak protests to which the government responded a few months later by forming Indonesia's only Dayak-majority province of Central Kalimantan on 23 May 1957.

Dayaks were initially well represented in the provincial leadership. The first governor, RTA Milono, was a Javanese but he was succeeded by a Dayak, Tjilik Riwut, who had been prominent in Indonesia's nationalist struggle for independence. Tjilik Riwut, however, had been close to President Soekarno and was replaced in 1967 by the new Soeharto regime. Although governors were formally elected by the provincial parliament during the New Order, in reality they were appointed by the president whose wishes were never disturbed by the formality of the election. Soeharto continued to favour Dayak governors - Reinout Sylvanus and Willy Ananias Gara - for the next sixteen years but then turned to the Javanese administrators on whom he often relied in the outer-island provinces. From 1984 the next three governors,

Gatot Amrih, Soeparmanto and Warsito Rasman, were all Javanese but, unlike in many other provinces, none was a military officer.

The fall of Soeharto in 1998 saw the democratisation of provincial government. Free, genuinely competitive, elections were held in 1999 for the first time since 1955 not only at the national but also at the provincial and district levels. In addition to five members appointed to represent the military and police, the forty elected seats were divided between the main political parties more or less reflecting the national results. Megawati Soekarnoputri's PDI-P won 14 seats, Golkar - the government party of the Soeharto regime - won 11, the Muslim PPP took 5, Abdurrahman Wahid's PKB obtained 3 and Amien Rais's PAN won 2 with several smaller parties taking 1 each. No party, however, was particularly identified as the party of the Dayaks because Dayaks were prominent in the leadership of all the major parties.

The election of the new governor was hard-fought but marred by vote-buying allegations. In a lengthy process that required three separate rounds of voting, Asmawi Agani, representing Golkar, defeated Professor Usop of the LMMDDKT in a close 24-20 vote.<sup>115</sup> Asmawi is of mixed Malay-Dayak descent while his deputy, Nahson Taway, is a Dayak. The main defeated candidates were also Dayaks, indicating political rivalries within the Dayak community. Although elected on 20 January 2001, the installation of the governor and his deputy was delayed until 8 March while the allegations of vote-buying were investigated.<sup>116</sup>

During the Soeharto period government at the district level had been largely in the hands of non-Dayaks until the last few years when several Dayak bupati were appointed. It was not unusual under Soeharto for military officers to be appointed as bupati. Since the fall of the New Order, however, local government has become dominated by Dayaks and currently three of the five bupati and the mayor of Palangkaraya are Dayaks or of mixed Dayak descent.<sup>117</sup> The bupati of Barito Selatan is a Javanese who has spent most of his life in

<sup>114</sup> *Kalimantan Tengah Dalam Angka, 1999*. pp. 53, 55.

<sup>115</sup> Banjarmasin Post, 21 January 2000.

<sup>116</sup> Kompas, 29 February, 1 March, 29 May 2001.

<sup>117</sup> The mayor of Palangkaraya is a Dayak who had previously served as an army officer.



Kalimantan while the bupati of Kualakapuas is of Banjarese descent.

Democratization was accompanied by decentralization with the adoption of Law No. 22 on Regional Government in 1999. The radical new law promised to transform regional government by transferring central government powers not to the provinces but to the districts. Among other powers, the law gives the regions authority to 'manage the national resources available in its territory'.<sup>118</sup> In anticipation of the implementation of the law in 2001, district governments throughout Indonesia began to look for opportunities to raise revenues from such areas as logging and mining even before the new legislation came into effect. In Kotawaringin Timur the district's locally generated revenue rose sharply in 2000 compared to 1999.<sup>119</sup> The result has been a sharpening of political competition for control of local government and the accompanying resources. Although hard to prove, it is quite likely that anti-Madurese political rhetoric in recent times has been stimulated by rivalries between Dayak-led parties seeking Dayak votes. Another by-product of regional autonomy is the need for local governments to reorganise their administration in order to cope with an influx of civil servants previously employed by the central government. In Kotawaringin Timur, as in many other districts, this meant that established senior officials were sometimes displaced in reshuffles of positions. Among those displaced in Sampit were Pedlik Asser and his brother-in-law who have been accused of expressing their anger by sparking the anti-Madurese riot.

At the village level traditional Dayak government was severely disrupted during the New Order period. In 1979 the central government adopted a law on village government which was applied throughout Indonesia and was intended, as stated by the law itself, 'to make the position of village

government as far as possible uniform'.<sup>120</sup> In place of the traditional customary forms of village government that continued to be practised in many parts of Indonesia, a new structure was adopted which in effect replicated the traditional system of village government in Java. Following the Javanese model, non-urban villages would be placed under an elected Village Head (*Kepala Desa*) while urban villages would be placed under appointed heads (*Lurah*) who would be granted the status of civil servants and made responsible to the head of the sub-district (*Kecamatan*) bureaucracy. Other positions within village government were to be standardised throughout Indonesia.

Before 1979 Dayak villages were governed by traditional customary institutions. Although usually headed by a single leader - often called Demang - the details of the structure of governance evolved differently from community to community. Some communities consisted of only a few thousand people in a few villages whereas others were more extensive and the system of governance more complex.<sup>121</sup> This, however, was all changed by the 1979 law.

As one Dayak intellectual in West Kalimantan put it, 'The Law on Village Government No.5, 1979 is the most destructive law against indigenous peoples in Indonesia'. Traditional village leadership was undermined as distinct communities were merged into larger villages in accordance with the national standard. In West Kalimantan the component parts of the new villages were often two or three kilometres, and sometimes as much as eight to ten kilometres, apart with the result that some villagers did not even know their village head. Under the new 'modern' system, it was difficult for respected customary leaders to be elected as village head because the law stipulated that candidates for village head should have graduated from high school.<sup>122</sup> As the traditional leadership lost its moral authority, its capacity to ensure social

<sup>118</sup> Undang-undang No. 22 Tahun 1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah, article 10(1).

<sup>119</sup> See Anne Casson, 'Ethnic violence in an era of regional autonomy: A background to the bloodshed in Kotawaringin Timur', RMAP Occasional Paper, Resource Management in Asia-Pacific Project, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, 2001. P. 21.

<sup>120</sup> Undang-undang No. 5 Tahun 1979 tentang Pemerintahan Desa.

<sup>121</sup> Stefanus Masiun, 'National Frameworks Affecting Adat Governance in Indonesia, and Dayak NGO Responses', in Janis B. Alcorn and Antoinette G. Royo, eds., *Indigenous Social Movements and Ecological Resilience: Lessons from the Dayak of Indonesia*. Washington, DC: Biodiversity Support Program, 2000. P.20.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid. Pp.24-25.

order was diminished. If in the past traditional leaders had been able to deal with minor criminal behaviour and youthful rebellion, now the police were called in and, as another Dayak intellectual said to ICG, 'the law of the jungle was introduced'.<sup>123</sup>

The 1979 law has been replaced by Law 22 on Regional Government, mentioned above, but the uniform structure of village government established in 1979 remains in place.

## E. THE POLICE AND MILITARY

It is a common perception among Dayaks that the police and military are biased against them. In part this arises from the small number of Dayaks among police and military personnel. Statistics on the ethnic makeup of the police and army in Central Kalimantan are not available but it is clear that much of the officer corps in both services is from outside Central Kalimantan, mainly from Java. Only one Dayak, Lt. Gen. (ret.) Zen Maulani, was appointed as Commander of the Tanjungpura Military Region covering all of Kalimantan, where he served from 1988 to 1991.<sup>124</sup> The first Dayak to be promoted as provincial police chief, Chief Commissioner Lodewyk Penyang, only received his appointment in April 2001 in the wake of the rioting. A retired soldier told ICG that a significant number of Dayaks had in fact joined the army or the police but many preferred to be posted outside their home province because they felt uncomfortable about the possibility of being placed in a position where they might be compelled to act against their own people.<sup>125</sup> It should be noted, however, that Madurese, too, were rare in the police in Central Kalimantan.

It is also common knowledge that the police and military have been involved in protecting the logging, mining and plantation companies that are now occupying land that was previously in Dayak hands. The police and military are not only involved in normal measures against

criminal behaviour but members of the security forces are often recruited directly by companies as security guards.<sup>126</sup> Dayaks therefore feel intimidated from making protests against what they see as unjust treatment.

The police in particular are generally perceived by Dayaks as failing to protect their interests. Dayaks almost universally believe that the police do not take firm action against members of other ethnic groups who commit crimes against Dayaks. Indeed it was the failure of the police to apprehend the Madurese killers of a Dayak at Kereng Pangi in December 2000 that seems to have set in train the events that led to the massacre in February and March 2001. On the other hand, Dayaks claim that when Dayaks commit crimes, they are normally arrested. Such stereotypical perceptions are of course common in virtually all ethnic conflicts. However, an alternative interpretation suggests that the police might indeed discriminate on the basis of ethnicity but for quite specific reasons. Unlike Dayaks who are generally poor and relatively unrepresented in the business community, Madurese are much more likely to have relatives or other patrons who can pay off the police if they get into trouble.<sup>127</sup>

However, it is not only Dayaks who are convinced that the security forces are biased against them. Following the Sampit and Palangkaraya rioting Madurese also claimed that the police sided with the Dayaks.<sup>128</sup>

## F. CULTURE AND RELIGION

Dayaks have long resented the attitudes of other ethnic groups who have tended to look down on Dayaks as 'uncultured' and 'uncivilised'. Dayak anger was clear in some of the statements issued by the LMMDDKT following the upheaval in February. Although directed specifically at the Madurese, the deep resentment at being

<sup>123</sup> ICG interview in Palangkaraya. To understand why police involvement was associated with 'the law of the jungle', see *Indonesia: National Police Reform*, ICG Asia Report No. 13, Jakarta/Brussels, 20 February 2001.

<sup>124</sup> Maulani was later appointed as Head of the State Intelligence Agency (Bakin) under President Habibie from 1998 to 1999.

<sup>125</sup> ICG interview in Sampit.

<sup>126</sup> Throughout Indonesia it is normal for police and military personnel to be 'hired out' in order to supplement inadequate wages. See *Indonesia: Keeping the Military Under Control*, ICG Asia Report No.9, Jakarta/Brussels, 5 September 2000, pp. 16-17; *Indonesia: National Police Reform*, ICG Asia Report No. 13, Jakarta/Brussels, 20 February 2001, pp. 10-11.

<sup>127</sup> This explanation was put forward by a veteran Dayak leader, Fridolin Ukur, in an interview with Tempo, 1 April 2001.

<sup>128</sup> Kompas, 19 March 2001.

considered backward applied more generally to all outsiders. In the words of one document, signed by Professor Usop, the Chairman of the LMMDDKT's Presidium, 'We have long lived like this with insults and contempt that claims that our ethnic group is stupid, dull-witted, destroyers of the environment, and that we don't know our place'.<sup>129</sup> Dayaks were particularly angered by the common claim that the shifting cultivation practised by Dayaks over the centuries had led to environmental degradation - while the work of the logging companies is seen as a contribution to national development.

Dayaks had also been humiliated by the treatment of traditional Dayak religion during the New Order period. Although by now most Dayaks in Central Kalimantan are either Muslim or Christian, the traditional religion of the dominant Ngaju sub-group - Kaharingan - is still respected. Indeed it is often claimed by Dayaks themselves that Muslim and Christian Dayaks continue to be influenced by the culture associated with Kaharingan.<sup>130</sup> During the New Order, however, only five religions were officially recognised - Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism and Buddhism. The New Order's passion to place every group into a regulated category combined with almost total disrespect for 'backward' peoples resulted in Kaharingan being treated as a form of Hinduism. Thus, official statistics on religious affiliation record that 195,646 Hindus lived in Central Kalimantan in 1999!<sup>131</sup>

## VI. THE DAYAKS AND THE MADURESE

The experiences of the Dayak community during the last twenty or thirty years have provided many grounds for grievance. Dayaks have good reason to feel that their interests have been neglected by the central government which has treated the resources of Central Kalimantan more as a source of wealth for members of the Jakarta elite than as an opportunity to improve the well-being of the majority community in the

province. It would not be difficult to understand Dayak hostility directed toward the national government and its provincial representatives, the big business interests that have dominated the logging and plantation industries, and the predominantly non-Kalimantanese police and military forces. It would also be easy to understand Dayak resentment against the influx of migrants from other parts of Indonesia who now play a substantial role in the provincial economy.

But why is Dayak hostility directed almost exclusively at the small Madurese community?

Some of the common explanations that have been suggested are clearly inadequate. The interpretation that emphasizes religious rivalry is based on the common misperception that the Dayaks in Central Kalimantan are non-Muslim whereas in fact most are Muslim. And, although Madurese are Muslim, so are most Javanese and virtually all Banjarese but these communities were left untouched.

Another common explanation places the emphasis on the 'socio-economic gap' between Dayaks and Madurese. While it is true that many Madurese moved into urban occupations and achieved some success, the Madurese were far from dominating the Central Kalimantan economy. Madurese were prominent in such sectors as retail trade, local markets and transportation but these fields are hardly the pinnacles of provincial commerce. However, Madurese were very prominent in commerce in Sampit which is where the massacre began but Dayaks themselves deny that they were motivated by economic considerations. Several Dayak leaders pointed out to ICG that 'if the Dayaks were motivated by social jealousy, we would have attacked the Chinese, not the Madurese'.<sup>132</sup>

It has also been suggested that Madurese made up a large part of the work force in the logging and plantation industries and were therefore seen by Dayaks as taking over Dayak land. But, in fact Madurese were only part of that work force which also consisted of members of other ethnic communities, including Dayaks themselves.

<sup>129</sup> 'Latar Belakang Terjadinya Peristiwa Kerusuhan Etnis di Kalimantan Tengah', Red Book, vol. 1.

<sup>130</sup> J.J. Kusni, *Negara Etnik: Beberapa Gagasan Pemberdayaan Suku Dayak*. Yogyakarta: FuSPAD, 2001. p. 101.

<sup>131</sup> *Kalimantan Tengah dalam Angka*, 1999, p.137.

<sup>132</sup> ICG interviews in Palangkaraya

The most common explanation given by Dayaks themselves is cultural. Dayak leaders emphasized to ICG that the Dayaks had no complaints against the Javanese, the Banjarese and other communities that treated Dayak culture with respect and were able to adjust themselves to Dayak values. Indeed, several Dayak informants admitted that there were some 'good' Madurese, especially among those who had lived many years in Kalimantan and those who belonged to second- and third-generation families.<sup>133</sup> But, Dayaks described Madurese in general as having a deep sense of ethnic solidarity (exemplified by their tendency to pray at exclusively Madurese mosques), being prone to violence, ever-ready to cheat non-Madurese, and contemptuous of Dayak values. Madurese themselves acknowledge that their culture approves duelling in response to slights to honour and the Madurese language has indeed contributed the work '*carok*' (duel) to the Indonesian language. To Dayaks, the Madurese failed to observe the time-honoured principle, '*di mana bumi dipijak, di situ langit dijunjung*' (wherever your foot rests, there the heavens are honoured), which implies acceptance of the customs of the place where one lives.

Among the examples of 'Madurese behaviour' given in interviews with ICG and in the LMMDDKT Red Book are the following:

- A non-Madurese who bargains with a Madurese stallholder in a market will be abused if he fails to make a purchase.
- Madurese stall-holders threaten non-Madurese if they sell goods at lower prices.
- A senior Dayak civil servant related how he had ordered some furniture to be brought to Palangkaraya by boat from Banjarmasin. The furniture was then brought by Madurese labourers directly to his house although he had not asked for assistance. The Madurese then demanded payment at a rate set by them.

- Madurese are notorious for renting land and then refusing to leave when their lease has expired.
- Madurese are said to often harvest crops grown on land owned by others, be involved in crime and bribe police.
- Madurese always carry a sickle which they will use if they get involved in a conflict with others.

While these complaints may seem minor, and are hardly sufficient to justify a massacre, they fuelled Dayak antagonism toward the Madurese. On the other hand, Dayaks describe their own culture as accommodating and conflict-avoiding – despite the recent violence. Thus when Dayaks are forced to leave a forest which has been awarded to a Jakarta logging company, they do not resist but simply move elsewhere. When a Dayak is insulted in the market, he just goes away rather than get involved in a fight. When the Madurese delivered the furniture to the senior civil servant's house he just paid them to avoid trouble – a typical Dayak response, he claimed. But, according to many Dayaks, these grievances were not forgotten and continued to fester until the accumulation of experiences over several decades burst out in the massacre that occurred in February 2001.

One remarkable feature of the massacre was the reluctance of other ethnic communities to express sympathy for the Madurese. On the contrary, non-Dayak community leaders gave their public support to the removal of Madurese from the province. While it seems to be true that many of the Dayak feelings toward Madurese are shared by other ethnic groups – anti-Madurese attitudes are not uncommon even in Jakarta – it is also likely that they were reluctant to defend the Madurese for fear of then becoming targets themselves.

<sup>133</sup> One prominent Dayak leader said that during the massacre he had protected his next-door neighbour, who had been a 'good' Madurese, and helped him escape from the province. The neighbour's house was still standing, in contrast to the homes of many other Madurese in Palangkaraya. ICG interview.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

The outbreak of vicious ethnic conflict in Central Kalimantan in February 2001 can only be understood against the background of an acute sense of dislocation, deprivation and marginalisation felt by the Dayak community in that province.

Questions remain unanswered, however, about the immediate origins of the violence. Was the Dayak onslaught completely spontaneous or was it planned and organized? Was the murder of five Madurese on the night of 17-18 February the result of a personal quarrel or was it intended to spark the conflagration that followed? Had Dayaks already been mobilized to attack Sampit before 20 February? If the conflict was indeed planned, who planned it and with what purpose? A key question of fact involves claims about Madurese behaviour on 18-20 February. Were anti-Dayak banners really placed around the town and did Madurese youths taunt Dayaks? Or were the banners put in place by Dayak 'provocateurs' as some Madurese allege? Until these questions are answered, a full explanation of the outbreak of the ethnic violence cannot be given.

Confronted with a massacre that the security forces could not prevent, the provincial government opted for 'temporary' evacuation of the Madurese population. Although government officials continued to assert that all Indonesians have the right to live anywhere they choose in the country, the inability of the security forces to maintain security meant that for Madurese the right to live in Central Kalimantan in effect meant the right to be killed there. The ethnic cleansing of Central Kalimantan is now almost complete and perhaps irreversible although the government finally decided to defend a symbolic Madurese presence in Pangkalabun on the coast near the West Kalimantan border. Both the central and provincial governments continue to speak of the eventual return of Madurese to Central Kalimantan and many Madurese want to return.<sup>134</sup> The Dayak-dominated Kalimantan People's Congress has

agreed to the eventual limited return of Madurese but has imposed conditions that most Madurese will have difficulty in accepting. The experience of the Sambas refugees in West Kalimantan suggests that an early return is virtually impossible. All sides talk of a 'cooling down' period but there is no agreement on how long this period should last. At best any return will be phased with priority given to Madurese either born in Kalimantan, those with family ties to Dayaks, or long-term residents.

The current reality in Central Kalimantan is that there will be no more conflict between Dayaks and Madurese because, apart from Pangkalanbun, there are no longer any Madurese left in the province. It is, of course, possible that another ethnic minority could become a scapegoat if long-term concerns of the Dayaks are not met. Recent history in both Central and West Kalimantan suggests, however, that the key point of friction has been in Dayak-Madurese relations. There are no strong indications that the purge of another minority community is likely.

In circumstances where the early return of most Madurese to their homes in Central Kalimantan seems impossible, immediate attention needs to be given to measures aiming to ameliorate the current sufferings of refugees and provide some hope for the future. The inability of the government to provide adequate alternatives for the refugees from Sambas in West Kalimantan has seen the numbers in refugee centres grow to around 50,000 at present. As demonstrated by a riot involving Madurese refugees in Pontianak, the capital of West Kalimantan, in October 2000, the presence of such a large unsettled community can be a source of further ethnic outbursts. The Madurese from Central Kalimantan have been 'sent back' to Madura although many have no close ties with their ethnic 'homeland'. The presence of close to 100,000 refugees in an already poor region has imposed huge strains on local government and could lead to future conflict between refugees and non-refugee Madurese. President Wahid's promise of 'an island' has not inspired much hope that a solution is at hand.

The standard government approach to resolving ethnic conflict has been to sponsor peace agreements between community leaders

<sup>134</sup> At a meeting of Madurese refugees in Madura, ICG witnessed refugees threatening to hold a demonstration at the provincial parliament to demand their return to Kalimantan

representing the warring communities. This approach has often been criticized because it only involves elites who do not necessarily exercise much influence over the combatants in the field. Some have argued that such meetings are not only useless but counter-productive because they promote unrealistic hopes that are inevitably followed by disappointment. In neither Central nor West Kalimantan did peace agreements after local clashes prevent later massacres and ethnic cleansing. In the case of the Kalimantan peace meeting held in Jakarta in March, recriminations continued to be made and little progress was achieved. On the other hand agreements between leaders can at least create an atmosphere conducive to preserving the peace although they cannot in themselves solve the fundamental problems that stand in the way of reconciliation. The important point is that such peace agreements should not stand alone but be followed by concrete measures to promote a degree of mutual confidence even when full reconciliation remains unachievable.

In pursuing legal action in the wake of the recent ethnic violence, the authorities will need to balance the strict application of the law with the goals of maintaining social order in the present and reconciliation in the long run. Full adherence to formal legal justice could easily aggravate the Dayak sense of being the victims of injustice in the wider sense. Many Dayaks continue to believe that the Madurese were responsible for the rioting and needed to be 'taught a lesson'. It is not unlikely that guilty verdicts against Dayaks accused of killing Madurese would provoke a violent reaction from at least part of the Dayak community and could even set off a new round of rioting.<sup>135</sup> There is no a priori answer to this dilemma. The authorities will have to make fine judgments about the extent to which the Dayak community would resist legal action against those involved in the massacres. Legal action should perhaps be delayed to allow for a 'cooling down' period. Charges against Dayaks would need to be balanced by charges against Madurese - especially those responsible for murders in

Sampit on 18 and 19 February.<sup>136</sup> However, Madurese must not be charged without strong evidence just to achieve this balance.

One of the most important lessons to be drawn from the Central Kalimantan case, as well as the two massacres in West Kalimantan, is that the law should be applied quickly and effectively to prevent isolated clashes between individuals developing into wider conflict. One of the common Dayak grievances was that the police, for whatever reason, favoured Madurese and that they had not acted vigorously enough to arrest the Madurese responsible for the death of a Dayak at Kereng Pangsi in December 2000. This view of police partiality seemed confirmed when Dayaks were murdered during the two days of Madurese 'control' of Sampit in February 2001. Madurese, on the other hand, felt threatened when the police failed to arrest Dayaks who were involved in the retaliatory attacks on Madurese following the murder of the Dayak in Kereng Pangsi. And they were dismayed when 38 Dayaks detained for their role in the killings in Sampit on 17-18 February were released in Palangkaraya following a demonstration led by Dayak community leaders. Firm police action in the early days may have been able to nip growing ethnic violence in the bud and thus avert the massacre that followed. In this respect, police intelligence seems to have failed to prepare the authorities for the disaster that eventually took place. Police efficiency might be improved if it recruited more local personnel, especially Dayaks.

The main blame for any massacre cannot be placed on its victims. That said, minority communities in Kalimantan having a history of conflict with ethnic or religious majorities would be well advised to adjust their behaviour and attitudes to those of the majority. This does not mean that they should abandon entirely their own distinctive culture and values but that they should be sensitive to the perceptions of others. The common lower-class Madurese habit of carrying a sickle when going about everyday business is an obvious example of a 'cultural attribute' that could be abandoned without dealing a fatal blow to Madurese culture itself.

<sup>135</sup> Jefferson Dau, a Dayak lawyer appointed to the Commission of Enquiry established by the National Commission on Human Rights, argued that 'if ethnic groups in conflict bring each other to court, the result will be the re-emergence of revenge and reconciliation cannot be achieved.' Banjarmasin Post, 23 May 2001.

<sup>136</sup> Two Madurese leaders, H. Marlinggi and H. Satiman, were arrested on 29 May 2001 for interrogation in relation to allegations that they instigated conflict in Sampit.

It is here that Madurese community leaders should take the lead in persuading the rest of the community to make the necessary adjustments.

Dayak community leaders also should act to restrain their followers from committing acts of violence. The apparent lack of regret for the massacres shown by many Dayak leaders is a matter of concern as is the tendency to treat as heroes men responsible for the murder of unarmed Madurese, including the elderly, women and small children. The presence of a strong 'hard-line' group at the Kalimantan People's Congress does not augur well for the future but it should also be noted that many Dayaks are willing to countenance the return of 'good' Madurese. In the new democratic era Dayak leaders should encourage the Dayak community to express and resolve its grievances through democratic channels and avoid violent means.

As has been emphasized in this report, the perpetrators of the massacre are members of a community, which feels that it has been treated badly in the past - not so much by Madurese as by the whole society. The dislocation and marginalisation of the Dayaks, especially during the last two decades of the New Order, created an angry and alienated community that was ready to take its revenge on another community that was certainly not responsible for the fate of the Dayaks but had offended them in other ways. The measures proposed by President Wahid, including upgraded educational and health facilities, seemed to recognize the need to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Dayaks but fell far short of the kind of program required to compensate them for what they have already lost. In this regard, the president's promise to return 'sacred land' may have failed to grasp the essence of the problem but it at least acknowledged past violation of Dayak cultural values. ICG welcomes the establishment of a commission of enquiry by the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission to investigate the violations of human rights in Central Kalimantan. In carrying out its investigations and presenting its findings it is to be hoped that the commission will focus on the goal of restoring harmony between the two communities. In virtually all communal conflicts, the rival communities firmly hold to

radically different explanations about how the conflict began in the first place. An undue focus on 'who started it' can - even if the findings are objectively true - easily aggravate mutual hostility rather than pave the way towards reconciliation.

The experience of Central Kalimantan also points to general lessons that might be broadly applicable to other parts of Indonesia. The most general conclusion to be drawn concerns so-called 'indigenous' communities that have been dislocated, discriminated against, deprived and marginalised. Although these communities often lack modern organisations to fight for their rights and seem to accept their fate, they usually nurse a deep sense of resentment against the unjust treatment that they have suffered at the hands of governments, corporations and relatively 'advanced' ethnic communities. From time to time these alienated communities express their resentments violently against other vulnerable communities even though their targets are not necessarily responsible for their sufferings. The national government should therefore give serious attention to the frustrations of alienated communities which in normal times lack the means to bring their own cause to the attention of national policy-makers. Special measures should be taken to compensate them for loss of land, forests and other resources.

The comments made above about the performance of the security forces in Central Kalimantan apply in various degrees to most provinces in Indonesia. As has been explained in earlier ICG reports on the military and the police,<sup>137</sup> both forces are seriously under-funded which means that their members have to supplement their own incomes by other means. The need of individuals to find additional income often forces them to engage in practices that alienate the rest of the community. In these circumstances, high standards of professionalism can hardly be expected. Indonesia badly needs an internal security force capable of dealing promptly and effectively with ethnic and religious clashes. One difficulty experienced by police in Central Kalimantan is

<sup>137</sup> *Indonesia: Keeping the Military Under Control*, ICG Asia Report No.9, Jakarta/Brussels, 5 September 2000; *Indonesia: National Police Reform*, ICG Asia Report No 13, Jakarta/Brussels, 20 February 2001.

that predominantly non-Kalimantan police officers lacked adequate intelligence about developments within the Dayak community. There is a need to recruit more police personnel from 'indigenous' communities not only in Kalimantan but also in other parts of Indonesia where such communities are large.

The experience of Sampit also points to a more general potential source of ethnic conflict arising from the government's decentralisation program. One result of this policy has been to place enormous new resources at the disposal of some district governments, especially in resource-rich areas, with the result that the sudden growth of the spoils of office has stimulated sharper political competition. In the context of democratisation in ethnically diverse areas, there is an increased danger that politicians will be tempted to turn to ethnic mobilisation in order to win popular support. ICG does not go so far as a recent Human Rights Watch recommendation that there 'should probably be a complete moratorium on any administrative boundary changes or local administration restructuring until a credible law and order presence is in place and the situation in Jakarta becomes more stable'.<sup>138</sup> But the Sampit case provides a warning that the possible impact on ethnic relations needs to be carefully considered when such administrative measures are adopted.

**Jakarta/Brussels 27 June 2001**

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<sup>138</sup> *Indonesia: The Violence in Central Kalimantan (Borneo)*: A Human Rights Watch Press Backgrounder, New York, 28 February 2001.



## **APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS**

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Bupati	Head of district government
LMMDDKT	Lembaga Musyawarah Masyarakat Dayak dan Daerah Kalimantan Tengah (Central Kalimantan Dayak Community Consultative Institute)
Mandau	Traditional Dayak sword
PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle)
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Military)
Tombak	Traditional Dayak spear

## **APPENDIX B: ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP**

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The International Crisis Group (ICG) is a private, multinational organisation committed to strengthening the capacity of the international community to anticipate, understand and act to prevent and contain conflict.

ICG's approach is grounded in field research. Teams of political analysts, based on the ground in countries at risk of conflict, gather information from a wide range of sources, assess local conditions and produce regular analytical reports containing practical recommendations targeted at key international decision-takers.

ICG's reports are distributed widely to officials in foreign ministries and international organisations and made generally available at the same time via the organisation's internet site, [www.crisisweb.org](http://www.crisisweb.org). ICG works closely with governments and those who influence them, including the media, to highlight its crisis analysis and to generate support for its policy prescriptions. The ICG Board - which includes prominent figures from the fields of politics, diplomacy, business and the media - is directly involved in helping to bring ICG reports and recommendations to the attention of senior policy-makers around the world. ICG is chaired by former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari; former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans has been President and Chief Executive since January 2000.

ICG's international headquarters are at Brussels, with advocacy offices in Washington DC, New York and Paris. The organisation currently operates or is planning field projects in nineteen crisis-affected countries and regions across three continents: Algeria, Burundi, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Zimbabwe in Africa; Burma/Myanmar, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan in Asia; Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia in Europe; and Colombia in Latin America.

ICG raises funds from governments, charitable foundations, companies and individual donors. The following governments currently provide funding: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France,

Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Foundation and private sector donors include the Ansary Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Open Society Institute, the Ploughshares Fund, the Sasakawa Foundation, the Smith Richardson Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the U.S. Institute of Peace.

June 2001

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Released since January 1999

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