

The Papua Monitor: Q1/2025



April 2025 Update: Human Rights and Conflict Developments in West Papua¹, Indonesia -
Covering Events from 1 January to 31 March 2025 (1st Quarter 2025)

Violations	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2024 Q4	2025 Q1
Torture	2 victims in 2 cases	11 victims in 3 cases	9 victims in 7 cases	23 victims in 12 cases
Freedom of expression	10 victims in 2 cases	18 victims in 8 cases	2 victims in 2 cases	More than 3 victims in 3 cases
Killings	3 victims in 3 cases	6 victims in 4 cases	7 victims in 6 cases	6 victims in 6 cases
Disappearances	1 victim in 1 case	-	2 victims in 2 cases	-
Intimidation	1 victim in 1 case	13 victims in 5 cases	2 victims in 2 cases	Dozens of victims in 3 cases
Criminalisation	1 victim in 1 case	-	-	-
Ill-treatment	34 victims in 7 cases	54 victims in 13 cases	More than 38 victims in 12 cases	More than 11 victims in 8 cases
Cultural rights	Dozens of victims in 4 cases	Dozens of victims in 3 cases	Dozens of victims in 1 case	Dozens of victims in 3 cases
Arbitrary detention	93 victims in 7 cases	233 victims in 9 cases	65 victims in 9 cases	81 victims in 11 cases
Freedom of assembly	More than 107 victims in 6 cases	More than 279 victims in 13 cases	More than 87 victims in 6 cases	More than 68 victims in 7 cases
TOTAL	More than 132 victims in 19 cases	More than 313 victims in 33 cases	More than 122 victims in 23 cases	More than 117 victims in 29 cases

Table 1: Violation and victim data per quarter. A "+" symbol following a number indicates a certain count (the number given) plus an additional, less precise count (e.g., dozens, several). Each column is an independent set, reflecting the possibility of multiple violations per victim or case. Totals represent unique counts per column, not aggregate sums.

Summary

Human rights

Between January and March 2025, the human rights situation in West Papua was marked by a series of [security force operations across various regencies in the central highlands](#), some of which were accompanied by aerial bombings near civilian settlements. The increased military presence and counter-insurgency operations led to [new internal displacements](#) in the affected areas (see conflict section) and also resulted in an unusually high number of torture cases during this reporting period (see table above). Armed violence

¹ The term West Papua, also sometimes referred to as Papua, Tanah Papua (Land of Papua) or Western New Guinea refers to the western half of the New Guinea islands and is recognised by the United Nations as part of Indonesia since 1969. It is comprised of the Indonesian administrative provinces Papua Province, Papua Barat Province, Papua Tengah Province, Papua Pegunungan Province, Papua Selatan Province, and Papua Barat Daya Province. The unresolved [conflict about the political status of West Papua](#) continues to cause violence and violations of human rights and indigenous people's rights.

significantly escalated in Intan Jaya, where the Indonesian military (TNI) reportedly conducted [bombardments near civilian settlements](#) in response to an attack by the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB). Meanwhile, the human rights community in West Papua has lost one of its most senior and prominent human rights defenders. [Mr Yones Douw passed away in his home in Nabire on 2 February 2025.](#)

During a visit to Indonesia in March 2025, Amnesty International Secretary General, Mrs Agnes Callamard, expressed concerns regarding the entrenched impunity in Indonesia, particularly in West Papua, where military and police actors routinely escape prosecution for extrajudicial killings, torture, and suppression of civil space, as law enforcement institutions fail to ensure accountability for human rights violations. [Throughout the reporting period, courts acquitted perpetrators while ignoring incriminating witness testimonies and evidence, and the law enforcement processes in various cases of extrajudicial executions, torture, and the Molotov attack against the media outlet Jubi](#) faced significant delays and a lack of transparency. Solidarity groups and [human rights activists](#) advocating for justice in such cases have faced [suppression, intimidation, and physical assault.](#)

[In several regencies across West Papua, educational services are facing severe disruptions](#), with thousands of students unable to access basic education. Recent reports from multiple locations highlight a troubling pattern of abandoned schools, absent teachers, and students left without educational opportunities. Cases documented throughout the reporting period show that structural failures have also affected West Papua's healthcare system. While the disparities between urban and rural areas regarding the availability, accessibility, quality, and adequacy of healthcare are a long-standing issue in the region, it is alarming that recent cases also indicate a growing deterioration of services in the urban areas. In [the general hospital in Nabire, over 200 health workers at the Nabire General Hospital \(RSUD\)](#), including doctors, nurses, and midwives, went on strike, demanding months of unpaid incentives dating back to late 2024.

Meanwhile, the extensive exploitation of West Papua's national resources continues. [Cases of mining](#) are driving conflicts and [destroying the environment](#) that indigenous communities depend on as their source of livelihood. Government-driven agricultural mega-projects have become a major threat to the existence of many indigenous tribes across West Papua. The most prominent example is the [Strategic National Project \(PSN\) in Merauke, where the government has planned to develop rice and sugar cane on 2 million hectares of customary land](#) without the free, prior, informed consent (FPIC) of indigenous communities. The [indigenous Marind Anim people of South Papua, alongside hundreds of indigenous activists from across Indonesia, have issued a powerful rejection of the PSN](#) that threatens their land, culture, and livelihoods. The implementation of the PSN was handed over to the TNI and [started in September 2024](#). It is highly concerning that the military and the police keep pushing into civilian spaces, particularly in the field of agriculture. In a controversial move, [the Indonesian National Police \(Polri\) launched a large-scale corn cultivation project targeting 1.7 million hectares of land across the country, including in Jayapura.](#)

Conflict

As of 1 April 2025, [more than 86,886 people in West Papua remain internally displaced](#) as a result of armed conflict between Indonesian security forces and the TPNPB. HRM documented 24 armed attacks and clashes throughout the first quarter of 2025. The figure of IDPs has risen again after [Indonesian security forces intensified operations in the regencies of Nduga, Pegunungan Bintang, and Puncak in January and February 2025.](#)

Hostilities in Intan Jaya increased significantly after TPNPB fighters attacked an Indonesian military convoy in the Janamba village on 27 March 2025. Thereupon, [the Indonesian military launched counterinsurgency operations across multiple districts](#), targeting what they claimed were insurgent positions. Evidence collected by local human rights defenders indicates that civilian areas were indiscriminately bombarded, resulting in widespread displacement and [at least one civilian death](#). On 23 March 2025, TPNPB members attacked teachers and health workers in the Angguruk Village, Yahukimo Regency, killing one of them and leaving seven others injured.

The deployments to conflict areas in the central highlands are part of the military's (TNI) new combat tactics in West Papua. [TNI General Agus Subiyanto announced in late January 2025](#) that he would make fundamental changes to its war doctrine, allowing the TNI to be more adaptive and capable of dealing with the guerrilla war in West Papua. [General Subiyanto elaborated](#) that the change would include technical adjustments, improving soldiers' tactical capabilities, and modernising combat equipment.

The period between January and March 2025 was marked by a high number of fatalities among both Indonesian security forces and civilians. Ten members of the security forces were killed, and one was injured during this period. In contrast, the TPNPB reportedly lost no combatants during hostilities. The armed hostilities between the conflicting parties also affected civilians, with four civilians killed and eight injured by the TPNPB, and two killed and four wounded by security force members during armed clashes or counter-insurgency operations.

The [National Human Rights Commission \(Komnas HAM\) condemned the use of public facilities such as schools, district offices, and churches as security posts by the TNI and police in West Papua](#), stating that it constitutes a human rights violation. According to local human rights observers, the TNI continues to occupy public facilities in the [Maybrat](#), [Nduga](#), and [Pegunungan Bintang](#) regencies.

Political developments

The Indonesian President, President Prabowo Subianto, launched the 'Free Nutritious Food' Project (Makanan Bergizi Gratis, MBG) across Indonesia, with a large-scale rollout scheduled for February 2025. [In West Papua, thousands of students in the regencies of Jayawijaya, Yalimo, Jayapura, Paniai, Deiyai, and Nabire held peaceful protests against the program](#), criticising the involvement of the military and demanding free education instead of free lunch meals. Security forces violently suppressed protests in Wamena, Yalimo, Timika, Jayapura, Sentani, and Nabire, including the use of tear gas, beatings, mass arrests, and intimidation of students inside schools.

[On 10 March 2025, TNI Commander General Agus Subiyanto disclosed a list of government institutions legally authorised to appoint active-duty TNI soldiers to civilian posts](#), based on Article 47 of Law No. 34 of 2004 concerning the TNI. These agencies include key strategic institutions, including the Supreme Court. According to the Indonesian human rights organisation 'Imparsial', [approximately 2,500 active TNI soldiers currently occupy civilian positions in direct violation of the same TNI Law](#).

[A closed-door meeting on the amendments held at the Fairmont Hotel in Jakarta on 15 March became controversial when three civil society activists](#) protesting the secretive process were reported to the police by hotel security, allegedly for disturbing public order. [On 20 March 2025, the Indonesian House of](#)

[Representatives \(DPR\) officially adopted amendments to Law Number 34 of 2004 on the Indonesian National Army \(TNI\)](#). Widespread protests across Indonesia erupted in response to the government's controversial revision of the law. [Student-led demonstrations in various cities were met with forceful responses from security forces](#), raising serious concerns about police violence, the stifling of civil society participation, and the erosion of democratic freedoms in Indonesia.

International developments

The [Pacific state of Vanuatu, in cooperation with the Federated State of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, and Samoa, delivered a joint statement](#) on the situation of human rights defenders in West Papua during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders on 6 March 2025 at the 18th Meeting of the 58th Session of the Human Rights Council. [Christian Solidarity International \(CSI\) delivered another statement](#) at the UN Human Rights Council on 28 March 2025, [warning of the Indonesian government's plans to expand its military presence and exploit natural resources in West Papua](#).

The [European Union Deforestation Regulation \(EUDR\)](#) is a policy designed to ensure that products entering the EU market are deforestation-free as part of the European Union (EU) target to reach climate neutrality by 2050. The EUDR mandates that companies conduct rigorous due diligence to verify that their supply chains are free from deforestation, forest degradation, and associated human rights violations. [It holds profound implications for West Papua and Indonesia](#), where agribusiness expansion and related investments have been linked to widespread environmental destruction and human rights abuses.

Over 120 civil society organisations from Europe and Indonesia, including Human Rights Monitor, have [called on the European Union and Indonesia to end negotiations on a proposed Free Trade Agreement](#) (FTA). The EU-Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) being developed will likely pose [significant risks to environmental and human rights, particularly for indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups in the Indonesian archipelago](#). The EU is particularly interested in finalising an agreement due to Indonesia's vast nickel reserves, which are key components of electric vehicle batteries.

Cases

Unlawful killings and enforced disappearances



Excessive force in Mappi Regency results in execution of a Papuan student and torture of two others

On 29 January 2025, a student named Herlis Pakaimu died after reportedly being tortured and shot by military members in Mappi Regency, Papua Selatan Province. Two other Papuans, Mr Steven Agawemu and Mr Santos Agawemu, were allegedly tortured by the same military personnel.

[Read more](#)

Extrajudicial execution of indigenous Papuan during military operation in Intan Jaya

On 30 March 2025, Indonesian military forces reportedly shot dead Mr Okto Zanambani, an indigenous resident of Janamba village, during an intensified counterinsurgency campaign in the districts of Hitadipa and Sugapa, Intan Jaya Regency, Papua Tengah Province.

[Read more](#)



Navy member accused of murdering woman in Sorong



On 12 January 2025, Mrs Kesya Irene Yola Lestaluhu, a 20-year-old woman, was found murdered in Saoka Beach, Sorong, Papua Barat Daya Province. The perpetrator, Mr Agung Suyono Ponidi, a 23-year-old member of the Indonesian Navy, confessed to stabbing the victim multiple times after engaging in sexual intercourse.

[Read more](#)

Military members torture indigenous Papuan in Sorong - Victim dies later in hospital

On 14 February 2025, members of the Indonesian National Army (TNI) arbitrarily detained and tortured Mr Abner Karet, 23, in Sorong City, Papua Barat Daya Province.

[Read more](#)



Military members alleged of executing Papuan civilian in Mamba Village, Intan Jaya

On 27 February 2025, members of the Indonesian National Army (TNI) arbitrarily arrested and tortured Mr Goliath Sani in Mamba Village, Sugapa District, Intan Jaya Regency, Papua Tengah Province.

[Read more](#)

Allegations of torture and killing of indigenous Papuans in Mebarok District: HRDs call for immediate independent investigation

Military personnel tortured and killed Mr Abral Wandikbo during a military raid in Yuguru village, Mebarok District, Nduga Regency, Papua Pegunungan Province on 22 March 2025. Relatives found his body two days later with dismembered limbs.

[Read more](#)



Torture & ill-treatment

Military members alleged of torturing and arbitrarily detaining Papuan men in Keangga, Puncak Regency

On 5 February 2025, military personnel reportedly raided community gardens near the Keangga Hamlet. According to the information received, the military members ambushed a group of indigenous villagers who had come to the gardens to collect food. The soldiers tortured U.T. 36 and T.M., 30, from the Pogoma Village and subsequently detained them for more than a week.

[Read more](#)

Police officers alleged of shooting Papuan farmer in Kaporaya District

On 7 February 2025, members of the Pumako Police Mobile Brigade (Brimob) special unit reportedly opened fire at a Papuan farmer, Mr Marten Anouw, in the Kaporaya District.

[Read more](#)



Police officers ill-treat Papuan youth following public celebration in Merauke

On 16 February 2025, police officers allegedly assaulted Mr Day Abuy, in front of the Mangga Market Police Post, Merauke City, Papua Selatan Province. Police officers allegedly assaulted him as he passed by the police post with a group of people. He sustained a bleeding injury on the head and the right knee.

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Two minor girls sexually abused during police custody in Kaimana – Police officer arrested

A police officer with the initials EMP is suspected of raping the girls, aged 13 and 14 years while on detention after the two victims were caught stealing in Kaimana, Papua Barat Province.

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Military members torture Papuan man inside military post in Intan Jaya

On 4 March 2025, Mr Aguni Sondegau, a 25-year-old motorcycle taxi driver, was arbitrarily arrested and tortured by members of the Yonif 509 military unit at the Holomama Military Post, Intan Jaya Regency, Papua Tengah Province.

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Police officer stabs Papuan man in Yalimo Regency: Case highlights lack of professionalism among police in West Papua

On 5 March 2025, a police officer reportedly stabbed Mr Elinus Walianggan during police detention in the town of Elelim Yalimo Regency.

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Military members torture indigenous Papuans in Puncak Jaya

On the night of 13 March 2025, military personnel reportedly tortured three indigenous Papuans in the Puncak Jaya Regency, Papua Pegunungan Province.

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Police brutality against Papuan student in Dogiyai Regency

On 24 March 2025, violence escalated in the Moanemani Village, Dogiyai Regency, Papua Tengah Province, as a group of police officers reportedly released warning shots and dispersed the crowd at the local market with tear gas.

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Arbitrary detention, intimidation, and criminalisation



Police arrest two minors in Dekai without a warrant

Members of the Police Mobile Brigade Special Unit reportedly arrested Yakonge Mirin, 14, and Ham Salla, 17, at the Kali Bonto Sosial Street in the town of Dekai, Yahukimo Regency, Papua Pegunungan Province, during a police patrol on 3 January 2025.

[Read more](#)

Human rights defenders in West Papua under surveillance: Security force members again intimidate activist Tineke Rumkabu

On 26 January 2025, human rights activist Mrs Tineke Rumkabu was intimidated by joint security force members. They came to see Mrs Rumkabu during worship and later visited her house in Biak, Papua Province, to question her.

[Read more](#)





Arbitrary arrest and torture of five Papuan students in Jayapura

On 8 February 2025, five Papuan students were arbitrarily arrested without a warrant by plainclothes officers in Jayapura. The students were forcefully detained, their hands were bound, and their eyes were covered. According to the victims, they were subjected to torture and intimidation during their detention.

[Read more](#)

Police officers intimidate students at Jayawijaya dormitory in Manokwari

On 10 March 2025, members of the Papua Barat Regional Police (Polda Papua Barat) intimidated students at the Jayawijaya student dormitory in Manokwari.

[Read more](#)



Escalating intimidation against human rights defender in Yahukimo

Human rights defender, Mr Marcho Pahabol, a member of the Justice Front for Tobias Silak (FJFTS) solidarity group, was subjected to a series of intimidation and violent attacks in the town of Dekai, Yahukimo Regency, Papua Pegunungan Province

[Read more](#)

Freedom of expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly and association

President Prabowo's free lunch program triggers protests in West Papua: Police officers intimidate, arrest and ill-treat pupils



On 3 February 2025, hundreds of pupils in Dekai Town, Yahukimo Regency, staged a protest against Prabowo's free lunch project. Two weeks later, students across West Papua held peaceful demonstrations in rejection of the program on 17 February 2025. Protests took place in Wamena, Jayapura, Sentani, Nabire, Timika, Yalimo, and Dogiyai. Security forces violently suppressed protests...

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Suppression of peaceful protest calling for justice in the killing of Tarina Murib

On 12 February 2025, police officers prevented Papuan students from holding a peaceful demonstration at the local parliament Office in Nabire, Papua Tengah Province. The protesters aimed to demand justice for the killing of Mrs Tarina Murib...

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Other violations



Illegal mining operations threaten ecosystems in Papua Tengah Province

Illegal mining operations have been discovered in Ajuda Village at the border of Intan Jaya Regency in Central Papua Province with Waropen Regency, raising significant environmental and social concerns among residents and environmental activists.

[Read more](#)

Cultural discrimination at Merauke Cathedral: Police and Catholic priest ban traditional attire during worship

On 9 March 2025, two indigenous Papuans faced cultural discrimination inside the church for using customary clothes at the cathedral in Merauke.

[Read more](#)



Communities in Yapen Islands file complaint against mining company PT SPK over environmental damage



Residents from three villages in the Yapen Islands, Papua Province, have lodged a formal complaint with the Papua Representative Office of the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) against PT Sinar Purna Karya (PT SPK).

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About Human Rights Monitor

The Human Rights Monitor (HRM) is an independent, international non-profit project promoting human rights through documentation and advocacy. HRM is based in the European Union and active since 2022. We are achieving our vision by documenting violations; researching institutional, social and political contexts that affect rights protection and peace; and sharing the conclusions of evidence-based monitoring work.

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