

Impunity

Enduring Impunity, Women Surviving Atrocities in the Absence of Justice

Last month an important report has been published on the gender perspective of impunity in a number of Southeast Asian countries. Human rights violations against women and ensuing impunity in Indonesia, Timor Leste and Myanmar are being highlighted. But also the active role of women in demanding justice, and several methodologies to achieve story-telling and counseling. The report is the result of research carried out and coordinated by AJAR (Asia Justice and Rights) together with survivors, their children and other relatives.

From the foreword: “The atrocities experienced by these women provide a challenge to us and humanity. Sisters in Asia, let us rise up to this challenge.”

See: <http://www.asia-ajar.org/files/ENDURING%20IMPUNITY%20final-23%20Nov-press.pdf>

From Inside Indonesia:

Review: 'Enduring impunity': Women surviving atrocities in the absence of justice

Katharine McGregor

71 year-old Ibu Kadmiyati is a survivor of the 1965 violence in Indonesia. She was imprisoned for a year along with her father and, upon her release, devoted her life to helping her mother support a family of seven children whilst her father remained in detention. Ibu Kadmiyati was one of two survivors who attended the

Ubud Readers & Writers Festival (UWRF) this October. With fellow survivor, Ibu Hartiti, her engagements at the festival included speaking at the opening of a photographic exhibition in which she featured, and launching the book from this larger project on women survivors of state violence, titled Enduring Impunity.

The forced cancellation of the photo exhibition, Act of Living, and other events in the festival program related to 1965, did not dissuade Ibu Kadmiyati and Ibu Hartiti from going to Ubud and participating in the festival. In media reports covering that event, the women were labelled ‘gutsy grannies’. But more than ever, the forced cancellations of these programs at UWRF 2015 was a reminder that much more still needs to be done to allow survivors of this violence public spaces to talk about their experiences of this history and its long aftermath.

Somewhat remarkably, perhaps, the launch of Enduring Impunity was not targeted for removal from the festival program. Moreover, from within its pages Ibu Kadmiyati’s call is more pertinent than ever. ‘I also demand and hope for justice for the violence against the victims of 1965. For the sadistic torture and killing of millions of people and those detained up to 14 years. When will the law be upheld? ... Who is sadistic and cruel? The communists? Or the perpetrators of the killings? Find out the truth.’

Written by a team of researchers from the Jakarta-based non-government organisation Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR), this book aims to examine the long term effects on women of politically motivated violence. The cases, from Myanmar, Indonesia and Timor-Leste are all examples of where victims are yet to see justice. The social and political contexts within which these women still live, continue to support impunity for the perpetrators of these crimes.

In the opening pages of Enduring Impunity the authors define the meaning of endure as: ‘to suffer (something painful or difficult) patiently’ and ‘to remain in existence, to last’. In this definition they highlight the lingering effects on women of rape, torture, imprisonment and the loss of loved ones.

Weekly Update Human Rights in Indonesia – date 30-11-2015

In Indonesia's case, victims and their supporters continue to confront state resistance to acknowledge the injustice of the 1965 violence, which claimed half a million lives and included the detention and forced labour of hundreds of thousands of political prisoners. It is only by uncovering and addressing the ongoing effects of impunity that activists, together with survivors can begin to take steps to address these effects and to raise public awareness.

AJAR's project is premised on a shift towards better understanding what impunity means in the context of the daily lives not only of survivors but also of the broader society where violence is accepted and tolerated and where there is ongoing stigmatisation and persecution of survivors. The book is one outcome of participatory-based research with 140 women from Myanmar, Indonesia and Timor-Leste. The ages of the women survivors range from between 15 and 78 years old. The project's aim was not only to document and understand the social and economic impact of violence on women survivors, but to also engage them in exercises to promote truth, advocacy and healing. The women were an integral part of the research process. In Indonesia, with the support of Komnas Perempuan (National Commission on Violence Against Women) there was also an effort to link the women with government support services.

Underpinning the research is a complex understanding of how ongoing impunity continues to affect the women's lives and the ways this might be reversed. AJAR's research is based on a long term commitment to the survivors and also a wariness within women's rights advocacy organisations of the 'hit and run' focus of transitional justice measures. The AJAR team was especially aware of the need to tackle head on the fact that women experiencing violence face specific barriers in society, which justice measures often overlook.

See also: <http://www.insideindonesia.org/enduring-impunity>

Local elections 9 December

Election procedures on schedule

Kompas, 28-11-2015

The Election Commission (KPU, Komisi Pemilihan Umum) is optimistic that the general elections of local authorities (bupati and mayors) will be carried out in accordance with the planning, on 9 December 2015. This notwithstanding the fact that in three areas the voting papers had to be printed again because one pair of candidates (bupati or mayor and his/her deputy) had to be withdrawn.



Transport of election material in Pulau Bawean, Kabupaten Gresik, Jawa Timur, Kompas, 28-11-2015

The three areas are Kabupaten Boven Digoel in the Province of Papua, Province Kalimantan Tengah, and Kota Manado. In Kabupaten Boven Digoel, the printing of the ballot papers had to wait for a judicial verdict on an appeal procedure by candidate bupati Yusak Yaluwo against the withdrawal of his candidacy. In the

Weekly Update Human Rights in Indonesia – date 30-11-2015

city of Manado and the province of Central Kalimantan Tengah, the ballot papers had to be reprinted because a candidate had withdrawn. The member of the Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU) Sigit Pamungkas said that the elections would not be postponed.

Detainees in Lampung to be allowed to vote

Kompas, 28-11-2015

IN the local elections in eight cities and districts in Lampung, some 1,700 detainees in prisons and detention centres experience obstacles in the realization of their right to vote. This was stated in a public debate by the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM), with the National Election Commission (KPU) and the Election Monitoring Body (Bawaslu) in Banda Lampung.

“In total there are some 1,700 prisoners who have the right to vote in the local elections of 9 December,” said KPU member Handi Mulyaningsih. In the districts of Lampung Selatan, Lampung Timur, Lampung Tengah, Pesisir Barat, Kota Metro, and Kota Bandar Lampung, KPU has made available special election locations (TPS) within the prisons. In Pesawaran and Way Kanan, the KPU has employed a mobile TPS.

The problems arise in the prison of Way Hui, Lampung Selatan. In this prison there are 700 prisoners who are listed in the official list of voters of Bandar Lampung. “The KPU of Bandar Lampung is not able to establish a special TPS as it falls under the region of Lampung Selatan. If the prisoners are going to vote in the nearest TPS of Bandar Lampung They have to go out of prison under special security measures,” said Handi.

Member of the Election Monitoring Body (Bawaslu, an independent body), Nazaruddin Togakratu, proposed that in this exceptional case the KPU of Bandar Lampung will be allowed to make a mobile TPS available, so that the prisoners of

prison Way Hui can realize their right to vote. He thinks this is a better solution than the prisoners going out of the prison. It is not easy to realise a security escort for 700 prisoners who have to vote in a number of different TPS’s. Komnas HAM member Ansori Sinungan said that the KPU of Bandar Lampung, Lampung Selatan, and Lampung should immediately find a solution. Detainees in prisons have the same right to vote as other civilians. “We have come here to solve problems with the right to vote of inmates of prisons. If those rights are not being fulfilled, they can report that to the DKPP (the Election Organizers Ethics Council). Violations of the right to vote are human rights violations,” said Ansori. He said he would report the matter to the central level of the KPU and Bawaslu. He added that in prisons the right to vote could be violated in a different way, namely by manipulation of the votes. He feared that the casting of votes in prisons could be subject to certain powers. “Prisoners who are dependent for their release can become objects of intimidation,” he said.

TNI to guard security during local elections

Kompas, 28-11-2015

The security situation in six districts and cities in the area of Surakarta (Solo), Central Java, remains normal and quiet. The local military command (Korem 074/Warastratama Surakarta) has deployed hundreds of military personnel to support the police to uphold security during the local elections of 9 December.

“In relation to the elections there are no special concerning areas in this region Solo Raya (eks Karesidenan Surakarta),” said the Commander of Korem 074/Warastratama Surakarta, colonel Arhanud Toto Nugroho .

The six districts and cities are Kota Solo, Kabupaten Klaten, Boyolali, Sragen, Sukoharjo, and Wonogiri. Although some tensions had arisen between the supporters of different candidates in Sragen, Boyolali, and Klaten, Toto said it was still acceptable. “It is still within the boundaries of acceptability, it is part of the

Weekly Update Human Rights in Indonesia – date 30-11-2015

process of having a grown-up democracy,” he said. To support the security, Toto said, the Korem 074 guarded the personnel in each military command area (kodim) of that area. In each Kodim the guards included 1 peloton (31 men) and in the Korem the guards were one company (107 men) “We are continuously on guard to back-up the police,” he said. (...)

The chairperson of the Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU, National Election Commission) of Sragen, Ngatmin Abbas, said he was optimistic that the elections in Sragen would be peaceful and secure. In Sragen there are four pairs of candidates (the bupati or mayor and his/her deputy) and up till now everything went peacefully. "To maintain this situation we as executives of the elections are constantly in contact with all other parties, such as the political parties, the candidates, the army, the police and the Monitoring Body.”

According to the chairperson of the KPU of Wonogiri, Mat Nawir, the temperature in Wonogiri will not rise in the run-up to election day. He has a good coordination with the security forces to be aware of any changes after the votes have been counted. He estimates that around 3.00 pm the candidates will know the results of the election. It is necessary to anticipate on any tensions between supporters of the different candidates. He stressed that the successful candidates will have their parallel quick-counting by their witnesses in each election office (TPS).

Social and Economic Rights

Social unrest and protests against pollution at a gold mine in Banyuwangi (East Java) has led to massive police interventions. How many people were hurt and/or arrested is not yet known. See:

<http://jakartaglobe.beritasatu.com/multimedia/police-open-fire-angry-residents-attack-gold-mine/>

Timor Leste

Australia received East Timor 'hit list' before Indonesian invasion

Friday 27 November 2015, By Sue Lannin

A think tank close to Indonesian intelligence agencies gave the Australian Government a 'hit list' of East Timor independence leaders before Indonesia invaded East Timor in December 1975. The list includes Jose Ramos-Horta, who managed to survive because he left East Timor. It also includes people who we know were killed by the Indonesians. The handwritten document from August 1975 has been unearthed from Australia's National Archives by Peter Job, a PhD student at the University of New South Wales, who is researching his doctorate on Australia-Indonesia-East Timor relations. The document, Steps to Prevent Communist Agitators to Escape, accuses Fretilin leaders like former East Timorese president Dr Jose Ramos-Horta and former prime-minister Dr Mari Alkatiri of being 'communist agitators' that should be arrested by Indonesia.

Their names were included on a list of 19 people handed to the Australian Embassy in Jakarta in September 1975 by Harry Tjan, the Indonesian adviser who told Australia that Indonesia was planning to invade East Timor. Tjan was a founder of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a Jakarta-based think tank.

Read more:

http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/australian-received-east-timor-%27hit-list%27/6979268?utm_content=buffer56807&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer