

FOET (WA) News Sheet

September 1999

In West Timor, the militias threaten and water is scarce.

An Oxfam worker just returned from West Timor told the Guardian yesterday that the refugees there were living as virtual prisoners in camps run by the militia groups that carried out the killing sprees after the independence referendum.

"They are terrified about what is going to happen if there are any casualties or their people are hurt when the peacekeepers come in. The refugees know that they will be a target for revenge killings if anything goes wrong," she said.

She could not confirm reports that the militia had killed people in the camps.

"I have heard reports that people have disappeared and no one knows where they were taken to. The situation is very tense and they are living in a hostile environment."

Apart from brief visits from a Catholic relief agency and the UNHCR, the people displaced to West Timor have been on their own.

"They are being held in large transit camps," the Oxfam worker said. "There is food but not enough water. Water is scarce anyway at this time of the year and there isn't enough to cope with thousands of extra refugees. The people are also being forced to register by the militia groups."

Yesterday the head of the international peacekeeping force, General Peter Cosgrove, said in Darwin that while he was aware of the situation in West Timor, the international peacekeepers had no mandate there.

Excerpt: The Guardian, Monday September 20, 1999.

Coming events

♦ Picket at the Indonesian Consulate

Friday 24 September 7am - 6pm, 134 Adelaide Tce. Perth, (Opposite the Hyatt Hotel)

It is planned to resume the picket at the Indonesian Consulate on Friday 24 September. If events make it necessary, the picket will be started on an earlier date. Come along and show solidarity with the East Timorese people.

♦ Badges

The Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) is producing a high quality badge featuring the slogan "Free East Timor" and the colours of the CNRT. These will be on sale for \$10 within a fortnight and will certainly become a collectors item. All profits will go to the CNRT.

For more information phone 9361 4678.

♦ Film fundraiser "Punitive Damage"

Friday 8 October 6.15 pm for refreshments and East Timorese entertainment, 7.00pm Film Starts.

Luna Cinemas, 155 Oxford St. Leederville

Price: \$20 Waged/\$12 Unwaged/Concession.

There will be a raffle and light meals for sale. We are hoping to raise a substantial amount and all profits will go directly to the East Timorese via APHEDA's East Timor Emergency Appeal and the CNRT (The Council of East Timorese Resistance that represents all East Timorese).

For tickets contact Ramona on 9323 3800 or Sandra on 9328 7877.

"The release of documentaries on the big screen is a fairly rare occurrence. One which has broken through is the regionally relevant Punitive Damage... On the 12th November 1991 during the Dili massacre in East Timor, 20 year old Kamal Bamardhaj was killed. He was a student at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, the son of a New Zealand woman Helen Todd and her Malaysian former husband. The documentary Punitive Damage is the story of his death as told by his mother, his girlfriend, and people who knew him, as well as by journalists who were in Dili that day. It's also the account of Helen Todd's suing of General Sintong Panjalian, one of the generals in charge that day in Dili, in a District Court of the United States. It all adds up to a very powerful film experience..."

Margaret Pomeranz, Movie Show. ★★★★★½

Current Demands

Fax/Email/Phone/Write to all Federal MPs and Senators to urge Parliament to make Australia the first country in the world to recognize East Timor's Independence. You can also request that current aid to Indonesia be redirected to East Timor to help repair and rebuild the towns and villages so violently destroyed in recent weeks.

It is imperative that we continue to press both the Australian and international governments for continued action on East Timor. Some of the points that you could be making include the following;

1. Indonesian Military to leave East Timor.
2. Recognition of East Timor's independence by both the Australian and Indonesian Governments.
3. The safe return of the East Timorese hostages in West Timor and other areas of Indonesia.
4. Prosecution of War Criminals involved in the recent genocide.
5. Reparations from Indonesia for the wholesale destruction of East Timor.

For useful addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses see the following website:
www.freetimor.com.

Change of Policy for FOET

In the past, FOET has focused on one primary objective - Self determination for East Timor under UN auspices. This has now occurred with the vast majority of the population choosing independence. FOET now supports the establishment of an independent East Timor.

Refugees at Leeuwin Barracks

The East Timorese are expected to arrive at Leeuwin Barracks on Friday 24 September and will be quarantined for 3-4 days.

- Any donation of clothing (in good condition) and toys should be taken to the local salvation Army Depot and designated "For East Timorese Refugees".
- Offers of assistance for counselling and support or social activities should be made to Lynn O'Brien, Department of Immigration on 9261 2201. (All offers will, of course, be vetted.)
- Volunteers for a 24hr Cafe for refugees and friends at Leeuwin Barracks can contact the Christian Centre for Social Action Mrs. Kaye Tait or Peter Stewart on 9472 4227 (Fax) 9472 4226.

Emails

As the situation is changing rapidly we have found email to be the quickest and easiest way to let people know what is happening. If you have an email address or have changed the one that we have on our records, please send an email to the following addresses asking to be put on the notification list:

foetwa@perth.dialix.oz.au

flegge@ozemail.com.au

Websites

For in-depth coverage of the current situation in East Timor see the website of the East Timor International Support Centre -

www.easttimor.com

or the ABC site

www.abc.net.au/news/etimor/

and for details of what you can do

www.freetimor.com

FOET (WA) Membership for 1999

Membership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> \$10 Waged	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5 Unwaged	(Please circle)
Last Name Given Name		
Address		
Phone (h)	Phone (w)
Fax	Email

Return to the Friends of East Timor, PO Box 570, Victoria Park 6979 Phone: 9361 0373 or Phone/Fax: 9361 4678