

Report on the Condition of Filep Karma

Received from Peneas Lokbere, Organisation for Solidarity with Human Rights Victims in Papua

On 19 August, we visited Bapak Filep Karma, one of the political prisoners being held at the Abepura Prison who is now in the intensive care ward at the Dok Dua Hospital in Jayapura.

His medical problems began on 5th August when he was unable to control his bladder and was having to go to the toilet every five minutes to urinate. It was very painful for him to urinate. On the following day, he went to the prison clinic to ask for medical treatment. All that happened was that he was advised to hold his legs up against the wall when he went to sleep and rub the painful area. This resulted in intense pain in his biji klir (?bladder) which has probably been infected.

Filep Karma has been very unwell since 6 August but his condition received no attention from the prison director and personnel., although he reported that he was having problems to prison medical personnel.

On 17 August, he was able to speak to a journalist from Bintang Papua about his condition. It was only after a report about his condition appeared in the newspaper that others realised what was happening in the prison.

After more than a week of suffering, he was transferred from the prison to the Dok Dua hospital. While there he is under heavy guard by three prison offerers and two criminal prisoners.

His present condition: Attached to a drip, he is unable to eat or go to the toilet. He is unable to move at all and lies on his bed all the time. The local, national and international community need to pay attention to his condition.

[Filip Karma is serving a fifteen-year sentence for unfurling a flag in December 2004, along with a colleague Yusak Pakage, who was given a ten-year sentence for the same offence.]

The following is from the report that appeared in the local newspaper, Bintang Papua, on 18 August.

Filip Karma accuses the prison authorities of lack of attention to the condition of the prisoners. He was speaking on his own behalf and not for the 320 peisoners being held in Abepura Prison.

He complained that the prisoners are not getting the necessary attention or humane treatment. He failed to receive any attention for almost a whole week after complaining about his ailment.

Director of the prison, Anthonius Ayorbaba SH, rejected the complaint and denied that the prison authorities have paid too little attention to the political prisoners being held in the prison., insisting that all the prisoners were being treated in the same way. He claimed that the complaints made by Filep Karma did not represent the views of the other prisoners.

When Filip Karma met the journalist from Bintang Papua on 17 August, he was in great pain. With tears in his eyes, he said that the prison personnel were not giving proper attention to the tapol/napol (political and criminal prisoners). He said that they were being subjected to mental intimidation, unjust treatment and other things which he described as 'slowly killing them'.

'I was ill for a whole week without getting any attention from the prison warders. They did nothing,' he told Bintang Papua, with tears streaming from his eyes.

Since special autonomy (Otsus) was enacted, they have been branded as separatists. Previously, he said the person who was director of the prison, an immigrant from Indonesia, treated them well, but now it was as if Papuans were maltreating Papuans.

When the prison director was asked to confirm the medical condition of Filep Karma, he said that the prisoner had failed to properly inform the prison authorities about his condition which was why nothing had been done about his condition. Ayorbaba said that even now, he had not been informed about the condition of the prisoner.