

Endless Violence against Papua Women, Let's Solve this with Islam!

News:

Amid the heat of the divestment issue of 51% of US-owned Freeport shares, which dredge the wealth of Papua's mines, social and poverty problems are increasingly inundating many Papuan women who became the backbone of the family without their husband's presence. They have lost their husbands because they have been captured or killed, or they have even disappeared. In addition, according to BPS 2017 data, the highest child poverty rates are in the provinces of Papua, West Papua and East Nusa Tenggara respectively 35.57 percent, 31.03 percent, 26.42 percent.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection (PPPA), Yohana Susana Yembise, said that the highest level of domestic violence against women and children in Indonesia is still in the land of Papua, she stated when she was meeting with students from Papua province in Lampung on Tuesday (Republika, 17/10). Ironically, two years ago, the exact same statement came out from the Minister who was also a native Papuan figure. She said the cause of high domestic violence in Papua is due to the hereditary tradition of Papuan people who like liquor, thus disrupting the life in the household.

Comment:

Two years have passed since the Jokowi regime has appointed directly a Papuan woman minister to handle the issue of women and children in Indonesia. But far from expectations, the problem remains the same. On the other hand, the existence of US-owned mining corporation – Freeport – which sucks the wealth of Papua has not been expelled from the rich land of Papua. On March 2015, ELSHAM Papua institute released data which stated that the violence experienced by women of Papua is not just a case of domestic violence. Beyond that, the violence by military personnels in Papua has greater impact on women both directly and indirectly. There were 389 cases of military violence, with details of 234 people killed, 854 people were injured, and 880 people were arrested - according to data ELSHAM Papua within 2012-2014.

Indonesian security forces have been standing side by side with the foreign corporations in order to dredge Papua's natural wealth and to seize the land that belong to the people of Papua. Freeport-McMoRan Inc has seized the lands of Amungme tribe for nearly half a century. Women in the indigenous territory of Anim-Ha (Merauke) have been evicted from their lands, sago villages, rivers, and animals because their ancestral lands were seized by the state for the giant project of MIFEE (Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate). Women in indigenous territory of Mamberamo-Tami (Keerom, Jayapura) have also lost their lands, sago villages, as well as the forest that was a resource of meats and vegetables because of the seizure by the state that transformed them into millions of acres of oil palm plantation owned by Sinar Mas Tbk (National of Papua Solidarity - NAPAS, 2013).

Indeed, women of Papua are only victims of multi-layered and systemic violence in Papua which are derived from three main layers: **The first layer comes from broken families and society in Papua** which have been poisoned by the values of secular capitalist that nurtured a liberal and self-gratifying culture where the pursuit of selfish pleasures prevails, so it is natural that alcohol is often cited as the main factor causing the occurrence

of violence against women in Papua. All of that due to liberal mind-set of pursuing selfish desires regardless of the consequence upon others which often degrades Papua women and children. **The Second layer is the incompetent of Indonesia government** who makes a flawed economic policy by handing over Papua's natural wealth to foreign private corporations and that led to vast poverty in Papua and shoved the women to fall in the abyss of exploitation and mass violence. The Indonesian government is so mushy and inferior to the foreign corporations, particularly PT Freeport. In the midst of the euphoria of success of forcing Freeport to divest 51% of its shares, an abrupt letter from Freeport McMoran Inc boss, Richard Adkerson, was circulated to the public. The letter stated that Freeport rejected the divestment mechanism offered by the government. To persuade Freeport not to sulk, Finance Minister, Sri Mulyani Indrawati (SMI), hastily plans to issue a rule that alleviates the American miners' taxes. **Third layer is the Western subjection over Papua lands**, particularly the US and Australia which have been eyeing Papua's natural wealth and causing thousands of women of Papua as victims of Western geopolitical game in the eastern part of Indonesia. Many Papua women lost their husbands and families due to the prolonged conflict and military operations there. The West has been trying to separate Papua from Indonesia by riding the separatist movements in Papua, playing the issue of ethnic and cultural differences and strengthening the cooperation of Melanesian ethnic countries in the Pacific. The separatism efforts have done through three elements, i.e., armed movements and diplomatic and political ways. And these are in line with their efforts to weaken the Muslim countries, like Indonesia, and in line with their efforts to dredge the natural wealth from Papua through Freeport.

This layered violence should be ended soon! It is time to find alternative solutions for Papuan women. Why is the solution not from Islam? For too long, the rulers of this country have relied on secular patchy solutions of the Capitalist style, whereas the land of Papua is also the Islamic land known as *Nuu Waar*. In this *Nuu Waar* land, we can feel the presence of Islamic da'wah even since five hundred years ago. The name of *Nuu Waar* was given by the Muslim merchant who came at that time. Islam came in around 1214 while other religions (other than animism and dynamism) only entered around the 20th century. The name *Nu Waar* itself means light.

Thus, let's solve the problem of Papua Women with Islam! Starting from eliminating injustice and cruelty that occurs to women since the innermost layer; building a strong and a healthy society by strengthening family building and social devotion by promoting Islamic values, then actuating a competent state which is able of managing the wealth of the country for the prosperity and welfare of the people; distributing wealth evenly and justly; giving justice to all without discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, race, religion, group and other sectarian perspective and criteria. Also by realizing a strong sovereign state - an independent and foremost state that will reject any form of foreign intervention that threatens the country's sovereignty; a government which wholeheartedly acts as a *ra'i* - regulator and guardian of the affairs and welfare of the people. All of that can only be brought into reality through the total implementation of the Islamic system under the frame of the Islamic state, namely al-Khilafah Rashiidah.

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