

## Behind the Discovery of Human Skeletons in the Former Cesspool of PT Wiralanao

March 29<sup>th</sup> 2010 about 4 pm Jamaluddin (age 39) was looking for woods in a former cesspool of PT Wiralanao, Desa Bukit Seulamat, Sungai Raya subdistrict then he found out 4 queued sacks buried at the edge of the muddy pool. When the sacks was lifting up their ties still fastened. Then Jamaluddin loosen it and discovered number of broken bones with some of 3 inches sized nails, bullets and ebony and several stones weight 5 kg inside them. Jamaludin first was shocked for a moment to see the scenes. Madam Nurjannah (48) who was shepperd her cows near the pool approached and inquired on what Jamaluddin found with a curiosity.



Photos: 1, 2 & 3: the stones, nails, bullets and ebony which is found from the inside of sacks . (Doc. KontraS Aceh, 6/4/2010)



The pool, the location of 4 sacks was found in which allegedly contain human bones. (Doc. KontraS Aceh, 6/4/2010)

Jamaluddin poked the sacks, then the broken bones were spilt. Noticed that it was human bones Jamaludin and Nurjannah decided to summon the village priest to the location in order to convince him. On their way to the location they met Sair, who was the former worker of PT Wiralanao. Before Nurjannah finished her explanation, Sair rushly went to the location and checked the bones. Soon after the bones were released out from the sacks and brought together into a sand filter. The condition of the broken bones as it could be seen, some of

them was turned to powder. Sair believed that they were human skeletons who previously burned to clear their traces, as a result the bone was broken and cracked, despite inside the sacks no skull, teeth or hair was found.

There are three things which strengthen these people's suspicion. *First*, the bones were found in sacks loaded with stones, ebony, and bullets. It is alleged these stones intentionally added to add weight to the sacks in order to keep them sinking. And the nails, in supernatural beliefs, nails could calm the soul of the dead people means of the murderer would not be disturbed by their ghosts.

*Secondly*, another appeared allegation that it was animal skeletons. But this was a feeble assumption as accordance to the Acehnese custom the skeletons of dead animal is directly buried in the ground, and would not be put in sacks and water. Likewise the cattle animals, after consumed soon they would be directly dumped..

*Thirdly*, with reason that the discovery located in the ex-area of PT Wiralanao. During the Military operation, the timber preservation company was once functioned by Brimob Army since 2000 to 2005 after the Peace agreement between GAM and Indonesian republic in Helsinki. During this period numerous violences and human rights violation took place experienced by the inhabitants, daily inspections enforced either to people who lived around the military post or passerby. The people who was caught and brought into the post would be released with scars due to the torture on their body. And there was also rumours which is said they ever heard that someone also burned alive while was being interrogated. (*Please refers to PT Wiralanao's profile and the people testimony on the Brimob post existence as below*)

A few moment before the bones brought to the village's meunasah for washing, the Langsa and Sungai Raya police who also involved their doctors still able to come to the location to check the finding bones and documenting them and putted up the police line. Then the people brought the bones to Meunasah for burial preparation. The villagers treated the bones as if it is human corpse who also deserves for Islamic funeral.

A month later, precisely on April 23rd 2010, another sack was found out by a resident who was looking for wood sticks around the pool. Some parts of these broken bones were scorched supposedly due to burnt.

### **The police Version**

The Langsa Police has different opinion on the bones discovery. In the meeting with the deputy of Langsa Police office, Kompol Armudjito, SIK, in their opinion, it was not human bones, otherwise it was animal bones. This estimation was conveyed by the police doctor, Denny Herry W, who said that it was flake of bones and is not human bones. In addition, there were no skull or teeth which reinforced it was human bones. The police doctor assessed the bones aged about 7 years old.

While being asked of what the type of equipments which utilized by the police to detect the bones, they said, we detected them without using any equipments, only opinion from the doctor. Then we inquired for the conclusion of the police on these. And they said they would keep probing on the bones finding and informing the result to public.

The police had also asked the bones finder to sign the news event inspection. Tgk. Sulaiman, the finder who signed the BAP said the aim of his witness only for reporting purpose which means the police had already inspecting to the crime scene.

### **A Glance about the Buket Seulamat Village and PT Wira Lanao**

Buket Seulamat Village, Sungai Raya subdistrict formerly located in Aceh Timur district. After expansion on June 2010, the Sungai Raya included in Langsa district. Bukit Seulamat village has 4 subvillages, namely are: Ganevo, Setia, Alue Kertang and Translok. The 37,000 hectare areas resides by 400 householder those majority of them working on farming and fisheries sectors. The main production of the village is coming from the palm oil plantation, embankment and fisheries. Bukit Seulamat is located 20 km from Langsa municipal and 400 km from Banda Aceh. The subdistrict bordered directly with Aceh Timur district.



The gate of the former PT Wira Lanao at Jalan Raya Medan-Banda Aceh.  
(Dok. KontraS Aceh, 6/4/2010)

About PT Wira Lanao, it was inaugurated on July 30th, 1991 by President Soeharto through his Industry minister, Hartato. The owner was a chinese ethnic businessman comes from Singapore. Wira Lanao was the timber preservation factory. A number of woods was cutted down from the Krueng Penalon and Krueng Ujeun forests, Aceh Timur brought to Wira Lanao. PT. Wira Lanao is 15 hectare in large and employed about 1000 workers. the area is surrounded by 2 metres height brick fences, except the back side covered with planks. The location is very strategic opposite the Medan-Banda Aceh route road and only several metres from the residents' housing and plantation.

At the back of PT Wira Lanao there is a pool which purposely made for waste disposal. The pool in rectangle shape with 120 metres lenght and 15 metres width was digged in 1992. about two weeks before the bones finding, the water height of the pool was reached 6 feet. Some of the villagers was coming to exhaust its water to find fish. When the sacks full of bones was discovered, the water height only 60 cm with muddy condition.

On January 28th 2000, PT Wira Lanao was burnt down , and until now the perpetrator and their motive was unrevealed. More than a half of the building of molding factory was burnt and hundred tons of timber also destroyed. All of the factory equipment was turned to debris. A truck and a car (with daihatsu brand) also seared. Likewise, two cars (with Isuzu Pather brand) which also parked in the burnt area was grabbed by anonymous people. the workers mess which is adjacent to canteen also burned.

As the consequences from the fire, PT Wira Lanao had to ceased their operation and discharged 1700 of the workers, while neglecting workers rights. This action sparked a demonstration demanding for 100% payment of their wages, but PT Wira Lanao merely was willing to pay 75 % plus residual bonus 50.000 IDR<sup>1</sup>.

Soon after the fire incident--still at the same year, the police officer of Brimob who under the operation of Polres Aceh Timur was placed in Wira Lanao. They made post at the front of the factory , no valid information whether the brimob post positioned there, because the trails had gone owing to the fire, or it was intentionally planned the burnt down. Considering, at that time many factories in Aceh were also sited by security forces and function for periodical troops turn over.

The existence of Brimob Post at PT Wira Lanao was known as the most cruelty post in Aceh Timur district at that time. They were not only launching raid and inspection throughout villages but also often stopping and detaining the residents during their raids, particularly for those who was riding motorcycles (Honda RX-King Brand) and had sturdy figures. Almost each nights raiding was took place at the front of the post. As reported by a mass media, for Wira Lanao's military post if the truck drivers who passed and only give them 5000 IDR would be tortured.

### **Their Testimony on the Violences in PT Wira Lanao**

On November 23rd , 2003 around 12 am at noon Tgk. Arifin (30) was caught by Brimob due to allegedly involved Freedom Aceh Movement. He was brought to one of chamber in Wira Lanao post and chained. Tgk Arifin experienced torture with hit and electrocuted on his chest. On his first day in the prison he was encountered with another detainees, as well as for the second day and so on. Every time he met other detainees, he was inquired if he knew each of them.

Tgk. Arifin was detained for 15 days, during the time he encountered with 4 detainees whose names are Zulkifli, Zakir, Razali Abu and one of them allegedly as an activist who demanded for referendum. While was being interrogated, Tgk. Arifin had ever been threat --would be push into the timber preservation containers. Tgk. Arifin also heard from others there wer other detainees those burned down inside a truck wheel and it was stink.

In 2001, Raniah (26) was selling beverages in front of the post , she admitted her revenue was good. Beside the beverages was be in demand, the policemen often gave money for her as request for daily needs. If there were money remained, it usually amounting 20.000-30,000 IDR was given to Raniah.

At that time Raniah was 15 years old. For several times she met beautiful young women, aged about 20-25 were coming to the post. Some of them were coming with the Brimob

policemen those still working outside the post. Halimah believed they were the policemen's girlfriends with the reason they were well treated. Unlike others residents such as men—those who were detained or housewives—who asked for their family members freedom. These people were unable to enter the post.

Raniah suspected there were prostitution practice inside the post. Several times Raniah saw some women guarded by policemen went to Langsa. Before went home, they were carrying shopping goods, looked like cosmetics and clothes. Those women and the Brimob police look very familiar to each others, no fright on their face.

One day, Halimah heard a woman voice was crying for help to her. She was crying and speaking behind the metal railing window, which faced to the main road "Please, help me just persuade Mr. Samsul to release me from here?" frankly, Halimah really wanted to help the woman, but she was helpless and worrying if she did that so her kiosk would be destroyed.

In Buket Seulamat village a number of catching had taken place. However, the police would telling the villagers to fetch them at the post. Their family would be picked them, the victims' lives was safe but their bodies was black- and-blue due to the punches during the detained

"My husband once had been caught and detained there, he was punched until his body black-and-blue. His condition was severe. The policemen even had put their weapon grip into his mouth. My mother in law came to the post while pleaded for my husband release", Rapuah said (34), the resident.

The other resident, Tgk. Agusta (65) correcting that he was also heard many local residents caught and brought into the post. "They had caught by the joint forces, during their action for *Sweeping* and *Illegal charges* (pungutan liar). We didn't know if the detainee were released or not".

### **Excavation for the Human Skeletons post MoU Helsinki**

Beside the findings of four sacks of Human bones in Wira Lanao, post MoU Helsinki signed, KontraS Aceh had been documenting 38 skeleton findings or excavation of conflict victims in a number of district in Aceh, and the total findings was 74 of human skeletons. In some cases, the victims was caught/kidnapped in the first stage of military emergency in Aceh. The information on the excavation of the conflict cemetery had been covering the mass media since November 2005.

The excavation conducted by the victims' families and the local community with sober equipments, without engaging the police, forensic team, and Komnas HAM. In some of excavation also involved the Indonesian Red Cross (PMI), Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM), Police, and the Indonesian Army. These excavation was conducted in Aceh Tamiang, Aceh Timur, Aceh Utara, Pidie, Aceh Tengah, Birueun, Aceh Selatan and Aceh Besar. (*Please see to the data table of the Aceh conflict victim cemetery excavation*)

The graves excavation was executed with sober equipments such as hoe, spades, cleaver and other excavating tools. After the taken from the hole, the skeletons were checked at the local hospital or some of them were taken home by their families for proper funeral.



Excavation of human skeletons Desa Sarah Keudee, Kec. Rantau Seulamat, Aceh Timur (Doc. KontraS Aceh, 30/1/2006)



Excavation in embankment areas of Desa Seuping, Bendahara subvillage , Aceh Tamiang (Doc. KontraS Aceh, 24/11/2005)

The victims' skeletons were under different conditions, some of them were packed with sack clothes, hand tied position, and also found some skeletons without skull and hair in other grave. In some locations, the graves were found near with places which formerly was functioned as post by the non-organic apparatus of TNI (the Indonesian Army) .

In Aceh Besar, excavation and evacuation of the victims corpse was carried by the Indonesian Redcross /PMI. However in Aceh Tamiang, Aceh Utara and Pidie the excavation and the evacuation was executed by the victim's family and the local residents. On overall the victims' body was already turn into skeletons and some of them also not intact.

Regardless who the victims and the perpetrators, the excavation which is not involved the police and the National commission of Human Rights (Komnas HAM) is faults which then could lead to evidence removal of the allegedly crime on human rights in Aceh.

### **The Law Aspect**

Legally the findings of the human skeletons those allegedly improper death obliged the law enforcer to conduct investigation in which involved their forensic team. But from the 38 incidents of findings/dismantling, the police rather passive or merely just monitored the excavation while was executing by the residents.

With references to UU No 26 Tahun 2000 on human rights trial, the crime against humanity classify as severe human rights violation. Thus, investigation upon tens of findings is part authority of the national commission of human rights/ Komnas HAM. However, up to this day Komnas HAM still neglecting the current facts.

Furthermore during the enforcement of military operation in Aceh numerous violence took place, therefore it is supposed to the excavation involved parties namely police and Komnas HAM. The police together with their forensic team those will excavating the graves and probing the reason for the victims' death. After the check, the corpse bodies will be handed over to their family for Islamic funeral. Alongside, Komnas HAM as the state institution which authorized for investigating upon every findings and reports related to allegedly human rights violations, as well as to follow up every findings of violence victims' graves who allegedly as armed conflicts victims in Aceh.

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