

Refugee Review Tribunal

AUSTRALIA

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

Research Response Number: IDN30156
Country: Indonesia
Date: 12 May 2006

Keywords: Indonesia – Ethnic Chinese – Gerakam Pemuda Pancasila – State protection

This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

Questions

1. Can you provide information on GPP?
2. Can you also provide an update on the Indonesian authorities' attitude to GPP and treatment of and protection provided to the Chinese minority?

RESPONSE

1. Can you provide information on Gerakam Pemuda Pancasila (GPP)?
2. The Indonesian authorities' attitude to GPP.

Gerakam Pemuda Pancasila (GPP) may refer to Gerakan Pemuda Pancasila. Only one reference to Gerakan Pemuda Pancasila was found in the sources consulted. The reference, in Indonesian (not translated) and accessed from the internet, appears to list the group as an organisation to which a person named Surya Dharma Paloh belonged ('Surya Dharma Paloh (2): Bisnis dan Pentas Politik' 2004, Ensiklopedi Tokoh Indonesia website, 12 February <http://www.tokohindonesia.com/ensiklopedi/s/surya-paloh/index2.shtml> – Accessed 10 May 2006 – Attachment 1).

However, sources indicate that an English translation for "gerakan" is "movement" and "pemuda" means "youth" or "young man". "Pancasila" refers to the five principles of state ideology formulated by Sukarno in 1945 and incorporated into Indonesia's constitution (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2005, *IDN100777.E – Indonesia: Information on the youth group Pemuda Islam Indonesia or Pemuda Islamaa Indonesia; whether its members' uniforms include robes and bandanas and whether some of their bandanas have Arabic letters on them or the letters PII* (January 2003 – November 2005), 17 November – Attachment 2; Cribb, Robert & Kahin, Audrey 2004, *Historical Dictionary of Indonesia*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2nd ed., Lanham, p.335,311-312 – Attachment 3).

The GPP group may refer to a youth movement known as the Pemuda Pancasila, a group formerly affiliated with the Golkar Party. In mid-2001, a cadre from the Pemuda Pancasila assisted in the establishment of the political party Pancasila Patriot Party (Party Patriot Pancasila) (Cribb, Robert & Kahin, Audrey 2004, *Historical Dictionary of Indonesia*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2nd ed., Lanham, pp. 311-312 – Attachment 3; McBeth, John 2001, ‘Indonesia lost labour, lost reform’, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 15 March http://www.feer.com/0103_15/p022region.html – Accessed 26 March 2001 – Attachment 4); ‘Profile of political parties contesting the 2004 elections’, 2003, Action in Solidarity with Asia and the Pacific, source: *Kompas*, 9 December – Attachment 5).

According to Cribb and Kahin, Pemuda Pancasila was founded in 1959 as a subordinate wing of A. H. Nasution’s Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia (IPKI) party. The group became prominent in the closing years of Sukarno’s rule when it offered to send troops in support of the West Irian campaign (Cribb, Robert & Kahin, Audrey 2004, *Historical Dictionary of Indonesia*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2nd ed., Lanham, pp. 311-312 – Attachment 3).

Cribb and Kahin continued:

Pemuda Pancasila had centers in Jakarta and Medan, where it was largely an extortion agency, operating primarily against Chinese businesses. It was active in both areas after the 1965 coup..., taking a leading role in killing suspected communists particularly in North Sumatra. Under Suharto it became one of the foremost organizations of gangs, carrying out “thug” politics (*politik premanisme*). These gangs formed part of the security apparatus and were closely tied to the military in organizing riots and extracting money from businesses. Pemuda Pancasila groups reemerged (sic) in the early 1980s in the aftermath of the Petrus (Pembunuhan Misterius) killings, when they were reportedly the major instrument used by Suharto and Benny Murdani in wiping out Ali Murtopo’s gangster organization. Their ties to the military became closer in the late 1980s when their regional branches were matched with the army’s Komando Daerah Militer (Kodam) structure, and their militias were used by the army in maintaining local control. Pemuda Pancasila was suspected of providing many of the gangs that attacked Megawati Sukarnoputri’s Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (PDI) headquarters in July 1996, and the organization’s leaders were some of Suharto’s last outspoken supporters in May 1998, again being suspected of responsibility for much of the destruction of businesses on 13-14 May. Their influence apparently declined after Suharto’s fall (Cribb, Robert & Kahin, Audrey 2004, *Historical Dictionary of Indonesia*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2nd ed., Lanham, pp. 311-312 – Attachment 3).

A former leader of Pemuda Pancasila, Yapto Sulistio Soerjosoemarno, split from Golkar and established the Partai Patriot Pancasila in mid-2001. The party was unsuccessful in the 2004 Indonesian elections with less than 1% of the vote. A March 2004 news article stated that a member of Pemuda Pancasila was expelled from the Pancasila Patriot Party following his support for Golkar. However, an International Crisis Group report has noted that the Golkar Party’s Youth Wing (*Angkatan Muda Partai Golkar*) includes some Pemuda Pancasila members. The report also cites a senior adviser to Pemuda Pancasila that in the Medan parliament the organisation is represented in Golkar, PDI-P (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan*) and PAN (*Partai Amanat Nasional*) (‘Profile of political parties contesting the 2004 elections’, 2003, Action in Solidarity with Asia and the Pacific, source: *Kompas*, 9 December, pp.15-16 – Attachment 5; Sherlock, S. 2004, ‘The 2004 Indonesian Elections: How the System Works and What the Parties Stand For’, Centre for Democratic Institutions

(CDI) – Australian National University (ANU) website, February http://www.cdi.anu.edu.au/indonesia/indonesia_reports/Sherlock_Election%202004.pdf – Accessed 5 April 2004 – Attachment 6; Banks, Arthur S., Muller, Thomas C., and Overstreet, William R. 2006, *Political Handbook of the World: 2005-2006*, CQ Press, Washington, p.528 – Attachment 7; ‘PP fires member for loyalty to Golkar’ 2004, *The Jakarta Post*, 6 March – Attachment 8; International Crisis Group 2003, *Indonesia Backgrounder: A Guide to the 2004 Elections*, Asia Report No. 71, 18 December, p.3,6,16-17 – Attachment 9).

Reported activities of Pemuda Pancasila include smuggling and they are used as “thugs-for-hire” by factory managers against workers (Kearney, Marianne 2003, ‘Rebels in Papua may be next target’, *South China Morning Post*, 14 May – Attachment 10; ‘Labor group condemns brutality’ 2002, *Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor News Digest*, source: Laksamana.net, 19 February – Attachment 11).

For further historical information on Pemuda Pancasila see: Ryter, Loren ‘Pemuda Pancasila: The Last Loyalist Free Men of Suharto’s Order?’ in B. Anderson, B. (ed) 2001, *Violence and the State in Suharto’s Indonesia*, Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University, New York, pp.124-155 <http://falcon.arts.cornell.edu/lsr32/articles/pdf-ryter/ryter-PP.pdf> – Accessed 9 May 2006 – Attachment 12.

Indonesian authorities’ attitude to GPP

Information on the Indonesian authorities’ attitude towards Pemuda Pancasila was not found in the sources consulted. However, although Cribbs and Kahin state that the group’s influence apparently declined after Suharto’s fall (Cribb, Robert & Kahin, Audrey 2004, *Historical Dictionary of Indonesia*, The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2nd ed., Lanham, pp.311-312 – Attachment 3) a December 2003 article notes that:

The organisation [Pemuda Pancasila] still has close ties with various factions of the military and police, and has been linked to criminal activities such as racketeering and extortion. Members of Pemuda Pancasila are frequently used to attack pro-democracy activists and workers’ rights groups (‘Profile of political parties contesting the 2004 elections’, 2003, *Action in Solidarity with Asia and the Pacific*, source: Kompas, 9 December, footnote 10 – Attachment 5).

2. Can you provide an update on the Indonesian authorities’ treatment of and protection provided to the Chinese minority?

A December 2005 Country Research Response has information on discrimination against, (question 1) and protection of (question 3), ethnic Chinese in Indonesia (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response IDN17690*, 5 December – Attachment 13).

At the 2006 Chinese New Year celebrations the Indonesian President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, conceded that Chinese-Indonesians continued to face discrimination. According to the article the President stated that, despite the state recognising Chinese-Indonesians, “lower bureaucratic levels and common people were still adjusting to the changes” (‘Indonesian president calls for end to discrimination against ethnic Chinese’ 2006, *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific*, source: Xinhua news agency, 5 February – Attachment 14).

Recently, the US State Department reported for the year 2005:

...Instances of discrimination and harassment of ethnic Chinese declined compared

with previous years. Recent reforms increased religious and cultural freedoms. However, some ethnic Chinese noted that public servants still discriminated in issuing marriage licenses and in other services and often demanded bribes or a citizenship certificate, although such certificates were no longer legally required... (US State Department 2006, 'National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities' in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005 – Indonesia*, 8 March – Attachment 15).

A February 2006 *Jakarta Post* article noted that:

Chinese-Indonesians, along with non-Muslims, are a minority in the country and there are growing complaints that the state is not only unable but reluctant to protect their rights. But Muslims also feel they are a minority in terms of economic power. They also complain the state fails to protect their basic economic rights (Purba, Kornelius 2006, 'Ending discrimination needs everybody on board', *The Jakarta Post*, 8 February – Attachment 16).

With respect to police action the US State Department reported:

...Overall, however, police professionalism remained low, as did their respect for human rights and effectiveness at investigating human rights abuses. Impunity and corruption remained significant problems. There were instances in which the police failed to respond to mob or vigilante violence. Police commonly extracted bribes, from minor payoffs in traffic cases to large bribes in criminal investigations... (US State Department 2006, 'Arbitrary Arrest or Detention' in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005 – Indonesia*, 8 March – Attachment 15).

Nevertheless, a recent news article noted that at a riot in east Java:

Police are maintaining a strong presence to ward off possible retaliatory moves, including against Chinese-Indonesians... ('Police issue shoot-on-sight for for (sic) East Java rioters' 2006, *The Jakarta Post*, 1 May – Attachment 17).

List of Sources Consulted

Internet Sources:

Google search engine <http://www.google.com.au/>

Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)

BACIS (DIMA Country Information database)

REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)

ISYS (RRT Country Research database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)

RRT Library Catalogue

List of Attachments

1. 'Surya Dharma Paloh (2): Bisnis dan Pentas Politik' 2004, Ensiklopedi Tokoh Indonesia website, 12 February (<http://www.tokohindonesia.com/ensiklopedi/s/surya-paloh/index2.shtml>) – Accessed 10 May 2006)
2. Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2005, *IDN100777.E – Indonesia: Information on the youth group Pemuda Islam Indonesia or Pemuda Islamaa Indonesia; whether its members' uniforms include robes and bandanas and whether some of their bandanas have Arabic letters on them or the letters PII (January 2003 – November 2005)*, 17 November.
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11. 'Labor group condemns brutality' 2002, *Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor News Digest*, source: Laksamana.net, 19 February.
12. Ryter, Loren 'Pemuda Pancasila: The Last Loyalist Free Men of Suharto's Order?' in B. Anderson, B. (ed) 2001, *Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia*, Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University, New York, pp.124-155. (<http://falcon.arts.cornell.edu/lsr32/articles/pdf-ryter/ryter-PP.pdf>) – Accessed 9 May 2006)
13. RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response IDN17690*, 5 December.

14. 'Indonesian president calls for end to discrimination against ethnic Chinese' 2006, *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific*, source: Xinhua news agency, 5 February. (FACTIVA)
15. US State Department 2006, 'Arbitrary Arrest or Detention', 'National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities' in *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2005 – Indonesia*, 8 March.
16. Purba, Kornelius 2006, 'Ending discrimination needs everybody on board', *The Jakarta Post*, 8 February. (FACTIVA)
17. 'Police issue shoot-on-sight for for (sic) East Java rioters' 2006, *The Jakarta Post*, 1 May. (FACTIVA)