

**THE INDONESIA  
TIMES**

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## No famine in East Timor

False news has been spread by FRETILIN (Timor Revolutionary Front for Independence) which operates abroad and some interested parties that the youngest Province of Indoensia, East Timor, is suffering from famine, poor health and insecurity. This false news has been circulated particularly in the United Nations and Australia to discredit the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and besmear its name.

The International Red Cross Committee and former Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, have just returned from their visits to and inspections of East Timor.

According to the International Red Cross Committee there is no sign of famine in East Timor and it is of the opinion it is no longer necessary to introduce an emergency programme for the distribution of food similar to that of two and a half years ago. "What is necessary at present is to create a bufferstock to face eventual shortage of food in some areas (if it happens) and to consolidate efforts in the field of general health."

The International Red Cross Committee admitted that in carrying out its humanitarian operation it had to encounter many difficulties due to the difficult terrain of the Province, but it had received full cooperation from the Indonesian Red Cross and the government. Contrary to the previous information that had reached it, it found only 13 military prisoners in "Comarca prison."

Former Australian Prime Minister G. Whitlam, after a four-day tour in East Timor stated of Friday that report about famine in East Timor was completely false. He is of the view that East Timor is now quite safe as evident from the fact that the Red Cross helicopter he was using did not hesitate to fly low over various parts of East Timor. According to information he got, at the most there are 100 to 130 FRETILIN insurgents who are still hiding in the jungle hide-outs.

Speaking about the health condition of the East Timor population, G. Whitlam said that the matter was truly in the good care of the Indonesian government and there appeared to be sufficient medical supplies. He observed development progress in the Province, development projects, agriculture and fishery centres, and livestock.

The two reports corroborate each other and give a big lie to the propaganda spread by FRETILIN and its supporters abroad. The reports should be transmitted fully to all our diplomatic and consular missions abroad, especially our mission in the United Nations where for some years to come the question of East Timor will continue to be raised.

This information will strengthen our arguments to convince our African friends not to support the case of the insurgent FRETILIN.

Of late we have invigorated our African policy and have opened more embassies there, for instance in Kenya and Senegambia. Our representatives in Africa and the United Nations may use this information by the international sources of high credibility to support our case in the international field. Though East Timor is our internal matter, yet it is annoying that the question is raised ritually in the United Nations every year.