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TNI's Mission: Driving the Acceleration of Welfare Development in Papua Amid Security Challenges

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PAPUA- The Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) are at the forefront of realizing the goals outlined in Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2020, which mandates the acceleration of welfare development in Papua. This directive entrusts the TNI with three critical tasks: maintaining security, assisting the Regional Government in delivering essential public services, and fostering inclusive social communication with all stakeholders in Papua.

In alignment with this mandate, the TNI has deployed dedicated Military Task Forces across Papua, focusing on creating a stable and conducive security environment. This stability is essential to ensure that residents, local governments, and stakeholders can contribute effectively to the region's development. However, these efforts face significant challenges due to persistent security threats posed by the Free Papua Movement Organization (OPM).

The OPM's actions—including intimidation, violence, and even murder—have disrupted peace and development in the region. Notable incidents include the killing of New Zealand pilot Glen Malcolm Conning by the OPM on Monday (5/8/2024). Glen, a helicopter pilot for PT Intan Angkasa Air Service, became a victim of the OPM's criminal activities, further highlighting the dangers faced by civilians and security personnel alike.

In response, the TNI demonstrated its commitment to humanitarian action by successfully securing the Alama area and evacuating victims, including Glen's body, healthcare workers, teachers, and infants. This operation, conducted on Tuesday (6/8/2024), was carried out without formal requests from the victims' families or the New Zealand Government.

A similar display of dedication was evident in the rescue of Susi Air pilot Captain Phillip Mark Mehrtens on Saturday (21/9/2024), after being held hostage by the OPM. "The rescue of Captain Mehrtens underscores the TNI's unwavering humanitarian commitment to achieving a safe and peaceful Papua," said Colonel Yogi Nugroho, Commander of the HABEMA Media Task Forces, in a written statement.

Colonel Yogi emphasized the TNI's resolve to maintain security and support the Indonesian Government's welfare initiatives in Papua. "The TNI and Polri Security Forces remain steadfast in their mission to ensure Papua is safe, conducive, and free from OPM disturbances. These efforts are vital to the success of welfare development programs," he added.

Through a blend of professionalism, responsiveness, and adaptability, the TNI continues to uphold its role as a protector and enabler of peace and progress in Papua. By prioritizing security and fostering cooperation among stakeholders, the TNI aims to transform Papua into a region of stability and prosperity.

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