

# **Country Report: Indonesia**

# **July 2024**

West Papuans have been the targets of oppression since Papua was integrated into Indonesia in the 1960s after a widely criticized referendum known as the Act of Free Choice. The referendum, often dubbed "the Act of No Choice," led to decades of repression of West Papuans by Indonesia. From mid-2023 through 2024, the region saw intensified military operations under President Prabowo Subianto's administration, leading to significant human rights violations. Indonesian security forces have violently carried out extrajudicial killings, torture, rape, and enforced disappearances. [Reports indicate a surge in extrajudicial killings and torture by security forces, with 17 extrajudicial killings and 53 torture cases documented in 2024 alone](https://humanrightsmonitor.org/reports/annual-report-2024-human-rights-and-conflict-in-west-papua/?utm_source=chatgpt.com).[Over 85,000 indigenous Papuans remain internally displaced due to ongoing armed clashes and military operations](https://humanrightsmonitor.org/reports/annual-report-2024-human-rights-and-conflict-in-west-papua/?utm_source=chatgpt.com). In May 2024, military forces occupied parts of Uwibutu General Hospital in Paniai Regency, halting medical services and forcing patient evacuations. Despite evidence of abuses, accountability remains elusive, with eight soldiers detained for torturing three indigenous Papuans yet to face public trials. The country’s legal system remains rife with prejudice and discrimination against Papuans. Violence against religious minorities is also on the rise. Fundamentalist Islamists target Ahmadiyah and Shia Muslims and Christians. I[n 2023, a transgender influencer was arrested for comments made during a livestream, and in 2024, comedian Aulia Rakhman received a seven-month prison sentence for a joke about the name "Muhammad" .](https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/indonesian-court-jails-comedian-joking-about-name-muhammad-2024-06-11/)

T[he Setara Institute recorded 65 disturbances of places of worship in 2023](https://www.indoleft.org/news/2024-06-23/setara-records-significant-rise-in-violations-against-freedom-of-religion-in-2023.html), the highest number in seven years. [Thousands of Shia Muslims remain displaced after their village in Madura was razed by a mob of Indonesian Sunni Islamists](https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-report-on-international-religious-freedom/indonesia/). Laws imposing religious discrimination include the Blasphemy Law passed in 1965 and newly enacted provisions under the [Criminal Code effective from 2026](https://talkabout.iclrs.org/2024/01/11/decolonizing-the-indonesian-penal-code/?utm_source=chatgpt.com), which criminalize apostasy, extramarital sex, insulting the president, and expressing opinions that contradict the Pancasila state ideology.

Due to the dehumanization of Papuans, extrajudicial killings, and other rights abuses in West Papua, Genocide Watch considers Indonesian West Papua to be at **Stage 4: Dehumanization**, **Stage 5: Organization**, **Stage 6: Polarization**, and **Stage 8: Persecution**. Due to the persecution of religious minorities, Genocide Watch considers Indonesia to be at **Stage 1: Classification, Stage 2: Symbolization, Stage 3: Discrimination, Stage 6: Polarization, and Stage 8: Persecution**.

**Genocide Watch Recommends:**

* Indonesia must permit unrestricted access for journalists and human rights workers to West Papua.
* The Indonesian government should provide resettlement aid to displaced West Papuans.
* Designation of religion should be removed from Indonesian national ID cards.
* Indonesia should repeal the 1965 Blasphemy Law and revise the new Criminal Code to safeguard freedom of religion and expression.