

US trains Indonesia torturers

Our reporter
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The American military is training Indonesian special forces units which have been charged with torture and murder of civilians, according to a report which appeared Monday, March 16 in *The Nation* magazine. The training is continuing despite a congressional ban imposed in 1992 after reports of extensive human rights abuses in East Timor.

Pentagon officials confirmed that US military personnel were engaged in training of the commando unit called Kopassus, or Red Berets, which has been deployed against street demonstrators in Jakarta, as well as another elite group known as Kostrad, which occupies central Java, and Suharto's presidential guard.

The training was maintained by transferring the operation from one program to another. Congress banned Indonesia from receiving training under the International Military Education and Training program, or IMET, but failed to prohibit continuation under a separate program, Joint Combined Exchange and Training, or J-CET.

J-CET is the same program that was used to train troops of the Rwandan Patriotic Army in psychological warfare and marksmanship. These troops carried out massacres of civilians in eastern Zaire during the recent civil war that ended in the ouster of the Mobutu dictatorship.



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