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B1, 1.4(D)PAGE 01 MEDAN 00179 01 OF 02 090242Z
ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-07	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
	NSAE-00	HA-09	LAB-04	PM-10	PA-01	SIL-01	INM-07
	INRE-00	CA-02	USIE-00	DEAE-00	DOEE-00	FAIM-01	C-01
	PRS-01	DS-01	OIG-04	SCT-02	P-02	/053 W	

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P R 060753Z APR 89 ZDK
 FM AMCONSUL MEDAN
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4076
 AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY
 INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
 AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
 AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEDAN 00179

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR TEXT PARA 3.

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
 TAGS: PINS, PGOV, SNAR, ID
 SUBJECT: INCIDENTS OF UNREST IN NORTH ACEH

REF: MEDAN 172

1. (U) BEGIN SUMMARY: OVER THE PAST MONTH, THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL INCIDENTS OF UNREST IN NORTH ACEH, THE DISTRICT WHERE THE P.T. ARUN GASFIELDS OPERATED BY PERTAMINA AND MOBIL OIL ARE LOCATED. A RIOT OCCURRED OVER ADMISSION TO A CIRCUS. STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED AT LHOKSEUMAWE'S CIVIL REGISTRY. MASKED ARSONISTS BURNED A SUGARCANE FIELD. ELECTRONIC POWER LINES HAVE BEEN SHORT-CIRCUITED, CAUSING CHRONIC BLACKOUTS, DUE TO WHAT THE LOCAL POWER COMPANY CHIEF HAS LABELLED ACTS OF "SABOTAGE".

2. (C) SPONTANEOUS FLARE-UPS ARE COMMON AMONG ACEH'S
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PAGE 02 MEDAN 00179 01 OF 02 090242Z

EASILY PROVOKED MUSLIMS. STILL, THIS IS AN UNUSUALLY ACTIVE SPATE OF MISCHIEF LEADING UP TO RAMADAN, TRADITIONALLY A TIME WHEN ACEH'S ISLAMIC FERVOR PEAKS. THUS FAR, NONE OF OUR SOURCES HAS YET GONE SO FAR AS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: DONALD A JOHNSTON
 DATE/CASE ID: 13 JUL 2005 200502290

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TO CONCLUDE THESE INCIDENTS REPRESENT A COORDINATED CAMPAIGN OF ORGANIZED RESISTANCE. END SUMMARY.

3. (U) ON MARCH 10, A RIOT DEVELOPED IN THE NORTH ACEH DISTRICT CAPITAL OF LHOKSEUMAWE OUTSIDE A TENT WHERE A CIRCUS WAS BEING HELD. THE TROUBLE REPORTEDLY BEGAN OVER A DISPUTE INVOLVING SCALPED TICKETS. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, "THOUSANDS" OF PEOPLE PUSHED DOWN A FENCE, SET FIRE TO A CIRCUS TRUCK, AND DAMAGED THREE OTHER CIRCUS VEHICLES. THREE PLATOONS OF SECURITY FORCES CAME TO THE SCENE, AND RESTORED ORDER AFTER FIRING WARNING SHOTS.

4. (U) ON MARCH 16, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS OCCURRED IN FRONT OF LHOKSEUMAWE'S CIVIL REGISTRY OVER THE ALLEGED ISSUANCE OF BIRTH CERTIFICATES INTENDED FOR CHRISTIANS TO MUSLIMS. THIS WAS THE SAME ISSUE THAT SPARKED DEMONSTRATIONS AT THE OFFICE LAST YEAR (88 MEDAN 402, PARA 19). MILITARY UNITS WERE DISPATCHED TO THE STREETS. AS OF LAST WEEK, THEY WERE STILL STATIONED AT VARIOUS POINTS AROUND TOWN.

5. (C) TWO WEEKS AGO, PERSONS WITH THEIR FACES CONCEALED BY MASKS (APPARENTLY, HANDKERCHIEFS) SET A LARGE FIRE IN THE SUGARCANE FIELDS OF GOVERNMENT PLANTATION PTP IX SOUTH OF LHOKSEUMAWE. WE HAVE HEARD ESTIMATES RANGING FROM THREE TO THIRTY-FIVE HECTARES BURNED. OUR SOURCES SPECULATE THAT THE FIRE WAS PROBABLY SET BY ACEHNESE OPPOSED TO

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PAGE 03 MEDAN 00179 01 OF 02 090242Z

NEW WORKERS BROUGHT IN FROM JAVA. A LOCAL EX-PAT PLANTATION MANAGER TOLD US RECENTLY THAT PTP IX HAS BEEN ON THE VERGE OF BANKRUPTCY DUE TO MIS-MANAGEMENT AND CORRUPTION.

6. (C) LAST WEEK, 12 HOUSES IN BANDA ACEH OF EMPLOYEES OF A KOREAN CONTRACTOR BURNED DOWN DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS. LOCAL NEWSPAPERS SAID THE FIRE WAS PROBABLY CAUSED BY FAULTY ELECTRICAL WIRING. HOWEVER, OUR SOURCES HERE HAVE SAID THE FIRE WAS SET AS A PROTEST AGAINST THE IMPORTATION OF OUTSIDE WORKERS RATHER THAN HIRING UNEMPLOYED ACEHNESE.

7. (U) ON SATURDAY, APRIL 1, THE HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT ELECTRIC UTILITY (PLN) IN NORTH ACEH,

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T. LOEKMAN, TOLD REPORTERS THAT BLACKOUTS WERE FREQUENTLY OCCURRING IN NORTH ACEH'S MAIN CITIES OF LHOKSEUMAWE, LHOKSUKON AND BIREUEN DUE TO ACTS OF "SABOTAGE". HE SAID THAT PIECES OF IRON, CABLES, AND STICKS WERE BEING THROWN ON MEDIUM VOLTAGE LINES TO CAUSE SHORT CIRCUITS. INSULATORS ON ELECTRIC POWER POLES WERE ALSO BEING SHOT BY "IRRESPONSIBLE PERSONS", CAUSING POWER LINES TO FALL. LOEKMAN SAID THAT THE CHRONIC BLACKOUTS WERE OF PARTICULAR CONCERN NOW BECAUSE RAMADAN IS ABOUT TO BEGIN. THE USAGE OF ELECTRICITY RISES AS DEVOUT MUSLIMS EAT BEFORE AND AFTER DAYLIGHT FASTING.

COMMENT

8. (C) LOCAL NEWSPAPERS RECEIVED GAG ORDERS ADVISING THEM NOT TO REPORT THE MARCH 16 STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN LHOKSEUMAWE, OR THE PTP IX SUGARCANE FIELD BURNING.

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PAGE 04 MEDAN 00179 01 OF 02 090242Z

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PAGE 01 MEDAN 00179 02 OF 02 060806Z
ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-07	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
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	DS-01	OIG-04	SCT-02	P-02	/052 W		

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P R 060753Z APR 89
 FM AMCONSUL MEDAN
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4077
 AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY
 INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
 AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MEDAN 00179

9. (C) THE GANJA ERADICATION CAMPAIGN REPORTED
 REFTTEL HAS CONTINUED IN ACEH. ACCORDING TO THE POLICE,
 THREE MILLION PLANTS HAVE NOW BEEN DESTROYED, REPRESENTING
 THE EQUIVALENT OF 60 TONS OF DRIED GANJA FROM 65
 HECTARES OF FIELDS. THIRTY SUSPECTS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED
 IN ACEH FOR INTERROGATION. A PROMINENT ACEHNESE

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LIVING IN MEDAN POINTED OUT TO THE P. O. THAT IN ADDITION TO DESTROYING GANJA PLANTS THE INDONESIAN ARMED FORCES ARE NO DOUBT ALSO SCREENING FOR THOSE THEY BELIEVE HAD LINKS TO THE FORMER ACEHNESE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT, ACEH MERDEKA.

10. (C) THE CONTINUED IMPORTATION OF NON-ACEHNESE WORKERS FOR PROJECTS, PLANTATIONS AND TRANSMIGRATION IS AN IRRITANT. IT JEOPARDIZES THE PROGRESS MADE BY WISE POLICIES IN RECENT YEARS THAT HAS RESULTED IN A GENERAL TREND TOWARD GREATER INTEGRATION OF ACEHNESE SOCIETY WITH THE REST OF INDONESIA. RATHER THAN BRAKING THE ARRIVAL OF MIGRANTS, SOME ACEHNESE FEAR THAT JAKARTA'S ANSWER TO ACEH'S INTRASIGENCE IS TO

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PAGE 02 MEDAN 00179 02 OF 02 060806Z

INCREASE THE PERCENTAGE OF JAVANESE IN THE PROVINCE. LOCAL NEWSPAPERS REPORTED THAT ON MARCH 30, 160 NEW TRANSMIGRANT FAMILIES ARRIVED IN LHOKSEUMAWA, AT A TIME WHEN NEW GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED TRANSMIGRATION ELSEWHERE IN SUMATRA HAS VIRTUALLY CAME TO A HALT DUE TO LACK OF FUNDING. WHEREAS JAVANESE TRANSMIGRANTS GRADUALLY BLEND IN WITH THE LOCAL POPULATION IN SOME PARTS OF SUMATRA, IT DOESN'T HAPPEN IN ACEH, WHERE THE CULTURE IS VERY DIFFERENT.

11.
THE P. O. THAT HE HAD ORDERED HIS EX-PAT EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES (NOW NUMBERING ABOUT 150) TO STAY OUT OF TOWN FOR SEVERAL DAYS FOLLOWING THE MARCH 16 STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS. HE SAID THAT WHILE MOST OF THE DEMONSTRATORS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS, THE LOCAL MILITARY COMMAND BELIEVED NON-STUDENT AGITATORS WERE ALSO INVOLVED.

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