

# Measles, malnutrition kill nearly 100 in Indonesia's Papua

January 22 2018

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A measles outbreak and a spike in cases of malnutrition in Indonesia's easternmost Papua province have killed at least 95 people, mostly indigenous children, highlighting severely inadequate health care in the impoverished region.

An army chief in the provincial capital of Jayapura, Boni Christian Pardede, said 25 [people](#) in one subdistrict had died from [malnutrition](#) and an outbreak of diarrhea.

He said the situation in mountainous Okbab subdistrict was first reported last week by church activists, who said 23 children and four adults had died. However, Pardede said the latest reports from a health team who had arrived there put the death toll at 25.

He said the military is planning to dispatch a second team including doctors and paramedics from Jakarta on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, a health official in remote Asmat district said the [death toll](#) from a measles outbreak and malnutrition since September has risen to 70 people. The latest two victims were children who died Saturday in the state-run hospital in Agats, the main town of Asmat.

Papua and neighboring West Papua are the poorest provinces in Indonesia and home to a decades-old independence movement and armed insurgency.

The region is culturally and ethnically distinct from the rest of Indonesia, which annexed it in the early 1960s. Its rich mineral resources have been exploited for decades by U.S. mining company Freeport, but indigenous Papuans have benefited little and are poorer, sicker and more likely to die young than people elsewhere in the country.

The Indonesian military sent a team of more than 50 doctors and paramedics last week to assist in the response to the [measles outbreak](#).

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