

OMBUDSMAN FINDS MALADMINISTRATION IN TALANGSARI MASSACRE 'PEACE DECLARATION'

Jum'at, 06 Desember 2019 - Muhamad Fatra Dasa Mura

The Indonesian Ombudsman has submitted a report alleging maladministration in a "peace declaration" that sought resolve the 1989 Talangsari tragedy in Central Lampung.

"The resolution of the suspected case of gross human rights violations in Talangsari through a peace declaration is not in line with Law 26/2000 on the human rights court," Ombudsman member Ahmad Suaedy said on Thursday, as quoted by Antara News Agency.

The Talangsari tragedy occurred on Feb. 7, 1989, in Cihideung village, Talangsari subdistrict, Rajabasa Lama district, Central Lampung (now part of East Lampung).

A battalion of soldiers from the Lampung military command post reportedly attacked the village after dawn, killing hundreds of followers of a man named Warsidi, who was suspected of preaching extremist views.

In February, the Office of the Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister and the Law and Human Rights Ministry drafted a peace declaration, which was signed by ministry officials, the local military command, the local police, local community leaders and officials from the East Lampung regional administration.

In March, the victims and their families met with the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) and rejected the declaration, saying they had not been involved in the process.

According to the Ombudsman, the peace declaration was not in line with a 2000 law that stipulated that the settlement of past human rights abuse cases through non-judicial mechanisms should be under a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (KKR), the establishment of which was mandated by a separate law.

The commission, however, was canceled in 2006 after the Constitutional Court revoked the 2004 Law on the KKR.

Suaedy said that based on the Ombudsman's investigation, the rightful compensation from the state to the victims and their families - whose efforts had been "ongoing for 30 years" according to the peace declaration - was not yet fulfilled.

He suggested Coordinating Political, Legal and Security Affairs Minister Mahfud MD conduct "corrective action" so that the peace declaration would be in line with the 2000 law.

He added that the minister should prepare regulations regarding non-judicial resolutions of gross human rights violations.

Ministry official Rudy Syamsir said the ministry would act on the Ombudsman's recommendations.

"We are ready to act on the Ombudsman's report and recommendations. In thirty days we can report [back]," he said, as quoted by Antara.