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TNI's Commitment to Accelerating Welfare Development in Papua Amid Security Challenges

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PAPUA- The Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) have reaffirmed their dedication to fostering progress in Papua, guided by **Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2020**. This directive emphasizes the **Acceleration of Welfare Development in Papua**, tasking the TNI with three crucial responsibilities: ensuring security, supporting essential public services, and fostering inclusive communication with all stakeholders.

Under this mandate, TNI has deployed **Military Task Forces** to Papua, aiming to create a secure environment conducive to development. Stability is vital for enabling government initiatives, stakeholder collaboration, and community participation, especially amidst the persistent security threats posed by the **Free Papua Movement (OPM)**.

Challenges Amid Progress

The OPM's actions, ranging from intimidation and violence against civilians to heinous crimes like murder, continue to disrupt the welfare development agenda. A notable incident was the tragic murder of **Glen Malcolm Conning**, a New Zealand helicopter pilot for PT Intan Angkasa Air Service, on **August 5, 2024**. This act, along with other OPM offenses, has underscored the critical need for TNI's presence in the region.

In response, TNI demonstrated swift humanitarian efforts, as highlighted by **Colonel Yogi Nugroho**, Commander of the HABEMA Media Task Forces. *"On August 6, TNI secured Alama, evacuating the remains of Pilot Glen, alongside health workers, teachers, and even infants. This mission was purely humanitarian, conducted without prior requests from the victim's family or the New Zealand Government,"* he stated.

Another testament to TNI's commitment was the successful rescue of **Captain Phillip Mark Mehrtens**, a Susi Air pilot held hostage by the OPM, on **September 21, 2024**. These operations underscore TNI's unwavering resolve to ensure safety and peace in Papua.

TNI's Role in Promoting Welfare

Colonel Yogi emphasized the continuous collaboration between TNI and the **National Police (Polri)** in maintaining security and advancing welfare development. *"Our priority is to ensure Papua remains safe, free from disturbances, and conducive to progress. This is a direct support of the government's program to uplift the welfare of Papuans,"* he affirmed.

The TNI's dual role as a security enforcer and development enabler highlights its integral contribution to Papua's transformation. With unwavering commitment, TNI continues to pave the way for a **prosperous and peaceful Papua**, where all citizens can thrive.

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