# Kopassus Inside Indonesias Special Forces

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in a nation where the military has played an influential social and political role since its founding perhaps no unit has wielded more power and seen more action than kopassus indonesia s special forces from the jungles of irian jaya to the backrooms of jakarta s most powerful political figures this elite group of commandos has influenced nearly every major policy decision taken since its inception in 1952 here for the first time this secretive and controversial unit is exposed in kopassus inside indonesia s special forces by acclaimed author ken conboy in this new age of terrorism and counter terrorism and especially in the wake of the october 2002 bali bombing understanding kopassus is an integral part of understanding the politics of modern indonesia this book is essential reading for anyone interested in unconventional warfare contemporary indonesian history and the brushfire wars that have swept the indonesian archipelago over the past fifty years ken conboy is country manager for risk management advisory a private security consultancy in jakarta prior to that he served as deputy director at the asian studies center an influential washington based think tank where his duties including writing policy papers for the u s congress and executive on economic and strategic relations with the nations of south and southeast asia the author of a dozen books about asian military history and intelligence operations conboy s most recent title spies in the himalayas has earned praise as an intriguing account of high altitude mountaineering and covert missions a graduate of georgetown university s school of foreign service and of johns hopkins school of advanced international studies conboy was also a visiting fellow at chulalongkorn university in bangkok and has lived in indonesia since 1992

for more than half a century the elite units of the indonesian armed forces have been in the forefront of that country s brushfire wars counter guerrilla campaigns counter terrorist battles and police actions they have also dominated indonesian politics for most of the decades since independence now for the first time in print a history of all the commando and airborne formations in the indonesian army air force navy marines and police from battlefields across the indonesian archipelago and beyond get a detailed understanding of these units from their origins to the present day ken conboy heads risk management advisory a security consultancy in jakarta a graduate of georgetown university and the johns hopkins school of advanced international studies conboy also studied at sophia university in tokyo and was a visiting fellow at chulalongkorn university in bangkok a resident of indonesia since 1992 he is the author of more than two dozen books on intelligence and military history

because the military is an integral part of indonesia s power structure it is of interest to anyone studying indonesian affairs this volume is the first study to address the role of the military in post soeharto indonesia the author is a former ghostwriter at the indonesian ministries of home affairs and defence he is privy to the internal dynamics of the military and has personally interviewed such untouchable figures as former president soeharto as such this is an up to date well informed study providing a useful contribution to the literature particularly with regard to the younger generation of the military book jacket

much of the uncertainty concerns the prospective political succession to president suharto as the president s age increasingly poses the succession issue it is not clear that there is a strong set of institutions to guide a smooth transition in fact the only truly integrated national institution is the armed forces known by its indonesian acronym abri exactly because of abri s central role in indonesia it is essential that the united states and its friends in the region understand the indonesian military

the military is one of the few institutions that cut across the divides of indonesian society as it continues to play a critical part in determining indonesia s future the military itself is undergoing profound change the authors of this book examine the role of the military in politics and society since the fall of president suharto in 1998 they present several strategic scenarios for indonesia which have important implications for u s indonesian relations and propose goals for indonesian military reform and elements of a u s engagement policy

this book critically examines the development of the post authoritarian indonesian national armed forces tentara nasional indonesia military modernisation agenda and its impact towards civil military relations it offers an original analysis on various and interrelated subjects related to indonesia s defence development i e arms build up organisational development conduct of military operations other than war defence diplomacy and defence economy these analyses offer a better understanding on the role played by the indonesian military in undertaking a modernisation agenda and sustaining its political influence over the non defence sphere simultaneously each chapter contributor aims to examine the most recent development pertaining to their topic and the influence of civil military dynamics on their subject matter the book will be of interest to undergraduate and graduate students professionals and experts on southeast asian politics defence studies security studies and civil military relations

under the new order regime 1967 98 the indonesian military sought to monopolise the production of official history and control its contents the goal was to validate the political role of the armed forces condemn communism and promote military values a detailed examination of the indonesian military s image making under suharto

in authoritarian modernization in indonesia s early independence period farabi fakih offers a historical analysis of the foundational years leading to indonesia s new order state 1966 1998 during the early independence period the study looks into the structural and ideological state formation during the so called liberal democracy 1950 1957 and sukarno s guided democracy 1957 1965 in particular it analyses how the international technical aid network and the dominant managerialist ideology of the period legitimized a new managerial elite the book discusses the development of managerial education in the civil and military sectors in indonesia the study gives a strongly backed argument that sukarno s constitutional reform during the guided democracy period inadvertently provided a strong managerial blueprint for the new order developmentalist state

presents research on the indonesian military thi going beyond traditional scholarship on the this dual function or dwifungsi which has been one of the dominating fields of analysis in indonesian studies since the 1970s

based on extensive original research this book examines the role of the military in indonesian politics looking at the role of the military historically its involvement in politics and also considers how its role might develop

chapter two explores the career patterns of army officers during the 1990 s through a detailed analysis of succession patterns and the examination of class cohorts from the national military academy this chapter further refines the basic model presented in chapter one this analysis highlights several forms of institutional rationalization within the army during the late soeharto era

one of the unique features of the indonesian military referred to as angkatan bersenjata republik indonesia or abri in the past and tentara nasional indonesia or tni at present is its massive involvement in commercial activities even though the military s business activities flourished under the presidency of suharto its origins can be traced to the pre suharto era the ostensible reasons for the quantum expansion of the military s business activities were the need to cater

for the welfare of the soldiers and to augment the operational budget of the armed forces that were believed to be inadequately provided for in the annual defence budget

the terror campaign by pro indonesian armed groups before during and after east timor s independence referendum in 1999 was a blatant challenge to the international community as many of the acts of murder political intimidation destruction and mass deportation took place before the eyes of the world yet still the ultimate responsibility has been denied and obscured masters of terror provides an authoritative analysis and documentation of the brutal operations carried out by the indonesian army and its east timorese allies the authors carefully assemble detailed accounts of the actions of the major indonesian officers and east timorese militia commanders accused of gross human rights violations this indispensable work explores a horrific frontal attack on democracy and calls for the establishment of an international tribunal for crimes against humanity in east timor

this book is an analysis of indonesia s civil military relations in the post 1998 reform era it focuses on the political thinking of the indonesian army during the time of democratic consolidation the book examines the army tentara nasional indonesia angkatan darat tni ad a pivotal player in the political scene of indonesian state and the aspect of military ideology development based on in depth interviews with civilian and military figures and applying the methodology of utilised process tracing and empirical analysis surrounding the appearance of military thinking the book argues that the indonesian military pursues to sustain its political power by propagating a set of values construed as moral compass for all members of society specifically the book discusses the origins and impacts of proxy war and bela negara defend the state which was promoted by former tni commander gatot nurmantyo 2015 2017 and former defence minister ryamizard ryacudu 2014 2019 the authors demonstrate that both ideologies facilitate expansion of the military s influence in all aspects of life and protection of its corporate interests in the age of democracy offering insights for theoretical discussion on the influence of military ideology to civil military relations particularly in the post authoritarian period this book will be of interest to academics and policy makers in the fields of southeast asian politics asian politics and civil military relations

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