Investigating Information Operations in West Papua

A digital forensic case study of cross-platform network analysis

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A bellingcat investigation
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Introduction

An online influence campaign operated by a startup communications company in Indonesia has been disseminating pro-Indonesian government propaganda material on the issue of West Papua.

The campaign spanned across multiple social media platforms and websites. Facebook and Twitter have removed many of the automated accounts, but others continue to be active and more have been recently created.

[Facebook’s announcement on October 4th 2019](#) independently verified the findings of our investigation: That Jakarta-based communications company InsightID was the source of this information operation.

Facebook removed 69 Facebook accounts, 42 Pages and 34 Instagram accounts, some of which had hundreds of thousands of followers. It is clear that significant resources were dedicated to this effort, including the equivalent of around $300,000 on Facebook ads (paid primarily in Indonesian rupiah) to advertise the material in countries including the Netherlands, US, UK, and Germany. Organic content in the campaign also targeted Australia and New Zealand.

In the course of investigating this campaign we also uncovered a second, smaller, overlapping but separate campaign that was not included in the abovementioned October 4 takedown.

The goal of both campaigns was to influence international opinion about the increasingly violent situation in West Papua, as Indonesian security forces crack down on the local pro-independence movement. The campaigns promote pro-Indonesian sentiment whilst condemning pro-independence forces, in particular the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) and its leader, Benny Wenda.

The InsightID campaign also appears to have included targeted harassment and trolling of prominent pro-independence advocates such as human rights lawyer Veronica Koman and Vanuatuan politician Ralph Regenvanu, as well as of journalists in Australia and New Zealand who have written about West Papua.
Political Context

Escalating violence in West Papua has made international headlines in 2019. Since July, a renewed push for independence by West Papuan groups including the ULMWP and unrest triggered by broader racialised tensions have been met with increasingly significant force by the Indonesian government. The United Nations has called on the government of Indonesia to protect the rights of independence activists and protesting students, and warned against the excessive use of force, blocking access to information or preventing freedom of expression.

The Indonesian government has taken significant steps to control the information which reaches the international community about what is taking place in West Papua. This has included intermittently cutting internet to the region and preventing foreign journalists, NGOs, UN officials and humanitarian agencies from entering West Papua.

Government control over traditional information channels makes social media a crucial source for independent information and news — for example, videos of Indonesian police shooting student protestors.

However, as this research shows, there have been multiple significant attempts to inauthentically manipulate the narrative about the West Papuan conflict on social media in favour of the Indonesian government, including targeting international audiences.
Methodology

In this investigation we have built on our previously published research Twitter Analysis: Identifying A Pro-Indonesian Propaganda Bot Network on the issue of West Papua. We now have evidence to identify the parties directly responsible for these operations.

All of the findings in this report have been made and are supported with open source evidence, using digital forensics to find the trails left behind by the individuals involved. While much of the evidence has been removed by social media platforms and the campaign operators themselves, where possible we have included examples and links to archived copies of websites and social media profiles.

We have investigated two overlapping but independent information campaigns, conducted primarily in English, which appear to be targeting international audiences, with the goal of promoting a pro-Indonesian narrative whilst condemning pro-independence forces.

This includes videos, “news” articles, images with text and comments on websites, Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and Instagram promoting narratives that argue that:

- The Indonesian Government’s role in West Papua is benefiting the people
- West Papuans embrace the Indonesian government and do not support independence
- “Foreign influencers” such as independence leader Benny Wenda and human rights lawyer Veronica Koman are criminals, and that they are driven by shadowy international forces rather than by a genuine desire for independence
- Independence activists are extremists and terrorists
- Foreign media coverage of violence in West Papua is flawed and/or malicious and misrepresents the true situation

The content was primarily promoted through “branded” social media accounts which had professional logos. Each “brand” had associated Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Youtube accounts and standalone websites, presenting themselves as legitimate news platforms.

In some cases, the content presented was factually true but significantly slanted in favour of the Indonesian government’s position. In other cases, the content itself was simply false.
UN human rights experts have expressed their concern on safety, freedom of expression, and other rights of Veronica Koman, a human rights lawyer. The experts are also concerned about the restriction of freedom of expression of other human rights defenders who are reporting on the alleged violations of human rights in Papua.

However, she’s currently being sought by the Indonesian government, not because of her works on human rights issues, but solely based on the case that she allegedly spread hoax that contributed to the unrest in Surabaya and further riots in Papua.
This content was spread using various tactics:

- On Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, the campaigns used hashtags irrelevant to the posts but relevant to current news about West Papua. For example, a video about the financial assistance the Indonesian government is providing with the tags #WestpapuaGenocide and #FreeWestPapua.

- The Twitter accounts used a network of automated and/or inauthentic accounts to spread the material.

- The Instagram accounts had fake followers, making them appear more legitimate.

- The Facebook accounts were running paid advertisements in English, targeting Facebook users in the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, the UK and the US.

Initial Detection And Previously Published Research

The inauthentic behaviour was initially detected by capturing activity on Twitter over five days from August 29th — September 2nd 2019. The activity captured was any media on Twitter using the hashtags #WestPapua and #FreeWestPapua. Those results were published on Bellingcat.
The data captured was used to illustrate and analyse a network of accounts that were posting, liking, retweeting and commenting about those tags. In that analysis, a network of accounts was identified.

Those accounts were posting the material mentioned in the campaign overview. The accounts were identified as bots through three markers:

1. All accounts (except for a small number of “branded” accounts linked to websites that were originating the content) were using fake profile pictures taken from elsewhere on the internet — reverse image searches were used to identify this.
2. Analysis of the accounts' timelines found that the accounts did not interact and were only used for either posting or spreading the content.

3. Many of the accounts were automated. This was identified by scraping the tweets and retweets of the accounts, which found posting patterns which strongly indicate automation.

The accounts on Twitter often linked to or amplified content from related Facebook pages, which had fans ranging from 50,000 to 200,000. For example, the “official” Info West Papua Twitter account would tweet links to posts on the “official” Info West Papua Facebook page, which might in turn be linking back to content posted on the infowestpapua.com site.

The Facebook pages were running paid advertisements targeting European and U.S. audiences, using the same English-language video content that was published by the Twitter accounts and on the websites. Facebook has reported these ads cost around $300,000, paid primarily in Indonesian rupiah. This confirms (a) that the targets of the information campaign included the international community, and (b) that substantial financial resources were dedicated to this effort. These findings have been previously published by Benjamin Strick on Medium.com.

**Current Research**

Building off the previously published research, we have analysed two case studies of information campaigns which appear to be primarily targeted at influencing international opinion about the situation in West Papua. We have used open source digital forensics to identify the actors behind these campaigns. Our conclusions have since been supported by Facebook and partially confirmed by the actors themselves.

It is important to note that while these campaigns are overlapping in the topics they cover and in presenting pro-Indonesian narratives, we have not found conclusive evidence they are connected.

These are only two streams in the complex deluge of misinformation and disinformation on social media relating to the struggle over West Papuan independence. The existence of multiple overlapping disinformation campaigns is a reflection of the way in which social media has become an increasingly complex and contested battleground for narrative control.
Propaganda Campaign One: InsightID

Operation, Tactics, And Branding

This campaign consists of at least five “brands”, each with its own website, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and Instagram accounts. As accounts were suspended by the platforms, particularly on Twitter, new accounts were created or repurposed to replace them. As of October 4th 2019, the five Facebook pages and dozens of inauthentic follower accounts have been removed.

The network operated like this: Content including articles, infographics and videos was posted on the brand websites. The content was then promoted by core branded accounts on Twitter, and amplified by a network of inauthentic and/or automated accounts, as exposed in the [previously published investigation](#).

The content was also shared on the brand’s Facebook pages, in some cases including using paid ads to target Facebook users in the U.S., UK and Europe.
Info West Papua Facebook page
West Papua ID Facebook ad which was targeted at Facebook users in the Netherlands
Should Australia support West Papua Separatist?

#FreeWestPapua #PapuaDamai #PapuaIndonesia @mbachelet @antonioguterres @OHCHRAsia @OHCHR_Pacific @FijiPM @FijiAG @CommsFWCC @SEEP_Fiji @RRegenvanu @v_langeberg @JGBlades @FWRM1 @PadreJB @ForumSEC @UNHumanRights

**Should Australia Support West Papua Separation?**

- **Is Australia assisting human rights abuses by military training?**
  - No. Australian Defence Educational Learning Environment (ADELE) isn’t exclusive to Indonesia, but a global program including UN Peacekeeping.

- **Is Australian aid working?**
  - Yes. $300+ million of annual aid is making $1.6 billion of impact, in form of electricity for Papuans and tackling Extreme Islamism.

- **Is Australia supporting environmental destruction?**
  - No. With Indonesian program (with WWF and Conservation International), deforestation is being reduced to 80% in 2020.

- **Is Australia supporting neo-colonization?**
  - No. Australia respects UN Decolonization list, because supporting a separation means breaking up a community, economy, and changing the lives of many people. Western Australia and Tasmania also have this problem.

- **Is West Papua closed for foreign journalists and diplomatic visit?**
  - No. Hamish Fitzsimmons, Alex Hatton, and 10 times UN review visits (2018, ’17, ’13, etc.) are some of the visits done by Australian figures.

4:23 AM · Oct 3, 2019 · Twitter for Android

Tweet from account promoting West Papua ID branded content
The campaign is clearly aimed at influencing international perceptions. In the example above, Australian audiences are explicitly being targeted.

The tweets also tag Australian and New Zealand journalists, Fijian and Vanuatuan officials, UN officials and UN institutions.

**Impersonation And Opposition Hashtag Targeting**

One of the tactics apparent on Twitter and Facebook is the targeting of “opposition” hashtags such as #FreeWestPapua. The goal of this is likely to be to influence those following the hashtag and/or to simply flood it with pro-Indonesian and anti-independence content.

A similarly misleading approach has been used in the names and profile pictures of some of the accounts. For example, the Twitter account @WestPapuaFreed2 (@WestPapuaFreed, which was also part of the campaign, was earlier suspended by Twitter) presents itself as a pro-independence account, but is in fact promoting the same anti-independence, pro-Indonesian content as the rest of the campaign.
The Extremist Group (ULMWP) has strong allegation for the fabrication of the riots in Jayapura and Wamena (11/22). The riot was intentionally planned the day before the UN General Assembly (UNGA) session in New York (11/23) to attract attention. #papua #westpapua #freewestpapua
Another tactic is typosquatting on pro-independence Twitter accounts. Typosquatting is a term for using misspelled versions of an already existing account to target audiences that may have made a typo in their search.

For example, the Twitter account @WestPapuaMedia is an established pro-independence news account. On October 1st, 2019, the same day Vanuatu’s leaders condemned the actions of Indonesian authorities in West Papua at the UN General Assembly, the account @WestPapuaMedia became active (the creation date for this account is November 2011, but its earliest remaining tweet is October 1st and the account’s handle is likely to have been changed on the same date) and began promoting content bearing its own logo.

Screenshot of established pro-independence account @WestPapuaMedia as of October 6th 2019
Screenshot of @WestPapuaaMedia timeline as of October 6th 2019

West Papua Media
@WestPapuaaMedia
Joined November 2011
17 Following 10 Followers
Not followed by anyone you’re following

West Papua Media @WestPapuaaMedia · Oct 1
Joko Widodo menyampaikan dukacita yang mendalam atas 33 korban jiwa dari warga sipil, aparat keamanan, dan dokter yang diisapkan oleh demo anarkis yang dikendalikan oleh kelompok ekstremis Papua di Wamena dan Jayapura, Papua (23/9). #papua #westpapua #freewestpapua

Screenshot of @WestPapuaaMedia timeline as of October 6th 2019
Coordinated Harassment

In addition to operating the brands, there are indications this campaign is also using Twitter accounts to actively harass journalists covering news about West Papua, as well as political leaders, activists and others who have publicly supported West Papuan independence or reporting which contradicts the Indonesian government’s line on the situation in West Papua.

We have confirmed that the accounts involved in this harassment are part of the same disinformation campaign, as discussed below.

Example of multiple Twitter accounts repeating identical content in reply to different tweets from organisations, journalists and political leaders.

Note the stray comma at the end of both tweets highlighted in purple. This suggests this tweet was either typed once and automatically posted across multiple accounts, or was copied from a single source.
Circumstantial evidence suggests that these accounts are likely to be part of the same campaign because, in addition to their automated posts, they also frequently like, follow and retweet branded content. Some of the harassment accounts have even been repurposed into branded accounts themselves, for example @WestPapuaaMedia:

Multiple Twitter accounts repeating identical content in reply to different tweets from organisations, journalists and political leaders
SEO Tactics

There is evidence of attempts at search engine optimisation (SEO). This is common practice for online marketing, where SEO is a term used for a range of techniques used to manipulate Google’s search algorithm to get a website higher in Google’s rankings for specific keywords. This means that when users search for a particular term, for instance “West Papua”, sites with good SEO will appear amongst the first results and therefore be more likely to be clicked on.

One SEO tactic in this campaign used a bot with the website’s domain as its username to comment on dozens of completely unrelated blogs and websites.

Screenshot of Google search results showing search engine optimisation tactics
Another tactic appears to have been including the domain in articles which bear little if any relevance to the content of the site. These articles appear on blogs with equally little connection to West Papua. This is likely to be a paid service provided by the owners of these blogs.

The domain has also been inserted into what appear to be automatically generated “articles” which are then published on file-sharing websites like Scribd and Issuu.
The goal of these efforts is to trick the Google search algorithm into thinking that the domain (in this case westpapuaindonesia.com) is more significant and legitimate because it is being linked to and referenced frequently. This in turn may lead to the site being ranked more highly in search results.

**Identification And Attribution**

Our initial focus was to expand on the earlier research by digging deeper into the accounts and inauthentic activity uncovered during that project.

With additional research, we have found evidence implicating a Jakarta-based communications and social media consultancy, InsightID, as the source of this information campaign. This has since been independently confirmed by Facebook.

In our investigation, we relied on open source digital forensics to identify the actors responsible for the campaign. One of the largest brands evident in the previously analysed bot network is West Papua ID, which (in addition to now-suspended social media accounts) is linked to the domain westpapuaindonesia.com.

This and four other domains relating to West Papua were registered using the same fake name, Westi Pearly (the initials seem unlikely to be a coincidence) and Gmail address.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain Name</th>
<th>Creation Date</th>
<th>Registrar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>papuawest.com</td>
<td>2018-08-02</td>
<td>webnic.cc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inipapua.com</td>
<td>2018-07-31</td>
<td>webnic.cc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>westpapuaindonesia.com</td>
<td>2018-08-02</td>
<td>webnic.cc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infowestpapua.com</td>
<td>2018-08-02</td>
<td>webnic.cc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freewestpapuacampaign.com</td>
<td>2018-08-02</td>
<td>webnic.cc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Screenshot of domains registered by "Westi Pearly"
The phone number, however, was not fake. Using WhatsApp in combination with Yandex reverse image search, we were able to connect that phone number to the Freelancer profile, personal Facebook page and LinkedIn account of one of InsightID’s employees.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media, Links and Docs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starred Messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About and phone number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent calls only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On its website (which was taken down, apparently by InsightID themselves, after the public identification by Facebook), InsightID said its services include “integrated PR and digital marketing program[s].”

An archived version of InsightID’s site can be viewed here.
One of the projects listed on InsightID’s company site is the “Papua Program Development Initiative”, which “examines Papua [sic] rapid socio-economic development and explores its challenges.” In addition, a number of current and former InsightID employees have listed the Papua Program Development Initiative in their LinkedIn profiles.

In her LinkedIn profile, an InsightID employee describes her work as:

“Insight ID is a communication & program agency that handles several projects.

As for me, I was assigned to be Content Writer for Papua Program Development Initiative Project and Study in Indonesia Project, my responsibilities were:
- Producing video contents regarding local and international issues
- Creating copy for the design team
- Translating contents from EN-ID and vice versa
- Analyzing social media report

Some of my works can be seen on:
1. Study in Indonesia (Instagram & Facebook)
2. West Papuan (Instagram, Facebook, Website)”

The rest of the staff at InsightID includes Facebook Ads analysts, “digital cyber” specialists, writers and project managers. All of these profiles could be viewed on LinkedIn, although some employees may now have removed or be in the process of removing their profiles.

This is of course not different from most communications consultancies — the difference between an information operation and marketing is the intention to deceive audiences for political purposes, but the core skills required are the same.

InsightID appears to recruit a large number of short-term interns as content writers. They specifically look for interns with an interest in international relations, as well as with basic English skills.
A number of additional points indicate InsightID’s responsibility for the information campaign.

According to one of the employees’ LinkedIn profile, they were a “Facebook Ads Analyst” at InsightID. The employee created a Youtube account in their own name with one video relating to West Papua. This video is embedded in the westpapuan.org site, which we have identified as one of the “fake news” sites.
Screenshot of Youtube account registered in InsightID employee’s name

Screenshot of westpapuan.org showing same Youtube video embedded
Westpapuan.org was not registered using the same fake details as the other domains identified, but we can confirm that westpapuan.org is part of the same campaign as the sites registered by Westi Pearly because they all use the same Google Analytics tracking code. The Google Analytics tracking code can be seen below embedded in the source code of westpapuan.org and infowestpapua.com. This means that the same Google Analytics account was being used to track visitors to both sites.

Even more significantly, however, InsightID’s co-founder used his company email address to register 14 domains on the same day, almost all of which clearly relate directly to West Papua.
Registering domains which would be obvious possible domains for independence supporters such as westpapuafreedom.com and westpapuagenocide.com echoes the oppositional hashtag use and impersonation tactics seen on social media, as mentioned above.

A small but interesting detail is the intersection of InsightID’s different campaigns for different clients. One of the puzzling aspects of the information campaign on Twitter was the prevalence of former K-pop spam bots amongst the accounts. K-pop spam bots are very common on Twitter, but in this campaign they played an even more dominant role than usual.

For example, when the InfoWestPapua brand’s Twitter account was suspended following the publication of the earlier investigation on Bellingcat, an account which had formerly been used for K-pop spam suddenly switched and began sharing the InfoWestPapua content, effectively taking over as the Twitter account for that brand.

The account’s name was changed to @WestPapuaTalks, and it went from tweeting on August 20th of this year about K-pop band NCT to attacking Benny Wenda and posting links to InfoWestPapua’s site on September 12th.
This account has now also been suspended, however the [WestPapuaTalks YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4VgYo4c96RiW3nJ3r8cQog) is still active.
A new Twitter account has also been created with a similar name and the same logo.

More job advertisements from InsightID provide the answer to this puzzle. One of InsightID’s other clients is the website Saranghandago, which shares news about K-pop and “Kdrama.” It appears that in some cases when their West Papua accounts are suspended, rather than creating or buying new accounts, InsightID just repurposes some of their stable of K-pop spam accounts.
We have not found evidence to identify the client who has hired InsightID to run this information campaign.

However, based on the available facts we can conclude the client is a party which is able to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to run a “fake news” information operation with the goal of influencing the international community’s political perceptions in favour of the Indonesian government’s actions in West Papua.
Propaganda Campaign Two: Muhamad Rosyid Jazuli

Operation And Tactics

In the process of researching the campaign connected to InsightID, we also identified a similar, separate but overlapping campaign. This campaign was initially detected whilst monitoring West Papua-related hashtags on Twitter.

This second campaign is smaller and includes three brands: Wawawa Journal, Tell the Truth NZ and Noken Insight. Each of the three has its own website, Facebook, Twitter and Youtube accounts. Wawawa Journal also has a Medium account.

The campaign also targeted international audiences with the goal of influencing perceptions in favour of the Indonesian government in West Papua. It also had a notable focus on attacking and undermining legitimate media (in particular Radio New Zealand).

Like the InsightID campaign, this operation posted content on its sites and promoted it using social media accounts. In addition, there was a level of cross-promotion between the brands, with some branded accounts promoting content from another brand (e.g. Tell the Truth NZ’s Facebook account might promote an article on Wawawa Journal’s site).

The Wawawa Journal (WJ) Twitter account, through which this campaign was first detected, was created on July 10th. This was a week after West Papuan independence groups announced they would join forces under the leadership of Benny Wenda in a renewed push for independence.

The WJ’s social media accounts target English-language hashtags related to news in West Papua. They link back to “news” stories on WJ’s site. Some of these stories are merely slanted to reflect a pro-Indonesian narrative, but others are simply false.
Screenshot of a Wawawa Journal article shared on Twitter, falsely implying that UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet supports the Indonesian government’s actions in West Papua.
Statement of the United Nations (UN) on issues about Papua, Indonesia

The United Nations supports the sovereignty and integrity of Indonesia's territory as it recognizes of the sovereignty of other sovereign states.

The status of Papua as part of Indonesia is based on the principles of uti possidetis iuris, NY Agreement 1962, Act of Free Choice 1969, and UN GA resolution 2504 (XXIV) 1969.

The UN is seeing the positive impacts of the development in Papua carried out by the Government of Indonesia in collaboration local governments of the region, especially in the era of President Joko Widodo. However, it certainly needs to be much strengthened and optimized in other aspects such as human resource development through education and health programs.

The UN understands that criminal and separatist groups are constantly making hoaxes and anarchist demonstrations and acts of violence. However, it emphasizes that law enforcement officials should always refrain from repressive actions to avoid unwanted effects and matters that complicate the government.

Regarding several countries that support the independent Papua movement such as Vanuatu, the UN is aware that this is part of the discourse of the global nations and Indonesia has given the right to answer and respond wisely.

Any proposal to carry out a referendum in Papua is not a wise choice at all cause because the urgency for Papua is the development and resolution of other crucial problems such as welfare, poverty, human rights, health, and education.

These points are the result of the meeting between the Secretary General of the United Nations, António Guterres with the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the UN, Dian Triandy Djamal in New York, 10 September 2019, on the development of the latest situation in Papua, and the status of Indonesian sovereignty from the UN perspective.
A notable feature of many of these articles are frequent smears against the international media, particularly the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Australia’s Special Broadcasting Service, and Radio New Zealand.

The content is also aimed against activists who speak out about the West Papua issue, such as Veronica Koman and Benny Wenda. In the WJ article included in a screenshot below (which is archived here), it uses an unknown source to accuse two people for inciting violence in Wamena.

As for your information, a valid source has confirmed that the disinformation and antagonization allegedly trigged by Socratez Yoman and Veronica Koman resulted in the burning of around 30 shops and 50 houses, and damaging 200 other houses and shops, 30 cars and 50 bikes during the violent riots. Most of the infrastructure targeted were government buildings in Wamena.

A closer examination of the WJ’s Facebook page revealed a further clue: the page had been repurposed one day after the creation of the WJ Twitter account, and had previously been called “Tell the Truth New Zealand.”
This discovery led to the second brand involved in this campaign, Tell the Truth NZ. Tell The Truth NZ, which has a new Facebook page, as well as a Twitter account, website and Medium blog, is aimed specifically at influencing the opinions of New Zealanders on the West Papuan conflict, including tagging the New Zealand Prime Minister and the co-leader of the Greens party in some of its tweets.
Like WJ, the content promoted by this brand promotes a pro-Indonesian narrative, smears pro-independence figures, and attacks international media for reporting news which shows the Indonesian government in a negative light.

Tell the Truth NZ has also used YouTube to display the same content in a video format with text displayed in English. It does this through two accounts. Both accounts have very low numbers of subscribers, however, suggesting the possible impact of these videos is limited.
Identification And Attribution

The domain tellthetruthnz.com is registered by Muhamad Rosyid Jazuli. Jazuli was formerly an international exchange student in New Zealand, where he wrote a paper on “Democracy in the Age of Information Abundance: The Impact of New Technologies on Our Democratic Political System”. Jazuli’s personal social media accounts frequently share content from both WJ and Tell the Truth NZ, including even before the brands themselves post it. The first link to Wawawa Journal’s site shared on Twitter came from Rosyid’s personal account. This is the earliest evidence of WJ content being shared on Twitter by any account and six days before the @wawawajournal Twitter account was created.

Since 2014, Rosyid has worked with an organisation called the Jenggala Center, including registering their website, jenggalacenter.com.
The Jenggala Center, where Jazuli’s position is currently listed as CEO of the Jenggala Institute for Strategic Studies, was created by Vice President of Indonesia Jusuf Kalla in 2014 to promote his own re-election and support Indonesian President Jokowi’s administration more broadly. In the years since, the Center has continued to play an active political role. Ahead of the 2019 Indonesian elections, for example, the Center mobilised teams in unsafe seats to support Jokowi’s re-election.

The Jenggala Center’s Facebook page routinely shares content from another domain registered by Jazuli, Indonesia Bersatu Bisa, which promotes “positive news” about Indonesian politics. The site does not clearly state any affiliation with the Jenggala Center.

Notably, the Indonesia Bersatu Bisa Facebook page has also shared content relating to West Papua from the WJ Medium account.

Indonesia Bersatu Bisa Facebook post promoting link to WJ Medium article on West Papua
Another brand which appears to be linked to Jazuli is Noken Insight (the “noken” voting system is a communal voting system used in parts of West Papua). This brand shares some identical content to Tell the Truth NZ.
It also has a remarkably similar posting pattern to WJ on Twitter (where it seems to be mostly followed by Turkish-language bots) and has also been shared on Rosyid’s personal accounts.

Tweet from Noken Insight Twitter account criticising New Zealand media coverage of West Papua

Like the other brands, it is also fixated on attacking Radio New Zealand in particular and Australian and New Zealand media more broadly.
Noken Insight also uses a YouTube Channel to disperse content in video format. Much of the content targets activist Benny Wenda, and human rights lawyer Veronica Koman, attributing blame for the conflict to them.

Jazuli is a subscriber to the channel.
To summarise, we have uncovered multiple information operations targeting international opinions on the issue of West Papuan independence. In response to questions from the BBC, Jazuli admitted responsibility for Wawawa Journal and Tell the Truth NZ. He denied knowledge of Noken Insight, despite evidence that the Wawawa Journal Facebook page, which he has admitted to running, once used Noken Insight’s brand as its cover photo.
Jazuli told the BBC that the sites and profiles were created on his own initiative by himself and friends, using personal money, and were not related to his work with the Jenggala Center. He claimed that the campaigns were not propaganda or “fake news”, but rather simply an attempt to counter negative Western media coverage.

Jazuli’s claims that the campaigns were not “fake news” seem to be at odds with the fact that they promoted “news” which is demonstrably fake, for example propagating completely fabricated “UN statements.”
Conclusion

In this investigation we have analysed the digital assets, operations and tactics used by two separate information operations aimed at influencing international perceptions of the situation in West Papua in favour of the Indonesian government.

We have also used open source intelligence and digital forensics to identify the actors responsible for these campaigns. Our attribution of the first campaign to InsightID has been confirmed by Facebook, whilst our attribution of the second campaign to Jazuli has been partially confirmed by the individual himself.

These campaigns are only a small fraction of the operations which are actively disseminating propaganda through the same large social media platforms, relating to West Papua and to a range of other domestic issues within in Indonesia. We hope that the work we have done here goes in some way to assist other researchers and investigators to identify even more disinformation networks.