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Papuan asylum seekers reach Australia

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19 January, 2006

THE ARTICLE

Papuan asylum seekers reach Australia

A boat carrying 43 asylum seekers from Indonesia has reached an Australian beach. The group of 30 men, six women and seven children are from Indonesia's Irian Jaya province. The area is known as West Papua by most of the people who live there. The group left Indonesia last Friday in a traditional canoe fitted with a small motor. Indonesian authorities had alerted Australian immigration officials about the boat but search planes failed to spot the craft. The boat contains some of Irian Jaya's most popular independence activists. They want to tell the world their story and gain independence for their people.

The group's requests for asylum will put the spotlight on Australia. The country is already under fire for its treatment of political refugees. The Papuan asylum seekers will also test Australia's difficult relations with Indonesia. There were two banners on the boat. One read: "Save West Papua's people from genocide, intimidation and Indonesia's military and state terrorism". Another banner said: "The West Papuan people need freedom, peace, love and justice in our own homeland." The Indonesian embassy said the group's grounds for seeking asylum were "baseless".

WARM-UPS

1. ASYLUM SEEKER: You are an asylum seeker. You are looking for a new home in a new country because you are afraid of your own country. Talk with the other “asylum seekers” in your class about their reasons for seeking asylum. Talk about your journey to your new country.

2. MY COUNTRY: Talk with your partner(s) about the history of your own country and how it became independent. Are you happy with the political situation in your country? Are there people in your country who would like to break away and form an independent country?

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Boats / asylum seekers / Indonesia / canoes / immigration officers / independence / spotlights / flags / genocide / love / torture / freedom / beliefs / embassies

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. NEW COUNTRIES: What would happen if the following states or regions broke away and said they were independent? Talk about each with your partner(s). Would you support each new country?

- a. West Papua from Indonesia.
- b. Palestine from Israel.
- c. Tibet from China.
- d. Texas from the USA.
- e. Taiwan from China.
- f. The Basque region from Spain.
- g. Chechnya from Russia.
- h. Northern Ireland from the UK.
- i. Somaliland from Somalia
- j. Quebec from Canada

5. INDEPENDENCE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word “independence”. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

6. MAPMAKER: You are a mapmaker. With your mapmaking partners, discuss the changes you would like to see made to the map of the world. Which borders would you like to create or erase? Which new countries would you like to create? Which people deserve independence? Change partners and share your ideas.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. Asylum seekers from Papua New Guinea flew to Australia. | T / F |
| b. The group consisted of 30 men, six women and seven children. | T / F |
| c. Indonesia alerted Australia to the asylum seekers. | T / F |
| d. Most of the world is aware of West Papua's struggle for independence. | T / F |
| e. The asylum seekers will put the spotlight on Australia. | T / F |
| f. The group accused Indonesia of genocide and intimidation. | T / F |
| g. The group said West Papuans need freedom, peace and love. | T / F |
| h. The Indonesian embassy said the group had grounds to claim asylum. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| a. province | warned |
| b. fitted | see |
| c. alerted | basis |
| d. spot | being criticized |
| e. gain | equipped |
| f. spotlight | mass murder |
| g. under fire | region |
| h. genocide | untrue |
| i. grounds | get |
| j. baseless | public eye |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. A boat carrying 43 asylum | to spot the craft |
| b. The area is known | with a small motor |
| c. a traditional canoe fitted | its treatment of political refugees |
| d. but search planes failed | for their people |
| e. ...and gain independence | seeking asylum were "baseless" |
| f. put the spotlight | people from genocide |
| g. under fire for | seekers from Indonesia |
| h. Save West Papua's | freedom, peace, love and justice |
| i. The West Papuan people need | as West Papua |
| j. the group's grounds for | on Australia |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Papuan asylum seekers reach Australia

A boat carrying 43 _____ seekers from Indonesia has reached an Australian beach. The group of 30 men, six women and seven children are from Indonesia's Irian Jaya _____. The area is _____ as West Papua by most of the people who live there. The group left Indonesia last Friday in a traditional canoe _____ with a small motor. Indonesian authorities had _____ Australian immigration officials about the boat but search planes failed to _____ the craft. The boat contains some of Irian Jaya's most popular independence _____. They want to tell the world their story and _____ independence for their people.

The group's _____ for asylum will put the _____ on Australia. The country is already under fire for its _____ of political refugees. The Papuan asylum seekers will also test Australia's difficult _____ with Indonesia. There were two _____ on the boat. One read: "Save West Papua's people from genocide, intimidation and Indonesia's military and _____ terrorism". Another banner said: "The West Papuan people need freedom, peace, love and justice in our own _____." The Indonesian embassy said the group's grounds for _____ asylum were "baseless".

known

spot

asylum

fitted

gain

province

alerted

activists

state

treatment

banners

seeking

requests

relations

homeland

spotlight

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Papuan asylum seekers reach Australia

A boat carrying 43 asylum _____ from Indonesia has reached an Australian beach. The group of 30 men, six women and seven children are from Indonesia's Irian Jaya _____. The area is known as West Papua by most of the people who live there. The group left Indonesia last Friday in a traditional canoe _____ with a small motor. Indonesian authorities had _____ Australian immigration officials about the boat but search planes failed to spot the _____. The boat contains some of Irian Jaya's most popular independence activists. They want to tell the world their story and _____ independence for their people.

The group's requests for asylum will put the _____ on Australia. The country is already under _____ for its treatment of political refugees. The Papuan asylum seekers will also test Australia's difficult _____ with Indonesia. There were two banners on the boat. One read: "Save West Papua's people from _____, intimidation and Indonesia's military and state terrorism". Another banner said: "The West Papuan people need freedom, peace, love and _____ in our own homeland." The Indonesian embassy said the group's grounds for seeking asylum were "_____".

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'seek' and 'asylum'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "ASYLUM SEEKERS" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about asylum seekers and people wanting their own country.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| • reached | • spotlight |
| • known | • under fire |
| • fitted | • relations |
| • failed | • save |
| • popular | • need |
| • gain | • grounds |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What adjectives describe your feelings about the article?
- c. What do you know about West Papua?
- d. What do you know about the different areas and islands of Indonesia?
- e. Do you think the asylum seekers are brave to sail to Australia?
- f. What do you think the Australian government should do with the asylum seekers?
- g. How do you think Indonesia would react if Australia gave the group asylum?
- h. Do you think there is a chance West Papua will gain independence from Indonesia, as West Timor did?
- i. Do you think it makes sense that half of the island of New Guinea is Indonesian and the other half is Papua New Guinea?
- j. Do you think the asylum seekers' grounds are baseless?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think the Indonesian government is worried about the asylum seekers telling their stories?
- d. Do you think all of the world's indigenous people should be given their own country?
- e. Are there any indigenous peoples in your country fighting for independence?
- f. Why do you think many countries refuse to give independence and rights to people who clearly lived on the land first?
- g. What is your image of Indonesia's government and military?
- h. Would you stand up for your political rights even if it meant you might be tortured?
- i. Do you think there should be a UN body to sort out claims of independence?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

INDEPENDENCE: You have the power to give independence to different groups of people. It is your job to decide who gets independence first. Walk around the class and ask for information about the peoples in the table. In pairs / groups, agree on reasons why these people should or should not have full independence. Put them in order of who should get independence first.

PEOPLE	REASONS FOR INDEPENDENCE	REASONS AGAINST INDEPENDENCE	ORDER
West Papuans			
Taiwanese			
Palestinians			
Chechens			
Basques			

Change partners and talk about your reasons and order. Advise each other on the wisdom of your recommendations.

Return to your original partners and discuss what you found out from the other "independence deciders".

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on this story. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. INDEPENDENCE: Write an essay describing a group of people who you think deserve independence. Read your essay to your partner(s) in your next class. Did you all write about similar things?

4. A DAY IN THE LIFE: You are a refugee. You are escaping a dangerous situation in your country. Write an account of one day in your life. Write about the political situation in the country you have left and your desire for an independent country. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone have similar days and thoughts?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. T d. F e. T f. T g. T h. F

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| a. province | region |
| b. fitted | equipped |
| c. alerted | warned |
| d. spot | see |
| e. gain | get |
| f. spotlight | public eye |
| g. under fire | being criticized |
| h. genocide | mass murder |
| i. grounds | basis |
| j. baseless | untrue |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a. A boat carrying 43 asylum | seekers from Indonesia |
| b. The area is known | as West Papua |
| c. a traditional canoe fitted | with a small motor |
| d. but search planes failed | to spot the craft |
| e. ...and gain independence | for their people |
| f. put the spotlight | on Australia |
| g. under fire for | its treatment of political refugees |
| h. Save West Papua's | people from genocide |
| i. The West Papuan people need | freedom, peace, love and justice |
| j. the group's grounds for | seeking asylum were "baseless" |

GAP FILL:

Papuan asylum seekers reach Australia

A boat carrying 43 **asylum** seekers from Indonesia has reached an Australian beach. The group of 30 men, six women and seven children are from Indonesia's Irian Jaya **province**. The area is **known** as West Papua by most of the people who live there. The group left Indonesia last Friday in a traditional canoe **fitted** with a small motor. Indonesian authorities had **alerted** Australian immigration officials about the boat but search planes failed to **spot** the craft. The boat contains some of Irian Jaya's most popular independence **activists**. They want to tell the world their story and **gain** independence for their people.

The group's **requests** for asylum will put the **spotlight** on Australia. The country is already under fire for its **treatment** of political refugees. The Papuan asylum seekers will also test Australia's difficult **relations** with Indonesia. There were two **banners** on the boat. One read: "Save West Papua's people from genocide intimidation and Indonesia's military and **state** terrorism". Another banner said: "The West Papuan people need freedom, peace, love and justice in our own **homeland**." The Indonesian embassy said the group's grounds for **seeking** asylum were "baseless".