

Media Update  
November 25, 2023

## **Bayu Widyatmoko, 20 Years of Dedication to Educating Papuan Children**

**Tembagapura** - Every child deserves access to education and technology for a brighter future. This idea is upheld by Bayu Widyatmoko, a teacher who has devoted himself since 2003 in Papua.

Following the completion of his undergraduate studies at the Universitas Negeri Malang in 2002, Bayu ventured to Papua to teach at the Jayawijaya Education Foundation School (YPJ). The school was established by PT Freeport Indonesia (PTFI) in 1973 to provide inclusive education for the children of company employees as well as indigenous Papuan children residing in villages around the company's operational area. Covering educational levels from early childhood education to elementary and junior high school, YPJ School presently accommodates 1,150 students, engages 148 teachers and education personnel, incorporates three technical experts, and has proudly seen approximately 6,700 students graduate over the years.

Bayu, who has become the Principal of YPJ Tembagapura, champions inclusive education, fostering an environment that welcomes all children, irrespective of their intellectual, social, and other conditions. The unique challenge arises in teaching indigenous Papuan children from the nearby villages attending YPJ, as they strive to compete on an equal footing with their peers from employee families who enjoy a more privileged family background and conducive environment.

"When I decided to relocate to Papua, I quickly noticed that the eagerness for learning among Papuan children rivaled that of children in Java. Witnessing their diverse backgrounds served as a motivating factor for me to fully harness and maximize their untapped potential," expressed Bayu.

He shared his experience when teaching the distinctions between the beaks of birds and the mouths of carnivorous and herbivorous mammals. A curious student interjected, asking, "Is Mr. Bayu aware that cuscuses have a penchant for sweets?". The student went on to share a personal experience, revealing that he had fed a cuscus and discovered its preference for cookies.

"The experience made me realize that what is listed in textbooks is infrequently contextualized and can even dwarf children's real experiences. Then I learned that as a teacher I need to consider the local context of students' daily lives, integrating elements that resonate with their interests, and incorporating these aspects into the teaching-learning process," he conveyed.

His experience led Bayu and his team to transform the curriculum that works for students. Through the collaborative endeavors of Bayu and the dedicated educators, YPJ has embraced a more adaptable curriculum, aligning with local contexts and content. The educational focus has shifted to a student-centered approach, emphasizing individual students' unique needs. Bayu emphasized, "YPJ has transitioned to the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) as our chosen learning framework, recognized for its ability to cater to the distinct needs and potential of each student."

Navigating the diverse cultural backgrounds of students poses a distinctive challenge. The cultural values they bring may diverge from those instilled within the school environment. Bayu emphasizes, "It is the teacher's responsibility to establish effective communication with students and their families to ensure a seamless teaching and learning process."

Bayu highlights a lingering perspective that girls are not deemed essential for higher education, underscoring the importance of teachers actively engaging with parents to reshape such perceptions.

"Despite these challenges, YPJ teachers remain resilient. We undertake a range of initiatives, including regular communication and socialization with parents. We believe that when students get a quality

education, they will be well-prepared to compete in the job market, fostering the opportunity to forge professional careers and attain a promising future," he said.

As the Principal of YPJ Tembapapura, Bayu is inspired to imbue the same spirit in the teachers at YPJ. "Educators at YPJ are motivated to consistently engage in a cycle of learning, relearning, and unlearning. This approach ensures our teaching methodologies stay relevant and effective for the holistic development of the children," Bayu continued.

National Teachers' Day serves as a reminder for educators to consistently deliver their utmost efforts. "Ultimately, our aspiration is that these dedicated endeavors will play a pivotal role in the realization of the Golden Generation 2045. This vision aligns with the Indonesian government's commitment to cultivating a future generation that is not only superior and competent but also highly competitive on the global stage," he said.

PTFI, as the visionary force behind the school, wholeheartedly champions the innovative approaches employed by the institution to optimize the teaching-learning experience. "Having a frontline perspective as an educator, I observe PTFI's unwavering dedication to advancing education in Papua, exemplified by initiatives like YPJ. PTFI's endeavors have effectively fostered an educational milieu conducive to nurturing top-tier human capital for Papua's future," remarked Bayu.

| PHOTOS  | DESCRIPTIONS   |
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| <p><b>Photo 1a-c</b></p>  | <p>Yayasan Pendidikan Jayawijaya (YPJ) Tembapapura Principal <b>Bayu Widyatmoko</b> with YPJ students in the YPJ Tembapapura learning environment, Saturday (25/11).</p> |



**Photo 2a-b**



Yayasan Pendidikan Jayawijaya (YPJ) students participate in teaching and learning activities at YPJ Tembagapura, Saturday (25/11).

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**About PT Freeport Indonesia (PTFI)**

PT Freeport Indonesia (PTFI) is a mineral mining company affiliated with Freeport-McMoRan (FCX) and Mining Industry Indonesia (MIND ID). PTFI mines and processes ore to produce copper concentrates, containing gold and silver.

PTFI markets the concentrates worldwide, and primarily to its domestic copper smelter, PT Smelting. PTFI's mining operations are located in the Grasberg mineral estate, Papua - Indonesia. The large copper and gold mineral deposits contained in the Grasberg area make PTFI's mining operations one of the largest in the world. PTFI currently operates the world's largest underground mine that emphasizes responsible business practices.

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