

Indonesian Journalists Safety Committee meets Foreign Ministry to follow up the brutal shooting of Indonesian journalist

Representatives of the Indonesian Journalists Safety Committee on Friday, October 18, met Foreign Ministry's director for the protection of Indonesian citizens, Judha Nugraha, to discuss the latest update from Veby Mega Indah, an Indonesian journalist who was hit by a bullet when she was covering a demonstration in Wan Chai, Hong Kong, on September 29.

The committee called on the ministry to provide support and protection for Veby, including preparing a safe house for her to stay once she can leave the hospital. In addition, the committee also urged the ministry to push the Hong Kong Police to investigate and take full responsibility of the shooting and intimidation towards Veby.

In response to that, Judha said that the Indonesian Consulate General in Hong Kong has asked Hong Kong authorities for an official explanation of the incident. The consulate general had also communicated with Veby and her family who have now stayed in Hong Kong to be with her. The Indonesian officials had reached out to Veby's employer regarding her rights as an employee.

Veby was shot in her right eye when covering the Hong Kong protest. The projectile that hit Veby was said to be very dangerous that it might be deadly.

The committee believes that the shot was an unnecessary act of violence since the police could have easily identified Veby Indah as a journalist. She was covering the protest with other journalists, separated from the protestors. She was also wearing high-visibility attributes to clearly identify her profession, such as a PRESS sign on her helmet, her bright vest, and an identity card.

According to the data gathered by Veby's lawyer, Vidler & Co Solicitor, which was appointed by the Hong Kong Journalists Association, the projectile is believed to be a bean bag round (Type 12 Gauge Drag Stabilised Round, with 40g projectile and velocity speed of 270fps/82mps) or Rubber Bullet (12 gauge Rubber Fin Rocket (Direct Fire), High Velocity (ALS120HV) with velocity of 650fps (198m/s), casings of which were found near the scene.

After the incident, Indonesian Journalists Safety Committee had been informed that the Hong Kong Police allegedly tried to intimidate Veby Indah by trying to meet her while she was still receiving treatment at the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital. We appreciate the hospital's effort to prevent the visit and keep Veby in a secure location.

In a statement from her lawyer, Veby is said to be in danger of permanently blind in one eye because her pupil was ruptured by the force of the impact. The committee is closely monitoring Veby's condition.

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