

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 21/01/00

EXTRA 01/00

Prisoner of conscience / Fear for safety / Harrassment of

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INDONESIA Syaifuddin Gani, Human Rights Lawyer
Nazaruddin Ibrahim, Human Rights Lawyer

On 4 January 2000, the two prominent human rights lawyers and human rights activists named above were arrested by Indonesian Police in Sigli town, Pidie District, Aceh. They are currently being held at Sigli police resort (Polres). Amnesty International is concerned for their safety.

The two were arrested as part of a sweeping police operation in search of members of the armed separatist group *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM), Free Aceh Movement.

The reason for their arrest is not known but is believed to be in connection with their human rights activities - both men are actively involved with non-governmental human rights organizations in Aceh. They are not thought to have been charged with any offence yet. As such, Amnesty International considers them to be prisoners of conscience.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since late 1998, serious human rights violations in Aceh have increased in the course of counter-insurgency operations by the *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (TNI), Indonesian National Army against GAM, which has seen hundreds of people arbitrarily detained on suspicion of having links to the organization. Those detained are often denied access to lawyers of their choice, and are at risk of torture or ill-treatment.

Human rights defenders and those who work for non-governmental organizations are particularly at risk of human rights violations, threats and harassment. On 18 November, six people involved in humanitarian work with refugees in South Aceh were reportedly detained by Indonesian soldiers and badly beaten before being released.

The failure by the authorities to bring security force personnel to justice for human rights violations they have committed in the area has fuelled tension and anger among the population. On 30 July, the then President, Habibie, announced the establishment of an Independent Investigation Commission on Violence in Aceh. Although the findings of the Commission have been submitted to the new President, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Attorney General, Marzuki Darusman, the authorities have failed to take concrete measures to act on its findings.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, Indonesian or your own language:

- urging the authorities to immediately release Syaifuddin Gani and Nazaruddin Ibrahim;
- urging the authorities to ensure that they are given immediate access to human rights lawyers, their family and to medical professionals;
- urging the authorities to provide guarantees that they are not tortured or ill-treated in custody;
- urging the authorities to allow human rights activists to conduct their work without fear of being subjected to human rights violations.

APPEALS TO:

Chief of National Police

Lt. Gen. Rusdihardjo
Kapolri
Markas Besar Kepolisian RI
Jl. Trunojoyo 13
Kebayoran Baru
Jakarta Selatan
Indonesia

Telegrams:National Police Chief, Jakarta, Indonesia

Faxes:+ 62 21 720 7277

Salutation:Dear Lt. General

COPIES TO:

President

KH Abdurrahman Wahid

President RI

Istana Merdeka

Jakarta 10110

Indonesia

Faxes:+ 62 21 345 2685 (via State Secretariat)/ 380 5511 / 526 8726

Telexes:44283 BIGRA IA; 44469 DEPLU IA

Attorney General

Marzuki Darusman, SH

Jaksa Agung

Jl. Sultan Hasanuddin No.1

Kebayoran Baru

Jakarta Selatan 12130

Indonesia

Faxes:+ 62 21 725 0213 / 739 2576

and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 2 February 2000.