

URGENT ACTION

SHI'A MUSLIMS AT RISK OF ATTACKS IN INDONESIA

Hundreds of Indonesian Shi'a Muslims have been living in a temporary shelter after their village was attacked by anti-Shi'a groups at the end of December. On 12 January, they were forced back to their village, despite an ongoing risk of further attacks.

On 28 December 2011, Shi'a religious leaders from Nangkrenang village in Sampang district, Madura Island were warned by the Omben sub-district police that their community would be attacked by anti-Shi'a groups. Despite requests for police protection, only one police and one military officer were present on the morning of 29 December when a mob of around 500 hundred people, some carrying sharp weapons, entered the village. According to local sources, the officers did not intervene but instead recorded the attacks on their mobile phones. The mob set fire to a place of worship, boarding school and various homes in the vicinity. Although 25 Police Mobile Brigade (Brimob) officers arrived at the scene an hour later, no steps were taken to prevent the attacks or protect the community. One person arrested for the attack has since been released.

Following the attacks, around 335 villagers, including at least 107 children, were evacuated to a temporary shelter at a sports complex in Sampang. Many of the children were afraid to go back to their homes and schools. Conditions in the shelter were reported to be inadequate, with limited access to clean water and sanitation.

On 4 January 2011 the Sampang district authorities and police began to pressure community members to return to their homes. Water supplies to the shelter were reduced and the authorities threatened to evict some community members from the shelter. The community refused to leave the shelter until they received adequate protection from the police and the perpetrators of the attack were brought to justice. In spite of this request, they were forced onto trucks by the local government authorities on the evening of 12 January, and taken back to their village. However, the authorities told four community members that they could not return.

Please write immediately in English, Indonesian or your own language urging the Indonesian authorities to:

- Take adequate measures to guarantee the safety of the Shi'a community in Sampang, East Java, in accordance with their right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- Conduct prompt, independent and impartial investigations into all reports of intimidation, harassment and attacks against members of the Shi'a community in Sampang, East Java and bring the perpetrators to justice in accordance with international fair trial standards and ensure victims receive reparations;
- Immediately investigate the failure of the police to prevent the attacks and protect the community and further, put in place a proactive strategy for preventing and addressing incidents of religiously based violence;
- Take effective steps to ensure that all religious minorities are protected and allowed to practise their faith free from fear, intimidation and attacks.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 FEBRUARY 2012 TO:

Head of the Indonesian National Police

General Timur Pradopo

Jl. Trunojoyo No. 3

Jakarta Selatan, Indonesia

Fax: +62 21 722 0669

Salutation: Dear General

Governor of East Java

Soekarwo

Jl. Pahlawan No. 110,

Surabaya, East Java,

Indonesia

Fax: +62 31 355 7138

Salutation: Dear Governor

And copies to:

Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal
and Security Affairs

Djoko Suyanto

Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat,

Jakarta 1500, Indonesia

Fax: +62 21 345 0918

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Shi'a community in Sampang, East Java have faced intimidation and attacks in the past, including in 2006 and 2011. They have also reportedly been pressured by anti-Shi'a groups to convert to Sunni Islam.

Amnesty International has documented numerous cases of intimidation and violence against religious minorities by radical Islamist groups in various parts of Indonesia. These include attacks and burning of places of worship and homes, at times leading to their displacement. In most cases, those who commit acts of violence are not punished.

The right to freedom of religion or belief is guaranteed in Article 18(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party. It provides that: "[e]veryone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom... either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching."

As a state party to the ICCPR, Indonesia also has an obligation to ensure the right to life, security and freedom from torture and other ill-treatment. Under Article 2(1) of the ICCPR, such protection must be provided without discrimination including on the basis of religion. The UN Human Rights Committee has further stated that the failure to take appropriate measures to prevent harm caused by private actors would give rise to violations by state parties. The duty to protect human rights is also explicitly invoked in the National Police Act (Law No. 2/2002) which provides that the function of the police includes maintaining security and social order, enforcing the law and providing protection.

By forcibly returning the Shi'a community, the Indonesian authorities have failed to apply the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. These include Principle 28 which states that the government has the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, and to provide the means, which allow internally displaced persons to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country.

Name: Shi'a community in Sampang, East Java

Gender m/f: Both

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