

# URGENT ACTION

## AUTHORITIES CUT OFF FOOD AND WATER TO SHI'AS Indonesian authorities cut off food and water supplies to displaced Shi'a community in East Java.

At least 190 displaced Shi'a followers in East Java, including 69 women and 61 children, are at risk after local government authorities halted supplies of food and water to the community, citing a lack of funds.

The Shi'a community, from Karang Gayam village in the Sampang district on Madura island, were displaced in August 2012 when an anti-Shi'a mob of around 500 people attacked the community with sharp weapons and stones. One person was killed and dozens were injured. The mob also set fire to thirty-five houses belonging to the Shi'a community. Four people have since been charged for the attack.

Following the attack, the community was moved to temporary shelter at a sports complex in Sampang - with minimal facilities - where they have been living for the last three months. No medicine or facilities specifically for children or women have been provided. On 18 November, the local authorities cut off water supply to the complex and on 22 November they halted food supplies. The displaced community have been forced to use their limited funds to purchase food and water.

According to credible sources, some of the Shi'a followers at the complex have been intimidated and harassed by local government officials who have urged them to convert to Sunni Islam if they want to return to their homes. Local and national authorities continue to put pressure on the community to relocate but they have rejected this option, preferring to return to their homes and livelihoods under conditions of safety. A group of volunteers have been assisting them with their daily needs and providing counselling, particularly to women and children.

### **Please write immediately in English, Indonesian or your own language calling on authorities in Indonesia**

- To ensure the displaced Shi'a community has immediate access to essential services such as food and clean drinking water in their shelter;
- To guarantee the safe, voluntary and dignified return of the Shi'a community to their homes, according to their wishes, and to provide assistance so as to enable them to rebuild the homes that were damaged or destroyed;
- To investigate reports that the local government authorities in Sampang District have been involved in the intimidation of Shi'a followers to renounce their faith;
- To ensure that all those involved in the attack against the Shi'a community are speedily brought to justice in proceedings which meet international standards of fairness and without the imposition of the death penalty and that victims are provided reparations.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 JANUARY 2013 TO:**

Sampang District Head (Bupati)  
Noer Tjahja  
Jl. Jamaluddin No.1A, Sampang,  
Madura, East Java, Indonesia 69241  
Fax: + 62 323 321017

**Salutation: Dear Noer Tjahja**

Minister of Justice and Human Rights  
Amir Syamsuddin  
Jl. H.R. Rasuna Said Kav No. 4-5  
Kuningan, Jakarta Selatan 12950,  
Indonesia

Fax: +62 21 525 3095

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

And copies to:

Mr. Otto Nur Abdullah  
Chairperson National Human Rights  
Commission (Komnas HAM)  
Jl Lатуharhary, No.4 Menteng  
Jakarta Pusat 10310, Indonesia  
Fax: +62 21 39 25 227

**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

There have been increasing levels of harassment, intimidation and attacks against religious minority groups in Indonesia including Shi'a, Ahmadiyya and Christian communities. These include attacks and burning of homes and places of worship, at times leading to the displacement of these groups. Those who commit acts of violence against religious minorities are rarely punished.

Amnesty International is particularly concerned that government authorities – as well as the police – are failing to protect these communities and, in some cases, actively taking part in their persecution. These include attempts by government officials to force religious minorities, such as Ahmadiyya and Shi'a followers, to denounce their beliefs.

The Shi'a community on Madura island has been intimidated and attacked before. On 29 December 2011, a mob set fire to a place of worship, a boarding school and to various homes in the vicinity. Police did not take adequate measures to protect the community and instead of intervening to stop the attack, some recorded it on their phones. Only one person was eventually charged and sentenced to three months' imprisonment for the attack.

In July 2012 Tajul Muluk, a religious leader from the East Java Shi'a community, was arrested and sentenced to two years' imprisonment for blasphemy under Article 156(a) of the Indonesian Criminal Code by the Sampang District Court. His arrest followed reports that on 1 January 2012, a religious decree (fatwa) was issued by the Sampang branch of the Indonesia Ulema Council (MUI) related to what was described as Tajul Muluk's "deviant teachings". The East Java High Court increased his sentence to four years in September 2012 upon appeal. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience and calls for his immediate and unconditional release.

The right to freedom of religion is guaranteed in the Indonesian Constitution. Moreover, Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party, states that "this right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice" and that "no one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice".

Name: At least 190 people from the Shi'a community

Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 336/12 Index: ASA 21/043/2012 Issue Date: 26 November 2012