

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 21/55/96

UA 198/96

Fear for safety / possible prisoners of
conscience

7 August 1996

INDONESIA Coen Hussein Pontoh
Dita Sari
Mohammad Shaleh
Hendrik Dikson Sirait, aged 24
Lisa Febrianti (f), aged 22
Trio Yohanus Mulyato
Zainal Abidin, aged 24
I Sunarman Purwosaputro
Patriatno
Titin
Agus Sukarmanto
Syamsul Bachri
Agustyana
Nyonya B Veronica Sembiring

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of at least 14 people detained in relation to disturbances which took place after the security forces raided the office of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) in Jakarta on 27 July 1996.

The police raid was an attempt to remove supporters of the former party chairwoman Megawati Sukarnoputri who had been ousted from the leadership by PDI dissidents at a breakaway party congress orchestrated by the authorities in June. The raid and subsequent disturbances resulted in dozens of PDI members being injured and large-scale arrests on 27 and 28 July. The government is blaming the *Partai Rakyat Demokratik* (PRD), People's Democratic Party, for masterminding the disturbances.

Since then the authorities have continued to arrest activists and members of organizations which it alleges were behind the disturbances. Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of those arrested, some of whom are being held in military custody or are being held without access to lawyers, greatly heightening the risk of torture or ill-treatment. The organization believes that most, if not all, of them are prisoners of conscience and that the disturbances have been used as a pretext by the authorities to clamp down on peaceful activists and opposition groups.

Hendrik Didson Sirait, a member of the student activist organization *Pilar*, was arrested by *Kostrad*, the Army Strategic Reserve Command, on 1 August during a peaceful demonstration outside the Jakarta District Court. There has been no information about Hendrik since his arrest and despite attempts to trace him by other *Pijar* members and lawyers, his whereabouts remains unknown.

The following day, 2 August, three students from Surabaya were arrested at their homes. Lisa Febrianti, Trio Yohanus Mulyato and Zainal Abidin are all student activists. It is not known precisely where the three are being detained, but on 7 August the Head of Information for the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) in East Java admitted that the three were being held in military custody and were being investigated for their alleged connections to the PRD.

Three more activists, I Sunarman Purwosaputro, Patriatno and Titin, are also believed to be in military custody. A statement by the military on 7 August said that they had been arrested but gave no details of their whereabouts or

why they are being held. The military is alleging that the three are members of the PRD.

Five other activists are being held in police custody. Two, Agus Sukarmanto and Syamsul Bachri are being held under Indonesia's wide ranging Anti-Subversion Law which carries the death penalty. They were arrested in the city of Solo in Central Java on 2 August and later taken to Jakarta where they are being held at Jakarta's main police station. Of the three others, Coen Hussein Pontoh and Dita Sari have been accused of "incitement" and "spreading hatred against the government" under Articles 160 and 154 respectively of Indonesia's Criminal Code. Mohammad Shaleh has also been accused under Article 154, as well as Article 156, which prohibits expressing "hatred... against groups in society". All three were arrested on 8 July after participating in a strike of workers from a number of factories in Surabaya to protest about wages and working conditions. They are all in police custody in Surabaya. Following the events of 27 July, they were moved into separate cells where they are being held in isolation. Although it is believed that they have access to lawyers, there is still concern for their safety because of the authorities' attempts to link them to the disturbances in Jakarta.

In another case, the mother of a student activist was arrested apparently in connection with her son's activities. Nyonya B Veronica Sembiring was arrested on 2 August in Bogor where she is believed to be still in police custody.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Riots broke out in Jakarta on 27 and 28 July 1996 after the security forces raided the headquarters of the PDI. As many as 241 people were arrested as a direct result of the raid and subsequent riots. At least five and possibly seven people are believed to have died and up to 90 are thought to have been wounded.

Since then, the Indonesian Government has issued threats against individuals and non-governmental organizations which it alleges played a role in the riots. The PRD, in particular, has been singled out for its alleged role in orchestrating the riots and has been accused by the authorities of having communist links. (For further information see *Indonesia: Raid on PDI Office*, AI Index: ASA 21/46/96 and *Indonesia: PDI Raid: Update*, AI Index ASA 21/48/96.)

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

- appealing to the authorities to release information on the exact whereabouts of all 14 detainees and the exact charges against them;
- requesting guarantees from the authorities that none of the detainees will be subjected to ill-treatment or torture;
- requesting that the authorities ensure that all the detainees are given access to independent lawyers of their own choosing and to their families;
- urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release any of those among the 14 who are prisoners of conscience.

APPEALS TO:

ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF
Maj. Gen R. Hartono
Kasad TNI AD
Markas Besar TNI AD

Jl. Medan Merdeka Utara 2
Jakarta Pusat
Indonesia

Telegrams: Army Chief of Staff Hartono, Jakarta, Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Maj. Gen. Hartono

MINISTER OF JUSTICE

Uahi Utoyo Usman S.H.
Menteri Kehkiman
Jl. H.R. Rasuna Said Kav. 6-7
Kuningan
Jakarta Selatan
Indonesia

Fax: + 62 21 525 3095

Telegrams: Justice Minister, Jakarta, Indonesia

Salutation: Dear Minister Usman

COPIES TO:

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Ali Alatas SH
Menteri Luar Negeri
Jl Medan Taman Pejambon No 6
Jakarta, Indonesia

Fax: + 62 21 380 5511 / 345 7782 / 21360 517

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 18 September 1996.