

28 July 1999

Further information on EXTRA 89/99 (ASA 21/63/99, 16 July 1999) - Arbitrary detention/fear for safety/Fear of torture or ill-treatment/possible "disappearance"

INDONESIA Abdullah  
Adanan Abdullah, 28  
Ansari Juned, 19  
Bahri Insya, 22  
Bakhtiar Razali, 17  
Helmi Zulkifli, 17  
Junaidi Ismail, 32  
M Amin, 30  
Marzuki Syamsuddin, 21  
M Husen, 35  
Muslidar Sabirin, 17  
Mustafa Hasyem, 23  
Nazir M Diah, 38  
Nurdin Ibrahim, 23  
Ramli Amin, 35  
Rasyidan Yusof, alias Si Yem, 28  
Razali, 18  
Si Bit A Rani, 18  
Si Yan Lem Badai, 38  
Zainuddin Syafii, 17

---

Amnesty International has learnt that the 20 men named above have been released. They were arrested in Teunom Sub-district, West Aceh, on 9 July 1999.

It is now known that they were arrested as they arrived for work at PT Tiga Mitra Perdana (PT TMP), a privately owned timber plantation at Laot Bhee, eight kilometres from Gunong Baloh Village, in Teunom Sub-district. They were detained by soldiers from Company A Yonif 132/BS of the Indonesian National Army (TNI), who were waiting in three trucks.

They were taken to the West Aceh District Military Headquarters (Kodim West Aceh) in the town of Meulaboh. Their families, and local community leaders from Teunom who went to Kodim West Aceh, were not allowed to see them, and the military authorities refused to explain why they were being held.

Several days later, military officials were reported as saying that the 20 men had been arrested on suspicion of links with the armed opposition group, *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM), Free Aceh Merdeka, and that the area where the men were arrested was frequently used as a training ground by GAM. The TNI also claimed that during interrogation the 20 men had admitted giving money to GAM, and that three of them admitted being GAM members.

Amnesty International is concerned by claims from human rights monitors that the 20 men were interrogated without lawyers present, and that they were tortured and ill-treated to force them to admit to involvement with GAM.

It now appears that the arrests may have been linked to a demonstration on 17 May, at PT TMP, at which more than a thousand Teunom residents demanded three billion rupiah (around US\$450,000) from the company for local development

projects. The company refused the demands, and in the disturbances that followed some company facilities were destroyed. The demonstration was led by three men, of whom two "disappeared" days after the demonstration and one was shot dead by an unknown group of men on 3 June.

On 19 July, while the 20 workers were still in military custody, Teunom community leaders met with PT TMP to discuss the community's demands. As a result the community apparently agreed to drop their demand for money and both sides agreed to ensure the security of the plantation area.

On 20 July, the 20 men were transferred to police custody, after, according to the TNI, it was found that there was no evidence of their involvement in GAM. Instead the military claimed that the 20 men were being investigated for stealing timber. However, they were released the next day, and it is believed they are no longer facing any charges.

Under Indonesia's Criminal Procedures Code (KUHAP), only the police - and not the TNI - have the legal authority to conduct arrests, detain or question suspects.

**No further action is required. Thank you to all those who sent appeals.**