

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 21/30/98

This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 10 per section

EXTRA 26/98

Fear for safety

31 March 1998

INDONESIA Haryanto Taslam

Bahrul Alam, student
Utami Pribadi, student
Okyanti, student
N.A. Chairil Syarif
Hamdani, activist

The safety of the above-named six political and student activists is at risk. N.A. Chairil Syarif and Hamdani are being held in incommunicado detention while the other four are missing, possibly detained.

Haryanto Taslam is the Deputy Secretary-General of the Indonesian Democratic Party-Struggle, (PDI-Struggle). This is a group of Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) members loyal to ousted PDI leader Megawati Sukarnoputri. He has been missing for at least two weeks and is feared to have been arrested and placed in incommunicado detention.

Haryanto Taslam is thought to have been arrested several days after attending a PDI press conference, critical of the president, at the residence of Megawati Sukarnoputri in Jakarta on 3 March 1998. Attempts by his friends and family to trace him have so far failed. In 1997, Haryanto Taslam was threatened with criminal charges following a ceremony at the house of Megawati Sukarnoputri commemorating the PDI's 24th anniversary. The charges were, however, never pursued by the police.

The five other people are believed to have been arrested in connection with an anti-government student demonstration in Lampung, Sumatra, on 19 March which resulted in clashes between the security forces and students. As a result 72 students were taken into custody but all were released shortly afterwards -- several badly wounded as a result of torture and ill-treatment. However, three students, Bahrul Alam, Utami Pribadi and Okyanti are still missing and may be in custody.

N.A. Chairil Syarif was arrested in Lampung on 26 March. Later that day Hamdani was arrested by security forces at a bus terminal. Lampung police have claimed that they found documentation on Hamdani produced by an illegal political party.

It is not known where they have been detained and it is not thought they have access to human rights lawyers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since January 1998, over 300 peaceful political activists have been taken into custody in Indonesia amidst a climate of increased repression. Indonesian authorities have taken harsh measures against those engaging in political activity, particularly around the March Presidential election which returned President Suharto to his seventh consecutive term. There has also been an increase in the incidence of incommunicado detention of activists, several of whom have been subjected to torture or ill-treatment while in military custody, and denied access to human rights lawyers or their families.

In February, five student activists from West Java were held for two days in incommunicado detention by the military during which they were subjected to

ill-treatment. Two other activists, Pius Lustrilanang and Desmond J Mahesa have both been missing since early February and are believed to be held in military custody (see UA 46/98, ASA 21/07/98, 11 February 1998 and follow-up).

Concern over an apparent trend towards incommunicado detention and possible disappearances has been expressed in recent Indonesian media coverage. On 31 March Kompas, a major daily paper, quoted an Armed Forces spokesperson as saying that the military are not involved in any of the recent suspected "disappearance" cases.

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

- urging the authorities to investigate the whereabouts of Haryanto Taslam, Bahrul Alam, Utami Pribadi, Okyanti, N.A. Chairil Syarif and Hamdani and, if taken into custody, to indicate the precise charges against them;
- urging the authorities, if they are in custody, to grant them access to independent human rights lawyers and their families and to release them if they are being held for their peaceful political activities.

APPEALS TO:

COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES (ABRI)

General Wiranto
 Panglima ABRI
 Markas Besar ABRI
 Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No 13
 Jakarta Timur
 Indonesia

Telegrams: General Wiranto, Jakarta, Indonesia

Faxes: + 62 21 36 1471 (Armed Forces HQ); + 62 21 37 8144

COPIES TO:

MINISTER OF JUSTICE

Muladi
 Menteri Kehakiman
 Jl. H.R. Rasuna Said Kav. 6-7
 Kuningan
 Jakarta Selatan
 Indonesia

Faxes: + 62 21 525 3095

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 28 April 1998.