

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 21/009/2007

03 August 2007

UA 199/07      Fear for safety

INDONESIA      **Socrates Yoman (m), Head of the Baptist Churches (Papua)**  
**Noahk Nawipa (m), Kingmi church leader**  
Benny Giay (m), Kingmi church leader

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Benny Giay, Noahk Nawipa and Socrates Yoman, all Christian church leaders in Papua province, have reportedly been threatened. Amnesty International believes that the lives of the three men could be in danger.

Around midnight on 29 July, two men reportedly came to the home of Pastor Benny Giay, a leader of the Kingmi church (the Papuan branch of the Gospel Tabernacle Church of Indonesia, in the town of Jayapura, Papua, where many local indigenous people worship), and walked around his house for about 15 minutes before leaving. The next day, Pastor Giay was informed that someone had received a text message asking him to join a group planning to vandalize Pastor Giay's office at the Kingmi Church. On 1 August, Pastor Giay was also told while he was travelling in the Sentani area of Papua province that he had to be 'extra careful' because there were plans by members of the national branch of the Gospel Tabernacle Church of Indonesia (*Gereja Kemah Injil Indonesia*, GKII) to kill or shoot pastors from around Sentani. This rumour echoed another warning by a pastor who reportedly said "tell pak [Mr] Benny Giay and pak [Mr] Noahk Nawipa to be extra careful as some pastors of GKII are planning to kill them. If they can't there are many ways to abduct them". Noahk Nawipa is also a leader at the Kingmi Church. Benny Giay has been outspoken on the political and human rights situation in Papua.

On 30 July, around 25 people who claimed to be members of GKII reportedly went to the Kingmi Church. The mob threw stones at the Kingmi Church building, injuring as many as eight people who were guarding the Church office. Three of those injured required hospital treatment. Some people from the mob were heard shouting: "Take and kill Dr Benny and Dr Noahk; they provoke people and create too many problems in West Papua. They are true provocateurs".

The attack may have occurred as a result of tensions between the Kingmi Church and GKII. In 2006, the Kingmi church officially separated from GKII, but following allegations that the Kingmi Church was supporting the armed Papuan independence movement (OPM, *Organisasi Papua Merdeka*), members of GKII rejected the autonomy of the Papuan church.

Although reports indicate that about 50 police officers were present during the attack on Kingmi church, it is claimed by witnesses that they did nothing to stop the violence. Some reports indicate that some members of the Special Police Force (Police Mobile Brigade, *Brimob*) and military personnel took part in the violence by vandalizing church property.

According to his testimony, in a separate incident on 29 July, Reverend Socrates Yoman, President of the Communion of Baptist Churches in Papua, was threatened and intimidated by armed police officers and military intelligence personnel outside the Baptist Church in Jayapura, Papua province, following a service. Reverend Yoman said that the security forces personnel pointed a pistol at him and he was verbally threatened, although details of these threats are not known to Amnesty International. Reverend Yoman has spoken out a number of times about human rights abuses committed by the authorities in Papua.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

There is an active independence movement in Papua province, and the Indonesian security forces have responded at times with excessive use of force including extrajudicial executions, torture and arbitrary

detentions. Members of local human rights organisations have been harassed and intimidated because of their work, and some have been forced to leave the province. Church leaders are among those who have voiced the concerns of the local population about ongoing human rights violations, and as a result have publicly been accused of being linked to the independence movement. Following her visit to Indonesia in June, the UN's Special Representative on Human Rights Defenders, Hina Jilani, stated that human rights defenders working in Papua province "continue to face torture, arbitrary detention and harassment from the country's police, military and security forces."

While Amnesty International takes no position on the political status of any province of Indonesia, the organization believes that the right to freedom of expression includes the right to peacefully express political views and that this right must be upheld.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Indonesian, English or your own language:**

- expressing concern for the safety of Benny Giay, Noahk Nawipa and Socrates Yoman;
- urging the authorities to take immediate, concrete measures to guarantee the safety of Benny Giay, Noahk Nawipa and Socrates Yoman, and members of the Kingmi church;
- calling on the authorities to investigate allegations that Socrates Yoman was threatened at gunpoint by security forces personnel and that Kingmi Church was attacked with the collusion of police and military;
- calling for those responsible for the attacks and intimidation towards the three church leaders and members of the Kingmi Church be held accountable;
- calling for the authorities to ensure that all members of the police and military are made aware of the legitimate role of human rights defenders and their responsibility to protect human rights defenders under the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

**APPEALS TO: (Please note that fax numbers may be switched off outside office hours, 7 hours ahead of GMT. Please keep trying)**

President

Mr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono  
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**Salutation:** Dear President Yudhoyono

**COPIES TO:**

Chairman, National Commission for Human Rights

Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia  
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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 14 September 2007.