
amnesty international

£INDONESIA

@Parliamentarian questioned after demonstrations - a pretext for silencing peaceful opposition?

APRIL 1995

AI INDEX: ASA 21/24/95

DISTR: SC/CO/GR

Amnesty International is concerned that parliamentarian Sri Bintang Pamungkas is currently being investigated by the Indonesian Police for his alleged involvement in demonstrations which took place in Germany between 1 and 6 April during a visit by Indonesia's President Suharto. If arrested and charged, Amnesty International would consider him to be a prisoner of conscience.

Sri Bintang Pamungkas has been summoned for questioning three times since he returned from a visit to Germany. He is being questioned under Article 134 of Indonesia's criminal Code, which stipulates that anyone found guilty of "insulting the President" is liable to a maximum sentence of six years' imprisonment. On 18 April, he was questioned for three hours, and on 19 April he was questioned from 10.30am until 5pm. During these interrogations, he was asked questions regarding his family (including his parents), his general activities and the reasons for his being in Germany at the time of the demonstrations. In the early morning of 19 April, his house and car were pelted with stones by unidentified youths. On 25 April, there were two separate demonstrations against Sri Bintang Pamungkas outside the office of his lawyers (from the Legal Aid Institute, LBH) in the capital, Jakarta.

Amnesty International is concerned about alleged irregularities with the process of Sri Bintang Pamungkas' questioning. Firstly, a letter signed by President Suharto is required by law before members of parliament can be questioned by the police. In the case of Sri Bintang Pamungkas, the letter was signed by State Secretary Moerdiono. His lawyers are currently seeking clarification about whether this power can be delegated. Secondly, there are concerns regarding the police report, which forms the basis of the questioning and accuses him of involvement in the demonstrations, distributing stickers and pamphlets and shouting anti-Suharto slogans. His lawyers are currently seeking clarification about the signatory of the report and whether it was in fact written after questioning had begun.

The organisation is concerned that the intimidation of Sri Bintang Pamungkas is being used as a pretext to silence peaceful opposition, and a violation of the right to freedom of association and expression guaranteed under international human rights standards and under Indonesia's own constitution.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There continue to be heavy restrictions on a wide range of political and civil liberties in Indonesia, including freedom of speech, assembly and conscience. In June 1994, three weekly publications were banned and more than 50 people were detained or badly beaten by the security forces during a peaceful protest over the bans in Jakarta. The press bans coincided with a crackdown by the authorities on peaceful political dissidents, including lawyers, academics, trade unionists and human rights defenders.

In a continuing crackdown on peaceful political opposition, the Indonesian Government has threatened to take action against individuals and organisations alleged to have taken part in demonstrations in Germany in April this year against human rights violations in Indonesia and East Timor.

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WHAT CAN YOU DO: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English, Bahasa Indonesia, or in your own language:

✍ *urging the government to stop the investigation on of Sri Bintang Pamungkas for peacefully expressing his opposition to the government;*

✍ *urging the Indonesian Government to ensure that those peacefully expressing their right to freedom of opinion and association do so free from intimidation and the threat of imprisonment.*

WHO TO SEND APPEALS TO:

⇒ Minister of Information

H. Harmoko

Menteri Penerangan

Jl. Merdeka Barat 9

Jakarta

Indonesia

Telephone: +62 21 37 4392 or 344 227

Telex: 44264; 44282; 44349 deppen jkt

Salutation: Dear Minister Harmoko

⇒ Chief of Police for Jakarta

Brig.Gen. Diby Widodo

Kapolda Jakarta Raya

Markas Besar Kepolisian Jaya

Jakarta

Indonesia

Telephone: +62 21 570 9250 or 523 4017

Fax: +62 21 570 9261

Salutation: Dear Brig. Gen. Widodo

⇒ Minister of State and State Secretary

Maj. Gen. Moerdiono

Sekretaris Negara

Jl. Veteran No. 17

Jakarta

Indonesia

Telephone: +62 21 348 819 or 352 685

Salutation: Dear Minister Moerdiono

ALSO SEND COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

⇒ Chairman, National Commission on Human Rights

Lt. Gen. (ret.) Ali Said

Ketua, Komisi Nasional Hak Azasi Manusia (KOMNAS HAM)

Departemen Kehakiman RI

Directorat Jenderal Pemasarakatan

Jl. Veteran No. 11

Jakarta Pusat

Indonesia

Fax: +62 21 525 3095 (c/o Ministry of Justice)

and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

Please send appeals immediately

KEYWORDS: HARASSMENT / CENSORSHIP / PARLIAMENTARIANS / DEMONSTRATIONS /