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INDONESIA

@Four shot dead by security forces during peaceful demonstration in Madura, East Java

8 OCTOBER 1993

SUMMARY

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DISTR: SC/CO/GR

Four people were killed and three others injured when security forces opened fire on a crowd of at least 500 peaceful demonstrators at a dam site 10 km from the town of Banyuates, Sampang regency, on the island of Madura, East Java in the morning of 25 September 1993. Those killed were **Mutirah**, a mother of three aged in her fifties, a 14-year-old schoolboy named **Nindin**, and **Simoki**, a 40-year-old widower. A 30-year-old man, **Muhammad**, who was injured in the incident died later of his injuries. In view of evidence that the killings were unprovoked, Amnesty International is calling on the Indonesian authorities to initiate a thorough, impartial inquiry into the circumstances in which they took place.

The killings occurred after hundreds of local villagers, many of them women and children, gathered near the site of a proposed dam on Madura island after learning that a team of surveyors from *Badan Pertanahan Nasional* (BPN, National Land Board) intended to carry out some work on the site. They gathered there to protest against the plans to build the dam which will result in 170 hectares (420 acres) of land, including four villages, being flooded. The villages at risk are Pelanggaran Timur, Nagasareh, Talang and Lar-lar.

According to independent sources, members of the crowd initially approached the BPN team, who were accompanied by at least twenty members of the security forces, comprising both police and military personnel, to voice their opposition to the project. The demonstrators then moved away to a hill some distance from the site and began to chant protest slogans. They then began moving towards the site again. Soon afterwards, reportedly on orders from the commander of the Sub-District Military Command (KORAMIL), who was in charge of the security personnel, security forces fired shots over the heads of the demonstrators, apparently in

an attempt to disperse the crowd. When the crowd continued to move towards the site the security forces began firing into the crowd.

One press report stated that some of the crowd were carrying sickles, and a military spokesman is quoted as saying that some of the protesters were armed with knives. However, a fact-finding mission carried out by the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (*LBH, Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia*) found no evidence to indicate that the demonstrators had carried any weapons or that they had behaved in an aggressive or threatening manner. Rather, its findings conclude that the demonstration was peaceful and that the security forces opened fire without warning and without provocation.

Amnesty International is also concerned by unconfirmed reports that seventeen people suspected of organizing the protest have been taken into custody for interrogation. If they are being held solely for the peaceful expression of their opinions then the organization believes they should be released immediately and unconditionally.

Amnesty International welcomes the announcement by the commander of the armed forces, General Feisal Tanjung, that an inquiry into the incident has been ordered and that those found guilty will be punished. However, the organization is concerned that those responsible for the inquiry are the military commander for East Java and the East Java police chief. The organization believes that in order for a thorough, impartial investigation to be carried out into the circumstances of the extrajudicial executions it is vital that it be conducted out by an independent body which has no link with the security forces allegedly responsible for the killings.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This is not the first incident to have occurred in connection with the dispute over the siting of the dam. Local people have forwarded several complaints about the proposed dam to the local authorities. Several days before the killings occurred the head of Sampang regency is understood to have ordered the arrest of residents who shouted protests at the end of a meeting between local officials and residents to discuss the dam project. It is not known whether any protesters were indeed arrested then and, if so, whether they remain in detention.

The day before the killings a BPN team, accompanied by members of the Banyuwates Sub-District Military Command (KORAMIL), the District Military Command (KODIM 0828) and the Sampang local police (POLRES), went to the dam site and began clearing the land. Local people protested to those carrying out the work that no agreement had yet been reached between the local residents and the authorities. Before leaving the site, a member of the security forces is reported to have threatened the protesters by saying: "When we begin work tomorrow, nobody must leave their homes....or they will be shot!"

In recent years, scores of communities in both rural and urban parts of Indonesia have been forced from the land which they own or cultivate to make way for a variety of real estate and development projects. Many of these communities have organized to resist eviction or to demand fair compensation for the land they occupy; in doing so some have received support from human rights organizations and university students. Although such protests have, for the most part, been non-violent, government authorities have used a variety of repressive measures - including short-term detention, ill-treatment, torture and imprisonment - to stop them, and have accused "third parties" of using land issues for subversive political ends. Community leaders, human rights workers, students and others involved in such activities have frequently been threatened with legal action, and some have been imprisoned on charges of "incitement".

For information about another recent example of a land dispute case resulting in human rights violations including arbitrary arrest, death threats and harassment see Amnesty International Urgent Action Extra 82/93, *Legal concern/possible prisoner of conscience, Dedi Ekadibrata, human rights activist, aged 30*, (ASA 21/23/93, 30 September 1993); and Amnesty International Urgent Action 355/93, *Death Threats/harassment, Ahmad Jauhari, lawyer*, (ASA 21/26/93, 7 October 1993).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing deep concern at the killing of four demonstrators and injuring of three others on 25 September 1993 in Madura, East Java;

- urging that a thorough, impartial investigation be carried out into the circumstances of the killings by an independent body which has no link with the security forces allegedly responsible for the killings.

- asking for clarification of the reasons for alleged arrest of seventeen people suspected of organizing the protest and seeking their immediate and unconditional release if they have been detained solely for organizing a peaceful demonstration.

APPEALS TO

General Feisal Tanjung
Commander of the Armed Forces (ABRI)
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Cilangkap, East Jakarta, Indonesia
Faxes: +62 21 36 1471
Telegrams: Markas Besar ABRI, Jakarta, Indonesia
Salutation: Dear General Feisal Tanjung

Maj. Gen. (Pol.) Banurusman Atmosunitro
Chief, National Police
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Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta Selatan, Indonesia
Faxes: +62 21 36 1471 (c/o Armed Forces HQ)
Telegrams: Markas Besar Kepolisian RI, Jakarta, Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Maj. Gen. Banurusman

Susilo Sudarman
Coordinating Minister for Political/Security Affairs
Jl. Merdeka Barat No. 15
Jakarta, Indonesia
Faxes: +62 21 36 0517 or 7781 or 7782 (c/o Foreign Ministry)
Telegrams: Menteri Koordinator Bidang Politik dan Keamanan, Jakarta, Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Minister Susilo Sudarman

KEYWORDS: EXTRAJUDICIAL EXECUTION / WOMEN / SCHOOLCHILDREN / CHILDREN /
POLITICAL ACTIVISTS / POLICE / LAND PROBLEMS / DEMONSTRATIONS /

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