

PART 1

The Indonesian 1997 Parliamentary Elections

Background Information

INDONESIA

No Room For Dissent: the 1997 Parliamentary Elections

Elections in Indonesia

On 29 May 1997, 124 million Indonesians will take part in parliamentary elections. In 1998, the country's presidential election will take place. This year's parliamentary elections come at a time of heightened political tension in Indonesia, much of it focusing on whether Indonesia's 75 year-old President Suharto will seek his seventh term as president in 1998.

Recent months have witnessed outbreaks of violent ethnic and political rioting but also peaceful anti-government demonstrations. In the context of increased opposition activity, the need to respect and protect human rights has emerged as a key issue in the 1997 elections. Indonesia's authorities have increased campaigning restrictions and are using a combination of repressive legislation and military force to prevent independent election related activities, restrict peaceful dissent and to control outbreaks of rioting. This approach resulted in the arrest of at least 50 people and the beatings of others involved in peaceful anti-election demonstrations or other political actions before the official campaign period had even begun.

Amnesty International acknowledges the Indonesian Government's responsibility to ensure an orderly and peaceful election process. But the maintenance of order should comply with the provisions of Indonesia's own constitution and law and relevant international standards. Amnesty International is concerned that the election process could be used as a pretext for human rights violations, such as the use of excessive force and repression of peaceful critics.

This briefing provides background on the election process in Indonesia and the restrictions which are imposed on peaceful political campaigning. It also contains details of people who have been arrested or subjected to harassment and intimidation in connection with the election.

The briefing touches on issues beyond the mandate and research remit of Amnesty International and is intended to put the organization's specific human rights concerns in context.

What are the elections for?

The election on 29 May is for 425 seats in Indonesia's 500-seat House of Representatives (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*, DPR). The 425 are those members of Indonesia's national parliament who are directly elected. The remaining 75 seats are reserved for members of the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI).¹ The 425 members are elected for a five year term. On the same day, Indonesians will also vote in elections for provincial and local parliaments.

¹In 1995, it was decided that the number of seats reserved for the military in the DPR would be reduced from 100 to 75. The military still hold 20% of unelected seats in provincial and local parliaments.

The DPR is Indonesia's legislative body and makes up 500 of the 1,000 seat main parliamentary body, the People's Consultative Assembly (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat*, MPR). The MPR meets only once every five years to elect the president and the vice-president and to approve an outline of state policy. The other 500 members of the MPR are appointed by the president. In March 1998, the MPR will select the president and the vice-president.

Indonesia has a system of proportional representation. The parties draw up lists of candidates who will fill particular regional seats if the party is successful in that region, but the population vote for the party, not for an individual candidate. Depending on each of the parties' overall result, parliamentary seats are then allocated based on the parties' lists.

The contestants in the election are from Indonesia's three legal political parties: the government party, Golkar (*Golongan Karya* - or Functional Groups), the United Development Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* - PPP), and the Indonesian Democratic Party (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia*, PDI). Under laws promulgated in 1985, no other political party or group is allowed to exist in Indonesia or participate in the elections. People involved in setting up independent parties have been subjected to harassment and in some cases arrested. Twelve members of one unofficial party - the People's Democratic Party (*Partai Rakyat Demokratik*, PRD), or its affiliated organizations were found guilty of subversion and sentenced in April to prison terms of up to 13 years for their peaceful political activities. The trials of another two members of the PRD are still ongoing. Even the two official opposition parties, the PPP and PDI, are restricted in their organization and are not permitted to have branches in Indonesia's villages.

The 1997 elections are the sixth since the New Order Government of President Suharto came to power. The government party, Golkar, has won on each occasion and expects to win just over 70 per cent of the vote this year. In the last election in 1992, Golkar won 282 of the parliamentary seats - or 68% of the vote. This was 17 seats fewer than in the previous election. All but one of the 17 seats were picked up by the PDI which won 56 seats. The PPP won 62 seats.

Who are the candidates?

There will be around 2,290 candidates contesting the 29 May elections.

The General Election Institute evaluates candidates' eligibility based on lists submitted by the parties. All candidates are required to be approved by the National Screening Committee which includes government representatives and representatives from the military agency, the Coordinating Agency for the Maintenance of National Stability, Bakorstanas. The process, called "special investigation" (*Penelitian Khusus* - Litsus), screens candidates for their adherence to Indonesia's state philosophy, *Pancasila*², and for any links to banned political organizations. Over 200 prospective candidates are believed to have been screened out of this year's elections as a result of this process. Most of the failed candidates are from the PPP and the PDI.

²*Pancasila*, Indonesia's state ideology, embodies five principles: belief in one God, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy and social justice.

Candidates who pass the screening process receive a *Surat Keterangan Tidak Terlibat*, a Letter of Non-Involvement, which clears them of any links to the alleged Indonesian Communist Party coup in 1965. Five prospective Golkar candidates for North Sumatra appealed to Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights after their *Surat Keterangan* were withdrawn by the Medan police, preventing them from taking part in the campaign.³ Fifty-five members of the PPP election candidates were reported as having been rejected on the grounds that they did not receive a letter of non-involvement with the PKI.⁴

Others who have been prevented from standing in this year's election are members of the PDI who support the former PDI leader Megawati Sukarnoputri. The daughter of Indonesia's first president, President Sukarno, Megawati was ousted in June 1996 from the leadership of the party - to which she had been elected in 1993 - by a government-backed candidate, Suryadi. Megawati is still challenging her removal from the party leadership in Indonesia's courts. In July 1996, hundreds of her supporters were arrested following a raid on the PDI's headquarters which they had refused to vacate. Apart from preventing Megawati and her supporters from running in the elections, the authorities have also forbidden her supporters from holding rallies during the election campaign period.

Who can vote?

Some 124 million Indonesians are expected to vote in the election at around 300,000 polling booths. Those eligible to vote are citizens over the age of 17 or married Indonesians under 17 years of age. Voting is not compulsory and is by secret ballot. The counting of votes is expected to last until 17 June.

Members of the Armed Forces are not permitted to vote but their political influence is nevertheless paramount, not least because of parliamentary seats reserved for members of the armed forces. In practice the military supports Golkar during elections. Armed Forces Commander Feisal Tanjung - who is on Golkar's board of patrons - stated in March 1997 that ABRI supports Golkar's victory in the election. Families of ABRI members are encouraged to vote for Golkar.

As in previous elections, Indonesians suspected of being former members and supporters of the banned Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) were screened prior to the election to determine their eligibility to vote. Over a million people were screened this year and 20,700 people determined to have links with the PKI have been denied the right to vote on 29 May.⁵

³ *Waspada*, 28 February 1997.

⁴ *Jakarta Post*, 28 December 1996.

⁵ In the 1992 election, 36,345 people were barred from voting on the basis of their alleged links with the PKI.

Public servants, their spouses and children, are under strong pressure to vote for Golkar, although this is not a legal requirement. In 1995, Home Affairs Minister Yogie Memet stated that “[i]f I were a member of the Indonesian Civil Servants Corps [Korpri - the organization to which all civil servants must belong], I’d quit and get another job if I didn’t want to choose Golkar”.⁶ In February 1997, the Secretary General of the General Elections Institute, Suryatna Subrata - who is also the chair of Korpri - stated that “[t]he current administration is one of Golkar. Therefore the corps members will automatically support and be loyal to the Golkar-dominated government”.⁷

In past elections, villages which have chosen not to vote for Golkar have then experienced difficulties in receiving government funding.⁸

Campaigning regulations

The usual restrictions on campaigning activities - many of which have been in place since 1971 - have been greatly tightened this year. The election campaign, which lasts for 27 days, began on 27 April and continues until 23 May. The PDI and the PPP rely on government funding which they receive specifically for the election campaign.

The following restrictions are among those imposed during the election campaign:

- mass outdoor campaign rallies are banned; only individuals who have been registered with the General Elections Institute are permitted to speak at election gatherings. Campaign events are only permitted to take place between 9 am and 6 pm;
- campaign material, including speeches, must be vetted by the General Election Institute before it can be aired on television or radio. The screening ensures that the speeches do not question *Pancasila*, “slander” government officials, or attack other election candidates. Moderators for broadcast debates will be chosen by the government from lists submitted by the three parties;⁹
- the parties are not allowed to discuss ideological issues or attack their opponents during campaigning;
- for the purposes of the election, the country has been divided into six campaigning “zones”. A tight campaign roster has been devised by the government to ensure that no

⁶ Reuter, 21 September 1995.

⁷ Jakarta Post, 28 February 1997.

⁸ The Australian, 1 March 1997.

⁹ Jakarta Post, 5 February 1997.

more than one party is campaigning in the one zone on the same day. This means that each party will be required to campaign in two of the six zones on each day of the campaign.

There have been complaints from both the PDI and the PPP that the campaign regulations create difficulties for their campaigning activities. The campaign roster in particular has evoked criticism because it requires that PPP and PDI campaigners will need to find more campaigning funds to travel to the different zones. This is less of a problem for Golkar because many senior government officials, such as provincial governors, throughout Indonesia are Golkar members and can therefore campaign in the regions for the party.

The role of the military

In recent months Indonesia has witnessed a growing number of inter-ethnic disturbances and other violent demonstrations, including clashes between supporters of rival political parties. There have also been peaceful anti-government demonstrations. Concerned about such outbreaks of rioting in connection with the elections, government and military authorities have implemented various measures which give a prominent role to the Armed Forces in ensuring the smooth running of the election.

The military authorities have stated that they will use "limited repression" against actions which would threaten national stability.¹⁰ In preparation for any disturbances the government announced in February that 10,000 police and soldiers, supported by tanks would be deployed in Jakarta during the election campaign. In addition, The National Committee of Indonesian Youths, a coalition of youth groups associated with ABRI and Golkar, has said that it will provide 15,000 members to assist the military during the election to "*help put down attempts to disturb the election process*".¹¹ Indonesian Armed Forces Commander, General Feisal Tanjung has also sanctioned a "shoot on sight" policy for rioters. Although announced during the pre-campaign period, its application has been stated by the Armed Forces to go beyond the election period. Earlier this year, the military also announced the establishment of "advance warning" military posts at the district level in Indonesia, or *Poskos*, which are intended to monitor local developments, in particular, potential disturbances.

In April, President Suharto reportedly told the Armed Forces that they should take preventative action against "*any disturbance, hindrance and threats to the general elections*".¹² Coordinating Minister for Political and Security Affairs, Susilo Sudarman, stated that workers, students and the press are "*three areas that have to be watched and handled especially in the run-up to the 1997 general election. It's from these areas that problems could arise, ones that could adversely affect the election*".¹³

¹⁰ Kompas, 2 March 1997.

¹¹ AFP, 13 April 1997.

¹² AFP, 4 April 1997.

¹³ Jakarta Post, 27 March 1996.

Already the military show of force has had an impact. A student demonstration in Yogyakarta, Central Java, was broken up by the security forces in early April 1997. Over thirty students were arrested and several were beaten on arrest during anti-government demonstrations during which the demonstrators called for an election boycott .

Election monitoring

The Election Supervising Committee (*Panitia Pengawas Pelaksanaan Pemilu*, Panwaslak) is the official body charged with monitoring the elections. It is chaired by the Attorney-General. However, frustrated by Panwaslak's lack of action in response to allegations of irregularities in past elections, a group of journalists, lawyers and academics established the Independent Election Monitoring Committee (*Komite Independen Pemantau Pemilu*, KIPP) in March 1996.

Although independent election monitors have not been formally banned, the government has stated that independent monitoring will not be permitted. Both domestic and foreign observers have been publicly warned by Indonesia's Attorney-General that they will not be allowed to enter the area around polling booths, will not be permitted to interview voters or to "scrutinise" election documents. The Attorney-General was quoted as saying "... *if they violate the laws, they will be clobbered*".¹⁴ Home Affairs Minister Yogie Memed stated that while foreign observers are permitted to come to the country during the election, they cannot "*engage in activities that tend towards investigations*" of the electoral process.¹⁵

KIPP members have already been subjected to harassment and in some cases have been arrested. Its leaders have been publicly accused by the authorities of having links with Indonesia's banned Communist Party and several of the organization's meetings have also been broken up. In one of the most recent threats to KIPP's operations, the regional Military Commander for West Java stated that "...*we do not recognize the existence of KIPP...if they still fight back the security apparatus should not hesitate to clobber them*".¹⁶ In April 1997, a KIPP training course in Ujung Pandang, Sulawesi, was broken up by police because the authorities claimed that organizers had not obtained the required permit.

Election boycott calls

Voting is not compulsory in Indonesia, but there is strong pressure on the electorate to vote. An Indonesian political researcher, Syamsuddin Haris, was recently quoted as saying: "*[i]n the villages, people are afraid not to vote because they can get into a lot of trouble*".¹⁷

¹⁴ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 March 1997.

¹⁵ AFP, 15 March 1997.

¹⁶ AFP, 20 March 1997.

¹⁷ *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6 February 1997.

In the absence of genuine political choice, opposition during elections has been expressed in the form of calls for an election boycott. The boycott movement - referred to as Golput (*Golongan Putih* - White Group) - in this year's election is considerably larger than in previous years. Several student demonstrations in large cities have called for a boycott and several prominent Indonesians have either directly joined in this call or stated that voters should feel at liberty not to vote. Commentators have suggested that the larger boycott movement this year can be attributed to rising tensions over perceptions of inequality in Indonesia and disgruntlement over the government's intervention in the affairs of the PDI in 1996 and the ousting of the party leader. Since June 1996, Megawati Sukarnoputri has become a focus for opposition sentiment in Indonesia.

The call for a boycott has not only come from political activists, but also from the establishment. The Catholic Church - usually silent on political issues - acknowledged choosing not to vote as a legitimate alternative in a pre-Easter pastoral letter from the Indonesian Bishops' Conference which was read out in many churches. The Catholic Cardinal Julius Darmaatmadja is since believed to have been called for questioning by both military and government officials in relation to the letter.

While choosing not to vote is not a violation of the country's election laws, the authorities consider that *inciting* others not to vote is illegal. The authorities have stated that anyone who disrupts or disturbs the elections will face legal sanctions under various laws including the Anti-subversion Law and under Indonesia's 1985 Election Laws which make "disturbing the elections" an offence punishable by five years' imprisonment. The 1985 Election Law does not, however, specifically prohibit inciting others to boycott.

In practice, those calling for an election boycott have so far been charged and in some cases sentenced under a series of Articles from Indonesia's Criminal Code known as the "Hate-sowing Articles" which forbid "spreading hatred" against the government or government officials. The Hate-sowing Articles include: Article 154 which punishes the public expression of feelings of hostility or hatred against the government by a maximum of seven years' imprisonment; Article 160 which prescribes up to six years' imprisonment for inciting others to break the law. Another article, Article 161, which also punishes incitement of others to disobey the law by up to four years' imprisonment, has also been invoked in one case.

Over 40 people have been taken into custody for calling for an election boycott. At least four of these people are facing criminal charges. Two people, Slamet Bibit and Faud Chafidin, were sentenced to prison terms of two years each in March for distributing leaflets which gave examples of irregularities in the 1992 election process and which also warned people to beware of similar irregularities in May. The cases of some of those who have been subjected to arrest or harassment for their peaceful involvement in election related activities, are enclosed with this briefing. Amnesty International believes that all of those arrested for the peaceful expression of their views opposing or criticising the election process or political system in Indonesia are prisoners of conscience. The organization calls on the Indonesian authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally.

* Additional information on the 1997 Parliamentary Elections in Indonesia can be found in Indonesia: Freedom of Expression in the 1997 Elections. Published by ARTICLE 19 & Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA). Telephone + 44 171 278 9292. Fax + 44 171 713 1356

PART 2

Arrests, harassment and intimidation

Election cases

Sri Bintang Pamungkas

"I think the greeting card ... tends towards subversion and therefore I call on the state attorney's office or those in authority to question Sri Bintang".¹⁸

Former parliamentarian and outspoken government critic, Sri Bintang Pamungkas, has been detained since 5 March under Indonesia's Anti-subversion Law for sending greeting cards in which a call was made for political change and for a boycott of the parliamentary elections. The cards were sent to mark the end of the Moslem festival of *Idul Fitri* and contained the three point agenda of the United Democratic Party of Indonesia (*Partai Uni Demokrasi Indonesia - PUDI*), an unofficial political party recently formed by Sri Bintang Pamungkas. These are:

- ◆ Boycott the 1997 Parliamentary Election
- ◆ Reject the re-election of President Suharto in the 1998 Presidential elections
- ◆ Prepare a new government for the post-Suharto period

Sri Bintang Pamungkas and four other PUDI members who were involved in distributing the cards were taken for questioning to the Attorney General's office in Jakarta on the afternoon of 5 March. Two were released later that day, but Sri Bintang Pamungkas, the party's Deputy Chairman Julius Usman and the Secretary General, Saleh Abdullah, were detained.

Julius Usman and Saleh Abdullah were released on 3 April after one month in detention. However, the charges against them have not been dropped. Sri Bintang Pamungkas remains in custody. Under the provisions of the Anti-subversion Law a suspect may be detained for up to one year without trial. In practice, detention is renewable indefinitely.

The Anti-subversion Law has been widely used in Indonesia to silence dissent. Over the last 30 years hundreds of thousands of alleged political opponents have been detained without trial under the Anti-subversion Law. Hundreds of others have been put through unfair trials and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment or even put to death. If charged and brought to trial, Sri Bintang Pamungkas risks the death sentence or up to life imprisonment.

Sri Bintang Pamungkas is already challenging a sentence of two years and 10 months' imprisonment handed down on 8 May 1996 after he was found guilty of "insulting" the President. The insult is claimed to have been made during a seminar which Sri Bintang gave in Berlin, Germany in 1995 in which he is alleged to have accused President Suharto of being anti-democracy and of being a dictator. The trial fell short of internationally accepted standards for fair trial. Sri Bintang Pamungkas was released pending the result of the appeal process which is still ongoing.

Amnesty International considers Sri Bintang Pamungkas to be a prisoner of conscience. The organization believes that he should be immediately released and that the charges under the Anti-subversion Law should be dropped and the 1996 conviction overturned.

¹⁸ Achmad Mustahid, head of Golkar in parliament. AFP, 5 March 1997.

Petrus Bima Nugraha, Herny Sualang & Ilham Syah (Iing)

Three young student activists have been in custody since the night of 3 March 1997 for their activities in support of an election boycott and for political change. None of the three were permitted access to lawyers or to members of their families for at least 10 days after their arrest.

Petrus Bima Nugraha, Herny Sualang and Ilham Syah were arrested in the Rambutan area of the Indonesian capital of Jakarta after attempting to stick up posters and paint graffiti slogans on the walls of bus terminals and other public places calling on people to boycott the 29 May elections for Indonesia's House of Representatives. The same night students in other major cities including Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Solo, Medan and Menado took part in similar actions. The slogans used by the young activists included:

- ◆ "Boycott the 1997 elections!"
- ◆ "Repeal the five political laws!"
- ◆ "End the dual role of the Army!"
- ◆ "The election process isn't worth continuing, boycott!"
- ◆ "Until the political laws are repealed, boycott the elections!"

The four youths who participated in the action in Rambutan were surprised by the police. Ilham Syah was detained at the time while Petrus Bima and Herny were picked up later that night. The fourth member of the team escaped.

All three have been charged under Articles 154 and 160 of Indonesia's Criminal Code, both of which are part of the series of articles known as the "Hate-sowing Articles". Introduced by the Dutch colonial administration in the early 1900s, they forbid "spreading of hatred" against government officials. Article 154 punishes the public expression of feelings of hostility or hatred against the government by a maximum of seven years' imprisonment. Article 160 prescribes up to six years' imprisonment for inciting others to break the law.

Petrus Bima, Herny and Ilham's families were not informed of their detention until three days after their arrest. They were also denied access to their families and to lawyers for at least 10 days in contravention of national law and international human rights standards.

The three are all students at Sam Ratunlangi University in Menado, Sulawesi. They are also reported to members of the unofficial People's Democratic Party (*Partai Rakyat Indonesia* - PRD). The PRD has accused of having links to the banned Indonesian Communist party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* - PKI) and has been blamed by the authorities for instigating riots in Jakarta in July 1996. Since the riots last July its members have been harassed, arrested and in some cases tortured or ill-treated while in detention. Fourteen members of the PRD have been tried for subversion in relation to the riots.

The nature of the charges against Petrus Bima Nugraha, Herny Sualang and Ilham Syah indicate that they are being detained for the peaceful expression of their views and are therefore prisoners of conscience. Amnesty International is calling for their immediate and unconditional release.

Afifudin Musytari Hambali Al-Hafidz

A Moslem *ulema* (cleric), Afifudin Musytari Hambali Al-Hafidz, has been accused of inciting riots in the Central Java town of Pekalongan in March 1997. He is being questioned under Articles 154 and 160 of Indonesia's Criminal Code under which he faces up to seven years' and six years' imprisonment respectively.

Amnesty International is concerned that Afifudin Musytari has been charged with offences relating to freedom of expression and that he may be being used as a scapegoat for the unrest by the authorities.

Disturbances broke out on 26 March in the batik-producing town of Pekalongan after local government officials removed flags from the Moslem-based United Development Party (PPP) from the streets of the town and replaced them with Golkar flags. Apparently angered by this and by the planned concert by a popular singer who has recently switched his allegiance from the PPP to Golkar, PPP supporters burnt down the stage on which the concert was due to take place. The violence escalated and up to 60 buildings, mainly belonging to ethnic Chinese, were either damaged or destroyed on 26 and 28 March.

Thirty people have already been tried and sentenced to probational terms of between three days' and three months' imprisonment for their involvement in the riots. PPP officials have criticised the "hasty decision" of the court and have claimed that some of those sentenced had not been arrested in the riot, but while saying a dawn prayer.

In common with other outbreaks of violence in the run-up to the elections, the authorities have not stopped at arresting those it believes to have participated in the disturbances, but has announced its intention to find the "mastermind" behind the riot.

In the case of Pekalongan, local *ulemas* have been singled out for blame for giving sermons which incited people to riot. One of them, Afifudin Musytari, who heads an Islamic boarding school in Semarang, Central Java, is accused of telling fellow preachers that they may end up in hell if they support the dominant party, Golkar. Although not detained, Afifudin has been charged with "spreading hatred" and "inciting" others to disobey the law under Articles 154 and 160 respectively of the Criminal Code. Both articles are part of a series of articles known as the "Hate-sowing Articles" which were introduced by the Dutch colonial administration in the early 1900s and which forbid "spreading of hatred" against government officials. These articles have been widely used in the past to imprison peaceful opponents of the regime.

Afifudin Musytari has denied inciting the riots and has said that "I did not mean to offend anyone or any group". On 12 April, hundreds of Islamic students staged a protest against the questioning of Afifudin Musytari and a petition, stating that he was not responsible for inciting the riots, signed by 4,300 Pekalongan residents was handed in to the police. The Secretary General of the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) which is investigating the cause of the riots, has stated that he believes socio-economic disparity contributed to the unrest.

Yogyakarta students

*"They really went too far..., calling for the release of Pakpahan, Budiman¹⁹ and so on. If they had had ordinary posters they would not have been arrested, but they were calling for an election boycott, which we regard as incitement... that's why we were entitled to arrest them"*²⁰

The Indonesian security forces broke up peaceful pro-democracy demonstrations in the Central Java town of Yogyakarta on 1 and 2 April 1997, injuring a number of the participants in the process. Over thirty students were arrested and there are reports that some of them were ill-treated while in custody. All the students have now been released, but the investigation against some of them may be continuing.

Around 300 people, mainly students from Yogyakarta universities, took part in a demonstration on 1 April. The students were demonstrating in support of the ousted leader of the Indonesian Democratic Party (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia - PDI*), Megawati Sukarnoputri, and were for calling for greater democracy and for a boycott of the parliamentary elections on 29 May 1997. Some of the demonstrators were also threatening to begin a hunger-strike in support of their demands. Although the students are not believed to have used any violence, the security forces beat the protesters with rattan sticks and with their fists in their attempt to break up the protest and arrest participants.

At least 24 people were arrested and taken to the district military headquarters where they were held for 24 hours before being transferred to the local police station. Despite requests, those among the detainees who had been injured did not receive medical treatment until the evening of 1 April, hours after they had been arrested. According to an unconfirmed report, one of the detainees was threatened with a broken bottle and another by a pistol. The students were released on 3 April. None of them had been given access to a lawyer while in detention and, with only one exception, the families of the students were not informed of their arrests.

The following day another demonstration of Yogyakarta university students took place in support of their detained colleagues. The 600 or so demonstrators marched around the various university colleges shouting slogans including "free our comrades" and "we will boycott [the elections]". The leaders also made speeches in support of the pro-democracy movement and attacking military brutality. Yet again the protest was forcefully dispersed and eight people, including one high-school student, were arrested. Five students were also reported to have been beaten by the security forces as they attempted to break up the protest.

Amnesty International believes that the students in Yogyakarta were arrested for the peaceful and legitimate expression of their views. The organization is concerned by the level of force that was used by the security forces to break up what are believed to have been

¹⁹ Muchtar Pakpahan and Budiman Sujatmiko were both arrested and tried for subversion in relation to the riots in Jakarta in July 1996. Budiman Sujatmiko was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment on 28 April 1997. Muchtar Pakpahan's trial has been suspended due to his ill-health. Amnesty International considers them both to be prisoners of conscience.

²⁰ Commander of the Yogyakarta military resort, Colonel Gaffar, Kompas, 3 April 1997.

peaceful demonstrations and by reports of ill-treatment of some of the detainees while in custody.

Independent Election Monitoring Committee (KIPP)

"The government does not need this... We don't need this body or any other body like it."²¹

"...we do not recognize the existence of KIPP... if they still fight back the security apparatus should not hesitate to clobber them."²²

In March 1996 the Independent Election Monitoring Committee (*Komite Independen Pemantau Pemilu*, KIPP) was formed by a group of journalists, lawyers and activists to monitor the 1997 parliamentary elections. Within weeks of KIPP's establishment, its members were being subjected to harassment and in a few cases were arrested. Its meetings and those of other independent monitoring groups have also been broken up.

The founding of KIPP met with a critical reaction from the Indonesian authorities. The head of the Armed Forces, General Feisal Tanjung, described independent monitoring bodies as "unconstitutional". Attorney General Singgih, who heads the official body charged with monitoring the elections - the Election Supervising Committee (*Panitia Pengawas Pelaksanaan Pemilu*, Panwaslak), accepted that KIPP was not a problem if it obeyed the law and did not interfere with the election, but threatened to "smash it" if it overstepped these boundaries. While Soesilo Soedarman, the Coordinating Minister for Political Affairs and Security expressed his fear that "[t]hese independent bodies could create unrest at a time when people need to feel most secure".²³

Despite the official reaction, KIPP is not banned although its members have experienced harassment and intimidation from the authorities. On 26 March 1996, two members of KIPP - Bambang Ekalaya and Sahzan Sarif - were taken into military custody in Lampung, Sumatra, and questioned for six hours immediately after they had launched the Lampung branch of KIPP. Bambang Ekalaya was arrested again in June 1996 and held in military custody for six days.

Efforts to intimidate KIPP members and damage the credibility of the organization continued with the branding of KIPP's Secretary General, Mulyana W Kusumah, as a member of the banned Indonesian Communist Party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia* - PKI) by the military in April 1996. The accusation of communist sympathies is frequently used by the authorities to discredit its opponents. Mulyana Kusumah has strongly denied the allegation.

In the run-up to the May 1997 elections both domestic and foreign observers have been warned by the authorities not to interfere in the election process and are restricted from entering the area around polling booths, from interviewing voters and scrutinising election

²¹ Attorney General Singgih, AFP, 18 April 1996

²² AFP, 20 March 1997.

²³ Jakarta Post, 20 April 1996

documents. KIPP meetings and training courses have also been closed down by the authorities. A training course organised by KIPP in early April in the south Sulawesi provincial capital of Ujung Pandang was broken up after the police said that it did not have the necessary permit. Another seminar on the General Election in which KIPP was due to participate on 13 March was also prevented from taking place for the same reason.