

EXTRA 95/99

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**INDONESIAM Nurdin Husein
Ir. Muslim**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of M Nurdin Husein and Ir. Muslim who have been missing, feared "disappeared", since they were arrested on around 20 May 1999.

They were arrested in Teunom Sub-district, West Aceh, in the province of Aceh, northern Sumatra, by men thought to be linked to the Indonesian National Army (TNI). Initial reports indicated that they were being held at the District Military Headquarters (Kodim) in West Aceh but there has been no news of them since.

Both men had been involved in organizing a community demonstration, on 17 May, at PT Tiga Mitra Perdana (PT TMP), a privately owned timber plantation at Laot Bhee, eight kilometres from Gunong Baloh Village, Teunom Sub-district, West Aceh. A third man also involved in organizing the demonstration, Iskandar, alias Raja Kanda, was shot dead in Pulo Tinggi Village, Teunom, on 3 June.

At the demonstration, local residents demanded three billion Rupiah (equivalent to around \$US450,000) from PT TMP for local development projects. When the company rejected their demands disturbances broke out at which some company property was destroyed.

On 9 July, 20 employees of PT TMP were arrested by the TNI (see EXTRA 89/99, ASA 21/63/99, 28 July 1999 and follow up). Military officials were reported as saying that they had been arrested on suspicion of having links with the armed opposition group, *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM), Free Aceh Merdeka. It now appears, however, that their arrests were also linked to the demonstration.

Human rights monitors claim that the 20 men were interrogated without having lawyers present and that they were tortured and ill-treated to force them to admit their involvement with GAM.

At a meeting between community members and the company on 19 July, the community agreed to drop their demand for money. The next day the 20 men were transferred to police custody after, according to the TNI, it was found that there was no evidence that they were involved with GAM. Instead the military claimed they were now being investigated for stealing timber. On 21 July they were released and, it is believed, are no longer facing any charges.

Under Indonesia's Criminal Procedures Code (KUHAP), only the police - and not the TNI - have the legal authority to conduct arrests, detain or question suspects.

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

- urging the authorities to immediately establish and make public the whereabouts of M Nurdin Husein and Ir. Muslim and to provide guarantees for their safety;
- urging the authorities to ensure that, if they are found to be in custody, they are given regular access to human rights lawyers, their families and to medical professionals, and that they are immediately released if they are not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

Coordinating Minister for Political/Security Affairs

Jend. Purn. Feisal Tanjung

Menteri Koordinator Bidang Politik dan Keamanan

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Indonesia

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Salutation:Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

President

President Jusuf Habibie

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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 25 August 1999.