

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 21/86/99

This is a limited action. Please restrict appeals to 20 per section

EXTRA 102/99

Fear for safety / Possible "disappearance"

6 August

INDONESIAM Yahya Daud, 42

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Amnesty International fears for the safety of M Yahya Daud whose whereabouts are unknown since he was arrested by a riot control police unit, the PPRM (*Petugas Penindak Rusuh Massa*), on 4 August 1999 in the province of Aceh, in northern Sumatra. Those detained by the PPRM are at risk of being tortured, ill-treated, "disappeared" or unlawfully killed.

M Yahya Daud was arrested at his home in Paya Deman village, Simpang Ulim Sub-district, East Aceh District. The PPRM had come to his village after hearing that a car had been set alight. When they saw M Yahya Daud, who was standing in his front garden close to the site of the burnt-out car, run back inside his house they apparently suspected that he was linked to the fire and arrested him.

M Yahya Daud was reportedly taken by the PPRM to Langsa Sub-district in East Aceh but this has not been confirmed.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since late 1998, serious human rights violations in Aceh have increased in the course of Indonesian National Army (TNI) counter-insurgency operations against the armed opposition group, *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM), Free Aceh Movement. Dozens of people have been arrested in recent months on suspicion of links to GAM. Suspects detained by the TNI and the PPRM are often denied access to lawyers of their choice, and are at risk of torture or ill-treatment. Many of those taken into custody have "disappeared" or been unlawfully killed by the security forces.

Large numbers of people have been unlawfully killed by the security forces in Aceh since late 1998. In February 1999 at least seven people were unlawfully killed when the TNI fired on a march in Idi Cut, East Aceh. On 3 May, human rights monitors claimed that at least 41 people were killed in Krueng Geukueh, Dewantara Sub-District, Aceh, when the TNI fired on a demonstration. On 23 July, at least 45 people and possibly as many as 70 were unlawfully killed by the TNI during counter-insurgency operations in Beutong Sub-district, West Aceh. The TNI claimed that those killed were members of GAM, but eyewitnesses and human rights groups deny this and claim that those killed were unarmed and were executed by the TNI.

GAM have also been accused of committing human rights abuses.

On 30 July 1999, President Habibie announced that he had established an Independent Investigation Commission on Violence in Aceh (*Komisi Independen Pengusutan Tindak Kekerasan di Aceh*) which is expected to conduct investigations into human rights violations which have occurred since August 1998, and to submit a report within six months, including recommendations on legal measures, rehabilitation and reconciliation. The commission is apparently made up of 27 people, including members of Indonesia's National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics and government representatives.

However, the commission has not been given a mandate to investigate human rights violations which occurred during TNI counter-insurgency operations between 1989 and 1998. Amnesty International believes that the commission can only be effective if it is given unrestricted access to all areas of Aceh to conduct full and independent investigations into all human rights violations including those since 1989, if its findings are made public and if its report leads to the prosecution of those found responsible.

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

- urging the authorities to immediately establish and make public the whereabouts of M Yahya Daud and to provide guarantees for his safety;
- urging the authorities to ensure that, if M Yahya Daud is found to be in custody, he has regular access to human rights lawyers, his family and to medical professionals, and that he is immediately released if he is 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

Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No. 15

Jakarta Pusat 10110

Indonesia

**Faxes:+ 62 21 345 1064**

**Salutation:Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:**

President

President Jusuf Habibie

Presiden RI

Istana Negara

Jalan Veteran

Jakarta Pusat

Indonesia

**Faxes:+ 62 21 3904541/526 8726**

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 3 September 1999.