

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 21/97/99

THIS IS A LIMITED ACTION. PLEASE RESTRICT APPEALS TO 15 PER SECTION

EXTRA 110/99

Fear for safety / Possible arbitrary detention

18 August

INDONESIA Abdul Hanan, 44

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of Abdul Hanan who was apparently shot in the leg and taken away by a riot control police unit on 2 August 1999 in the province of Aceh, northern Sumatra. Many people arbitrarily detained have been "disappeared", tortured, ill-treated or unlawfully killed.

Abdul Hanan, from Keude Krueng Village, Kuta Makmur Sub-district, North Aceh District, was arrested at the rice processing plant he runs in the village after four military trucks, including troops from the PPRM (*Petugas Penindak Rusuh Massa*), a riot-control police unit, arrived there. Others present at the time ran away when they reportedly heard gunshots.

Abdul Hanan was then allegedly taken by the PPRM to a military hospital in the town of Lhokseumawe in North Aceh. It is not known whether he is still there or whether he is detained as a suspect.

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.

Since late 1998 the security forces in Aceh have unlawfully killed large numbers of people. On 23 July, at least 45 people and possibly as many as 70 were 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 the people who died were unarmed and that they were executed by the TNI.

Human rights workers claim that at least four civilians were killed when the PPRM attacked a camp site in Bintang Kala village, Nisam Sub-district, North Aceh, on 7 August. The PPRM, who were reportedly searching the area for GAM members, came across a camp of civilians who were in the area searching for wood and suspected that they were members of GAM. Three others reportedly taken into PPRM custody were later released, apparently bearing marks of ill-treatment.

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*). The Commission is expected to conduct investigations into human rights violations that 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 Abdul Hanan and to provide guarantees for his safety;
- urging the authorities to ensure that, if he 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 not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Defence and Security
 Gen. Wiranto
 Menteri Pertahanan dan Keamanan
 Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No.13-14
 Jakarta 10110
 Indonesia
Faxes: + 62 21 381 4535 / 384 5178
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 15 September 1999.