

UA 273/99

Possible

INDONESIA **Tengku Habet Beuransyah, village chief**
M. Nasir, also known as Adnan Abu, aged 35, motorcycle taxi driver

Juriman, aged 23
Muntazir Yahya, aged 18
Ahmad Puteh, aged 50
Razali Hasan, aged 37
Rahim Salam, aged 45
Abu Ben, aged 60
Abubakar Ahmad, aged 39

Amnesty International is gravely concerned for the safety of the men named above, who are reported to have "disappeared" in Aceh province, northern Sumatra. It is feared they may be in incommunicado detention, where they are at risk of being killed or tortured. In recent months Amnesty International has documented an upsurge in the number of "disappearances", killings and other serious human rights violations in the province.

Tengku Habet Beuransyah, chief of the village of Alue Geulumpang Banjar Ain, who was the leader of the Northern Aceh regional assembly in the 1970s, is reported to have been abducted on 29 September 1999.

On 25 August, according to eyewitness reports, M. Nasir was shot at and wounded in the arm by members of the Mobile Police Brigade (Brimob) who took him to an undisclosed location in Pidie district. According to the local Chief of Police, he has been detained for questioning in connection with alleged links to the armed separatist group, *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (GAM), Free Aceh Movement. The authorities have refused to disclose any information about his whereabouts or state of health.

Juriman, from the village of Meuria Paloh, Muara Dua sub-district, is reported to have "disappeared" since his arrest on 17 August 1999 by a riot control police unit, the PPRM (*Petugas Penindak Rusuh Massa*).

Amnesty International has just learned of the abduction three months ago of Muntazir Yahya, from Alue Bu Tuha, East Aceh District. According to his family he was abducted by a military officer and has not been seen since.

The five other men named above are reported to have "disappeared" in the last 30 days in the sub-districts of Lhoksukon and Peudada.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Serious human rights violations in Aceh, including "disappearances" and unlawful killings, have increased since the end of 1998 in the course of Indonesian National Army (TNI) counter-insurgency operations against the armed separatist group, GAM. 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.

Since June 1999 the number of "disappearances" in the province appears to have escalated sharply, with more than 40 cases reported to Amnesty International. While some of those thought to have "disappeared" have later been discovered

in detention, or subsequently released, the fate of most victims remains unknown. According to local human rights groups at least three bodies of people who had "disappeared" were discovered in September.

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.

Students and other local people have held a number of demonstrations recently calling for a referendum on self-determination and urging that those responsible for human rights violations be prosecuted.

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

- urging the authorities to immediately establish and make public the whereabouts of the nine men named above, and to provide guarantees for their safety;
- urging the authorities to ensure that, if they are found to be in custody, they are allowed regular access to human rights lawyers, their family and to medical attention, and that they are immediately released if they are not to be charged with recognizably criminal offences;
- calling on the authorities to cease the practice of arbitrary and incommunicado detention and to bring those responsible for these violations to justice before a civilian court.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Defence and Security
Gen. Wiranto
Menteri Pertahanan dan Keamanan
Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No.13-14
Jakarta 10110
Indonesia

Telegrams:General Wiranto, Jakarta, Indonesia

Faxes:+ 62 21 381 4535 / 384 5178 (please note that fax tones can be very difficult to obtain)

Salutation:Dear Minister

COPIES TO:

Military Commander Region I/Bukit Barisan
(covers North & West Sumatra and Aceh)
Major General Abdul Rahman Gaffar
Pangdam I/Bukit Barisan
Markas Besar KODAM I
Medan
Sumatra Utara
Indonesia

Chief of National Police
Gen. Roesmanhadi
Kapolri
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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 23 November 1999.