

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 28/02/98

12 January 1998

Further information on UA 102/97 (ASA 28/05/97, 16 April 1997) - Fear of imminent execution

**MALAYSIAYip Kim Seng, aged 49, shoemaker
Lam Hok Sung, aged 41, cook**

Yip Kim Seng continues to face imminent execution after being sentenced to death by the Seremban High Court in February 1989 for firing at a police officer while resisting arrest. He is awaiting the outcome of his final appeal in March 1998, which is due to be heard by the Negri Sembilan Pardons Board.

According to a report in the Malaysian newspaper, the *New Straits Times*, Yip Kim Seng wishes to contact his family to seek their forgiveness for the difficulties he has caused them before being executed. He has not seen his family for the past eight years. The authorities have appealed to the family and relatives to fulfil his final wish of meeting them and his relatives are reported to have indicated that they would visit him. He has yet to make contact with his former wife, present wife and their six children.

Amnesty International has received no further information about Lam Hok Sung, who was convicted of being Yip's accomplice at the same time and place.

Until recently Amnesty International was unaware of the true number of executions in Malaysia as official statistics were not made public. However, the authorities have revealed that between 1970 and 1996, a total of 349 people were executed. At present, at least 13 people are at risk of imminent execution. There have been no recent reports of any executions.

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

- urging the King to commute the death sentence passed on Yip Kim Seng;
- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty as a violation of one of the most fundamental of human rights - the right to life;
- calling for all other death sentences to be commuted;
- recognizing the need to combat firearms offences, but emphasizing that there is no proof that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other punishments, and appealing to the authorities to find a more humane form of punishment for those convicted of serious offences.

APPEALS TO:

Yang di-Pertuan Agong [King of Malaysia]
DYMM Tuanku Jaafar Ibni
Al-Marhum Tuanku Abdul Rahman
Istana Negara
50500 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

Telegrams: Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Faxes: +603 230 4646

Salutation: Your Majesty

COPIES TO:

Prime Minister:

Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad
Prime Minister's Department

2

Jalan Dato' Onn
50502 Kuala Lumpur
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and to diplomatic representatives of Malaysia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 February 1998.