

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 94/01 (ASA 28/006/2001, 11 April 2001) and follow-ups (ASA 28/007/2001, 26 April 2001; ASA 28/009/2001, 9 May 2001; ASA 28/011/2001, 1 June 2001 and ASA 28/013/2001, 4 June 2001; ASA 28/015/2001, 14 June 2001; ASA 28/032/2001, 9 November 2001) - Fear of torture/ill-treatment/incommunicado detention/prisoner of conscience

MALAYSIA	Tian Chua [m], Vice President, <i>Parti Keadilan Nasional</i> (PKN)]
	Mohd Ezam Mohd Nor [m], National Youth Chief, PKN]
	Saari Sungib [m], PKN activist] released
	Hishamuddin Rais [m], media columnist and social activist]
	Dr Badrul Amin Baharom [m], PKN Youth leader]
	Lokman Noor Adam [m], Executive Secretary, PKN Youth Wing]

On 1 June, Saari Sungib, Tian Chua, Hishamuddin Rais and Mohd Ezam Mohd Nor were unconditionally released from detention under the Internal Security Act (ISA). The four had been held without charge or trial under the ISA for over two years. The detention orders for the four expired on 1 June, with the Home Minister deciding not to exercise his power of renewal.

Saari Sungib immediately walked free from Kamunting Detention Camp, located in the northwest state of Perak, on the evening of 1 June. Tian Chua and Hishamuddin Rais were transferred to Taiping prison on 1 June pending bail hearings on other charges against them. They were both released on 4 June.

Mohd Ezam Mohd Nor, although no longer detained under the ISA, remained in detention for offences under the Official Secrets Act (OSA). He was later released on bail on 10 June pending an appeal against his conviction under this legislation. Amnesty International has declared him a prisoner of conscience for his imprisonment under the OSA.

Dr Badrul Amin Baharom and Lokman Noor Adam were unconditionally released upon the expiry of their ISA detention orders on 12 June. On release Dr. Badrul Amin Baharom was reunited with his family, while Lokman Noor Adam was initially transferred to a local police station due to a pre-existing charge of illegal assembly. He was released on bail in the afternoon.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The six were initially arrested in April 2001, accused by the Malaysian authorities of planning to use militant means to overthrow the government. No evidence was ever produced to substantiate these allegations, and none of the men were ever brought to trial. A Federal Court ruling on 6 September 2002, pertaining to some of the detainees, declared their initial 60-day detention to be unlawful. In December 2002, the ISA review board advised that some of the detainees be released. No action was taken by the authorities at the time.

Amnesty International believes that the decision by the Home Minister not to renew the detention orders of the six men was strongly influenced by the domestic and international campaign to free them. Activists in Malaysia have thanked Amnesty International members for all of their work on behalf of these individuals and hope they will continue to work for the release or prompt trial of all those held under the ISA.

No further action is required by the Urgent Action network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.