

# SUARA AKSI

Indonesia Solidarity Action

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## ACTU retreats from SPSI project

*Striking workers staffing  
a picket line in support of  
improved wages and bet-  
ter working conditions.*

At the coming September Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) congress, activists from Indonesian workers support organisations and AKSI will be campaigning to make sure the ACTU officialdom adheres to the assurances from ACTU president Martin Ferguson that the ACTU will not provide support to the Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia (SPSI - All Indonesia Workers' Union).

Following the publication in the independent workers paper, *Solidarity*, (published in Sydney) of leaked documents revealing recommendations to the ACTU that it begin a large scale program of co-operation with the Suharto regime's puppet trade union, the SPSI, the ACTU appears to have been forced to retreat on its plans. Martin Ferguson, ACTU president, told the *Age* newspaper on July 23 that he had

written to ACTU affiliates stating that he would not act on the recommendations. He even emphasised that he had opposed attempts by the SPSI to obtain affiliation to the International Confederation on Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) last May. Despite the fact that the ACTU met last year with leaders of the SPSI during a visit to Melbourne, Ferguson also claimed the ACTU did not even have an 'informal' relationship

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with the SPSI.

The story began last June when AKSI activists received information from friends in Indonesia of a plan for the ACTU and the Australian Government to provide large scale assistance to the SPSI. The project recommendations advocated the training of 3,000 so-called 'union delegates', the establishment of an Australia-Indonesia Labour Institute and the appointment of a Labour Attache at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

The recommendations, made after a visit to Indonesia by ACTU staffer Peter Duncan, proclaim that the goal of the project is to help develop an independent trade union movement. Despite this they also stress that the ACTU should essentially work together with the Indonesian regime's official trade union, the SPSI and the Ministry of Manpower.

## A fake union

According to a spokesperson for FISI (Indonesian Forum for International Solidarity), a coalition of worker, student and cultural activists in Indonesia, the SPSI remains an impotent organisation mainly dominated by military officials and business people. "While the Minister of Labour is a millionaire businessman as well as the Chairman of the SPSI himself, we cannot expect any real change inside the SPSI. The SPSI continues to help the military break strikes and refuses to support most worker protests." These views were also reflected in a statement issued by the worker support organisation Yayasan Maju Bersama (Advance Together Foundation) which called on Australian unions to boycott the ACTU's plans.

## Who benefits

A closer reading of the project recommendations reveals however that the project is also oriented towards the Australian side's own needs - although these are not spelled out. The report states that Indonesia is a key to 'Australia's relations with the ASEAN na-

tions'. A 'union agency' in Indonesia and a program of exchanges would give 'us', says the report, much needed contacts and information. Given the Australian Government's vision of massive commercial advantage from Southeast Asia's cheap labour and cheap resources and the current push to take maximum advantage of this and the report's expressed opinion that the whole ACTU plan should be funded by the Government, we can only presume that the ACTU plan is connected with helping Australian business interests in Indonesia. It is certainly true that the more respectable the puppet SPSI union can be made to look despite its record of anti-worker policies, the harder it will be for any attempts to start a genuine independent union to gain international support.

## Solidarity with workers

Dick Nichols, co-editor of *Solidarity* newspaper, told *Suara Aksi* that he was pleased with the apparent retreat by Ferguson. "It is necessary, however," said Nichols, "that unions in Australia remain alert to ensure there is no backsliding. There certainly seems to be some kind of international campaign to rehabilitate the SPSI. In the US, some unions have been publishing pamphlets praising the SPSI. It is interesting to note that the *Age* has heard that there is this increasing view that the SPSI is becoming more independent from the Government."

"If the ACTU and the trade union movement in Australia wants to help the workers' movement in Indonesia," said Nichols, "then they should consult with the independent worker and worker support organisations such as the Advance Together Foundation, the Workers Solidarity Forum and others. Unions here should make sure that the ACTU leadership doesn't try to manoeuvre back in line with Australian foreign policy of working to help repair and improve the Suharto regime's deservedly deplorable human rights image."



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# FISI supports East Timorese stand

East Timor

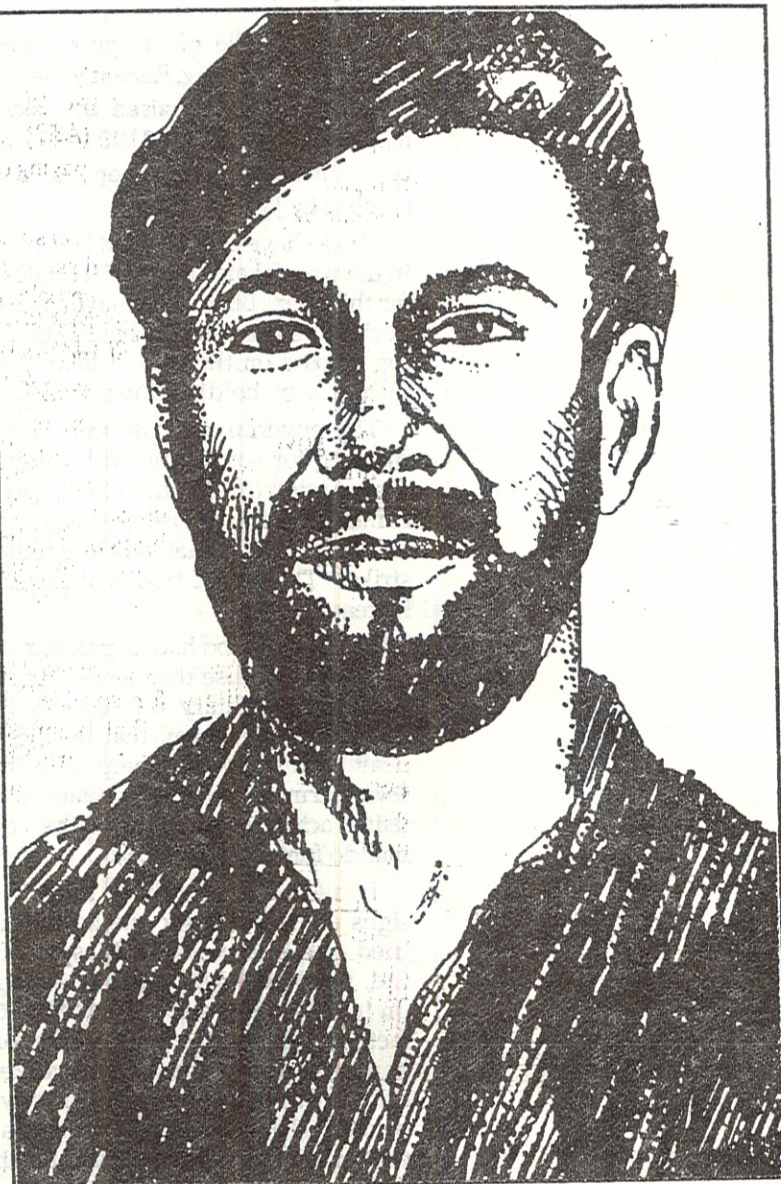
Representatives of the Indonesian Forum for International Solidarity (FISI) recently attended the Fifth Seminar on East Timor of the Oporto University in Portugal. While in Portugal they received news about the endorsement by President Suharto of talks between pro and anti-integration Timorese. FISI, a Jakarta based group, together with the Front Demokrasi Indonesia (FDI - Indonesian Democratic Front), based in Holland, and Perhimpunan Indonesia (Indonesian Association), based in Germany, issued the following statement.

The [proposed] talks are a scheme prepared by Indonesian military intelligence, co-ordinated by the two military attaches in The Hague and Brussels. This initiative began to take shape prior to the UN talks between Indonesia and Portugal under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali last April in Rome. It was presented as an effort to make a breakthrough in the stalemate situation of the talks and presented as an attempt at reconciliation between the divided East Timorese, pro and anti Indonesian.

The persons who were involved from the outset were Nuno Rocha, a Portuguese businessman who has strong ties with highly placed Indonesian officials and Petrus Suryadi, an Indonesian journalist with close ties to BAIS, the Indonesian military intelligence. Some Timorese exiles were approached by the above persons.

We strongly believe that these "reconciliation" talks are part of an overall Indonesian diplomatic offensive on East Timor. This offensive wants to improve the tarnished image of Indonesia on the international scene and at the same time try to undermine the position of the CNRM, the umbrella of Timorese resistance, both inside and outside East Timor.

As Indonesians we are very much aware of the nature of the present Indonesian government. We strongly denounce such ploys and call for support



to explore new avenues for a comprehensive solution to the East Timor problem. If the Indonesian government were really sincere, they would have welcomed the idea of Peace Talks proposed several years ago by the CNRM.

Confidence-building measures are strongly needed to break the stalemate situation and we propose the withdrawal of Indonesian troops from East Timorese soil immediately and the release of all East Timorese political prisoners, including Xanana Gusmao and Mau Huno.

Xanana Gusmao

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# Spies used against Indonesian workers

by Cipto R.

Since the middle of the year, strikes have been increasing. Recently the Ministry of Manpower raised the Jakarta minimum wage to Rp., 3100 (A\$2), and companies should have been paying this amount by July.

There have been at least 200 strikes in the west Jakarta industrial estates so far this year. Businesses have been especially affected as they have been trying to pass on the cost of income tax increases by holding down wages.

The government has been experimenting for some time with different ways to stop this trend. In 1992, special combined military exercises were held to train troops in methods of handling strikes. The use of troops at factories increased.

But this method had its problems for managers because they were expected to pay the military for services rendered. One new way that businesses dealt with this was to help form their own permanent security units, often using active soldiers from the commando forces (KOPASUS).

In recent weeks there have been signs of new fascistic methods being tried out. In the case of Masplon Pty Ltd, reported in *Republika* newspaper on July 30, a spy was employed at the factory. After a strike and after the company agreed to some of the workers' demands, some machinery was burned. The next day the organisers of the strike were summoned and harshly interrogated by the military.

Another case where the use of hired spies is suspected is the case of the murder of the woman worker activist Marsinah, which has become a major issue in the media.

More recently an incident took place in Harapan Daya Pty Ltd, which produced electronics under the brand Daichi. In May the workers struck to demand an increase in wages and improvements to other conditions, including the granting of holidays and lunch money. But the company only conceded on the demand for holidays.

The company the Ministry of Labor and the local military combined to force the workers to join the government puppet union, the All Indonesia Workers Union (SPSI), and to promise not to go on strike again.

A month later, in June, the company gave "incentive money" to several of the workers who were involved in the negotiations in order to tame them and ensure no more strikes. Other workers heard of this and threatened to strike if they weren't also provided with the same "incentive payments".

The company used another paid spy, "Yongki". He arranged with another worker, Parman, to buy a radio off him if he could pinch one from the stores. As soon as Parman made the delivery, he was arrested on the spot by a security unit which included members of KOPASUS. He was taken to the local security post where he was beaten and also forced to drink liquor. After he was beaten and made drunk, he was taken to the local Police Station. because he couldn't stand the torture, he finally gave them a list of his close friends.

On 27 July, these workers were summoned one by one and interrogated about "thefts" of electronic goods. The personnel section tried to cajole them into confessing by saying they would be surely able to keep their jobs if they confessed.

But on July 28, the seven workers were called away from their work again. This time they were met by military, including KOPASUS members, who loaded the workers into a truck and took them immediately to Cileungsi Police Station, where, after being beaten and tortured, they "confessed". But only one of the workers was formally charged. As of July 31 these seven and Parman, all of whom were involved in organising the May strike, remain in gaol, accused of "theft".

The company has been able to get rid of the strike organisers by having them set up on criminal charges. In this way, they do not need to pay any redundancy money. The workers will also be black listed as criminals and not be able to find any further employment.





# Child labour in Indonesia

News

According to a July 30 Reuters report, Indonesian child workers have called for an end to the practice of child labour.

About 100 delegates to a three-day conference called for better laws, the full implementation of government plans to extend compulsory education from six to nine years and an eventual end to child labour. Official statistics indicate some 2.4 million children between the age of 10 and 14 work in Indonesia, but a recent survey sponsored by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) said the figures were

underestimated.

While Indonesian children under 10 are legally barred from working, analysts say the law is weak and has never been properly implemented.

The US Senate is currently debating a bill which would ban products believed to be made using child labour.

The ILO last year chose Indonesia as one of six trial countries for its newly formed International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC), giving \$1.5 million to support projects improving child workers' living conditions.

## Arrest of Muslims

Police on July 31, stormed the headquarters of a Muslim sect in West Java, killing four people and injuring five.

Officials said seven other people, believed to be the followers of a loosely-formed Muslim sect, were arrested, while two others managed to flee.

Local newspapers reported that a special team of four trucks of police

forces had been dispatched to Majalengka district on West Java about 110 miles (180 km) east of Jakarta, to encircle the sect headquarters, after members of the group stabbed to death a police officer and injured another.

The Indonesian police chief Lt. Gen. Banurusman deplored the killing of Chief Sgt. Sri Ayem, the Majalengka district police chief.

## Ill health forces release

*Tempo* reported on July 24, that AM Fatwa, former secretary of the Petition of 50 Working Group and former personal assistant to one-time Jakarta Governor Ali Sadikin, has received day leave from Cipinang Prison, where he contracted hepatitis.

Fatwa had been sentenced to 18 years imprisonment for subversion in connection with P50's "White Paper" circulated after the 1984 Tanjung Priok incident. During the day Fatwa works at the publisher PT Pustaka Antara as a consultant. He must be back at Cipinang by 5 pm.

He is barred from taking strolls and may not speak to reporters.

Now 53, Fatwa's release conditions may be further loosened to 'conditional

freedom.' This request is now being processed. Barring further obstacles, a decision could be made in four months. Fatwa may just be the first in line.

Former Textile and Light Industry Minister and P50 signatory AM Sanusi could be next. Sanusi was sentenced to 19 years imprisonment for alleged involvement in the Bank Central Asia bombing in Jakarta nine years ago.

A recent court decision set aside his concurrent sentence in another case in which he was found guilty of involvement of several alleged plots to assassinate President Suharto.

During his day leave, Sanusi, now 71, will work in Optic Kasoem. While in prison, Sanusi gave several very recent interviews to the press which were highly critical of the government.

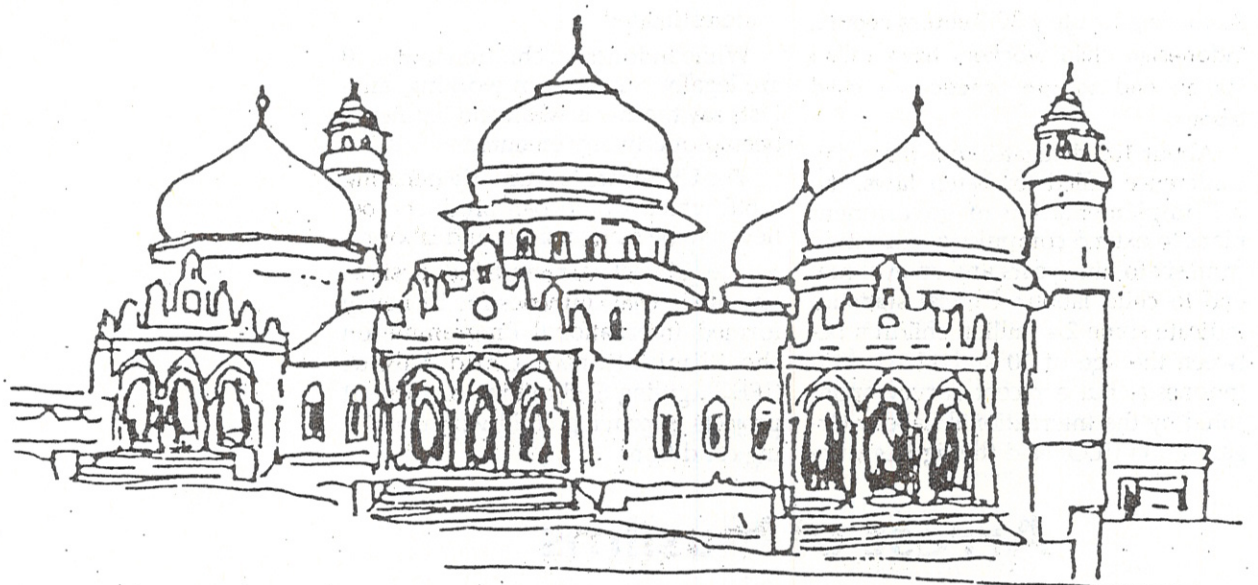


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# Indonesia's death squads

## Australia's role



— Mesjid Raya  
Banda Aceh

This August, Amnesty International released a report on human rights abuses in Aceh. Killings and detentions have been a part of the solution applied by the Suharto regime in dealing with social and political discontent in the Aceh, a province on the northern most tip of Sumatra. Since 1988 some of the discontent has manifested itself in support of an armed movement for Independence called Aceh Merdeka. In the absence of a free political situation it is not possible to definite about the precise extent of support for Aceh Merdeka, however it is noteworthy that despite considerable repression the movement seems able to survive.

Foreign minister, Senator Evans, last July defended Australia's training of elite Indonesian troops that Amnesty International claims have been responsible for systematic human rights violations in East Timor and the staunchly Islamic northern province of Aceh. Campaigns director for Amnesty International in Australia, Andre Frankovits, said that Amnesty was simply asking that the Australia government "be able to demonstrate that any Australian contact with the Kopassus regiment will not lead to further violations of human rights".

"If it is unable to do this, then Amnesty International believes the Austra-

lian government should suspend all such contact". The report alleges that Kopassus is consistently associated with human rights violations in Aceh and elsewhere in Indonesia and East Timor.

According to AI, a variety of social, economic, political and religious factors have contributed to the re-emergence of widespread anti-pathology to central government authority in the late 1980s and to support for Aceh's independence. Aceh Merdeka has tapped the political potential of this sentiment and given it institutional and military expression.

Suara Aksi reproduces sections of the Amnesty International Report.



Among the factors contributing to popular support for independence has been unhappiness over the unequal distribution of benefits from the large industrial enterprises and plantations along the east coast of Aceh. The discovery of substantial reserves of natural gas near Lhokseumawe, Aceh Utara, in the early 1970s, led to the establishment of large extraction and processing facilities, as well as associated industries. The revenue derived from these enterprises now accounts for a substantial proportion of Indonesia's foreign earnings. Agricultural cash crop plantations along the east coast, including rubber, coffee, tobacco and pepper, have also generated significant revenue. Yet to many in the local Acehnese community the benefits of the economic boom have been less obvious. Critics say that industrial expansion has forced farmers and fishermen from their traditional occupations without necessarily providing alternative employment. Acehnese also complain of spiraling prices, serious pollution and social dislocation, while an estimated 40% of Aceh's population are said to continue to live in poverty.

These problems have been compounded by the steady influx of economic migrants (known as transmigrants), military personnel and civil servants from other parts of Indonesia, particularly from the island of Java. From the perspective of at least some Acehnese, including the leadership of Aceh Merdeka, these "outsiders" have gained a disproportionate share of the benefits of industrial growth and government development spending, while at the same time encouraging behaviour deemed inconsistent with, or offensive to, local customs and religious belief. Some Acehnese blame the increased incidence of prostitution, gambling, drinking and other practices considered an anathema by Aceh's devout Muslims, on their influence. The leadership of Aceh Merdeka has gone further, accusing the "Javanese imperialists" of cultural genocide.

### Counter-insurgency

The methods employed to defeat Aceh Merdeka bore all the hall-marks of counter-insurgency campaigns conducted elsewhere in Indonesia and in East Timor. In an effort to undercut the civilian support base of the guerrilla resistance, Indonesian forces carried

out armed raids and house-to-house searches in suspected rebel areas. The houses of villagers suspected of providing shelter or support to the rebels were burned to the ground. The wives or daughters of some suspected rebel were detained as hostages and some were raped. Anyone suspected of contact with Aceh Merdeka was vulnerable to arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, disappearance or summary execution. The counter-insurgency campaign also resulted in the flight of hundreds of Acehnese to neighbouring Malaysia beginning in March 1991.

A key component of the counter-insurgency campaign in Aceh was the strategy of civil-military cooperation, officially known as "People's total defence and security system" (Sishankamrata). The involvement of civilians in the military campaign inevitably increased the scale of human rights violations. The most notorious example of the strategy of civil-military cooperation was the "fence of legs" operation used previously in East Timor - in which ordinary villagers were compelled to sweep through an area ahead of armed troops, in order both to flush out rebels and to inhibit them from returning fire. Essential to the success of these operations were local vigilante groups and night patrols made up of civilians but established under military order and supervision. Between 20 and 30 young men were mobilized from each village in suspected rebel areas. In the words of a local military commander: "The youths are the front line. They know best who the GPK are. We then settle the matter." Refusal to participate in these groups - or failure to demonstrate sufficient commitment to crushing the enemy by identifying, capturing or killing alleged rebels sometimes resulted in punishment by government forces, including public torture, arrest and execution.

One such government-backed vigilante group, the Laskar Rakyat (People's Militia), established in Idi, Aceh Timur, in August 1990, was said to have recruited 1,500 members within a few months. Recruits were given basic military training, armed with knives, machetes and bamboo spears, and told to hunt the GPK. Within a few weeks, the group announced that it had arrested some 80 people believed to be Aceh Merdeka members, and had handed them over to the armed forces. In Aceh

## Aceh





Utara, military commanders recruited young men to form local paramilitary groups called Bela Negara (Defend the Nation) to track down suspected rebels.

In a style reminiscent of the anti-communist campaign that followed the 1965 coup, military authorities organized mass rallies at which civilians were urged to crush the GPK. Banners and posters with similar messages were displayed throughout the troubled areas. One banner exhibited in Idi, Aceh Timur, in July 1991, declared: "We submit Hasan Tiro to you, ABRI, to be destroyed"; another said "Destroy the GPK for the sake of national development!" Military commanders also explicitly encouraged civilians to spy upon, turn in, or even kill suspected GPK members.

## Failure to Investigate

Many of the violations reported in Aceh - including torture and extrajudicial execution - are considered criminal offences under Indonesia's civilian and military legal codes, and all constitute infringements of international human rights law. However, to Amnesty International's knowledge, no military or police officials have been brought to justice for human rights related offences in Aceh, though at least twelve current or former armed forces members have been tried for allegedly supporting Aceh Merdeka. The government's failure to punish the suspected perpetrators of serious human rights violations in Aceh raises serious questions about the sincerity of its commitment to promoting and protecting human rights. Just as importantly, it sends a message that violations by government forces will be tolerated, thereby increasing the likelihood of future abuse.

Government and military authorities have also failed to initiate any investigations into reported human rights violations in Aceh. With few exceptions, they have flatly denied allegations of grave human rights abuse in the area, while failing utterly to address their substance.

Human rights monitors, both domestic and international, have faced serious obstacles in reporting about the situation in Aceh. These restrictions have inhibited efforts to clarify the fate of victims of human rights violations,

and to identify the perpetrators. Amnesty International believes that the restrictions have also contributed to an atmosphere in which human rights violations are more likely to occur.

Representatives of the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute (LBH) were able to conduct field investigations and trial observations in the provinces of Aceh and North Sumatra in 1990 and 1991. A report published in July 1991, which outlined the organization's main findings about political trials in Aceh, was subsequently banned on the grounds that it portrayed government forces in a negative light, and might cause instability in the region. LBH staff members involved in human rights work in Aceh have been placed under tight surveillance, and some have been summoned for questioning by military intelligence following contact with representatives of international human rights organizations.

Amnesty International's requests to visit Aceh to conduct first-hand investigations have also been repeatedly refused, as have its requests to meet government officials to discuss outstanding human rights concerns there and elsewhere in Indonesia and East Timor. Responding to Amnesty International's allegations of serious human rights violations in Aceh, Major General HR. Pramono said "We don't need lessons from other nations about human rights. We have our own values. They have a liberal state, ours is a Pancasila state. It's different."

High ranking government and military authorities have displayed little tolerance for reports of human rights violations in Aceh, thereby further inhibiting genuine efforts to monitor and investigate. Credible reports of serious violations in Aceh have been summarily dismissed as lies by military officials, and those who disseminated the reports have been characterized as rumour-mongers and enemies of the state. The Indonesian Government stated that accusations of human rights violations in Aceh, for example killings, torture and mass murder, are in fact pure inventions and are launched with the intention of discrediting the Republic of Indonesia in the eyes of the international community.

The public expression of similar attitudes by government and military authorities in Aceh has contributed to





a sense of deep insecurity and vulnerability on the part of ordinary citizens. Many have avoided reporting or lodging complaints about the death or disappearance of relatives or friends out of fear of reprisals from the armed forces.

### Extrajudicial executions

The extrajudicial execution of civilians and alleged Aceh Merdeka combatants has been a central feature of the government's counter-insurgency campaign in Aceh. Some have died in public executions, while others have been killed secretly, their decomposing and often mutilated bodies left in public places as a warning to others. Scores of the dead are reported to have been dumped in mass graves.

Most of the victims have been ordinary villagers living in areas of suspected rebel activity. One objective of the killings has apparently been to terrorize the local population so that they will cooperate fully with the security forces in tracking down alleged rebels. Some villagers have been killed solely as retribution for the death of a soldier, or for failing promptly to obey a military command. Government troops are also reported to have killed dozens of Aceh Merdeka combatants in extrajudicial executions, rather than taking them into custody.

Limitations on access to the area by human rights monitors, heavy restrictions on media and other reporting during the counter-insurgency campaign, and a deep-seated fear on the part of witnesses and relatives, make it difficult to give a precise number of victims of extrajudicial execution. Aceh Merdeka sources claim that as many as 20,000 have died in Aceh and North Sumatra since 1989, while some independent observers in Aceh suggest a figure of about 10,000.

The timing of the worst killings in Aceh, the methods and techniques employed, and the public comments made by military officers in the region, suggest strongly that extrajudicial execution was part of a deliberate and coordinated counter-insurgency strategy. The uniformity of the pattern of human rights violations reported in Aceh and those documented in other parts of Indonesia and East Timor, indicates that, where it faces serious opposition to its authority, political killing

may be a central aspect of Indonesian Government policy.

### Mass Graves

Arbitrary killings by government forces were reported as early as 1989, shortly after the first Aceh Merdeka attacks. Extrajudicial execution on a massive and systematic scale appears to have begun in July 1990, immediately after the replacement of the regional military commander of KODAM I and the special deployment, on the President's order, of some 6,000 counter-insurgency troops.

The "mysterious killings" in Aceh had the following general features. The corpses of victims were usually left in public places, apparently as a warning to others not to join or support the rebels. Most had clearly been prisoners when they were killed. Their thumbs, and sometimes their feet, had been tied together with a particular type of knot. Most had been shot at close range, though the bullets were seldom found in their bodies. Most also showed signs of having been beaten with a blunt instrument or tortured, and their faces were therefore often unrecognizable. For the most part, the bodies were not recovered by relatives or friends, both out of fear of retribution by the military and because the victims were usually dumped at some distance from their home villages.

Most of the unidentified corpses appeared in Aceh Utara and Aceh Timur, base areas of the rebel movement, but some were also discovered just across the provincial boundary in North Sumatra. In September and October 1990, the national news weekly, *Tempo*, reported the discovery of scores of corpses in these areas. Many of these reports were later confirmed by foreign journalists and human rights workers who conducted brief first-hand investigations. Their investigations suggest that the cases mentioned in *Tempo*, were only a small proportion of the total number killed.

Not all victims of unlawful killing in Aceh were tortured and left in public places. Many were simply shot and thrown into mass graves, some of which reportedly contained hundreds of bodies. Government and military authorities have acknowledged the existence of at least one mass grave, while disputing the number of corpses be-

**Aceh**



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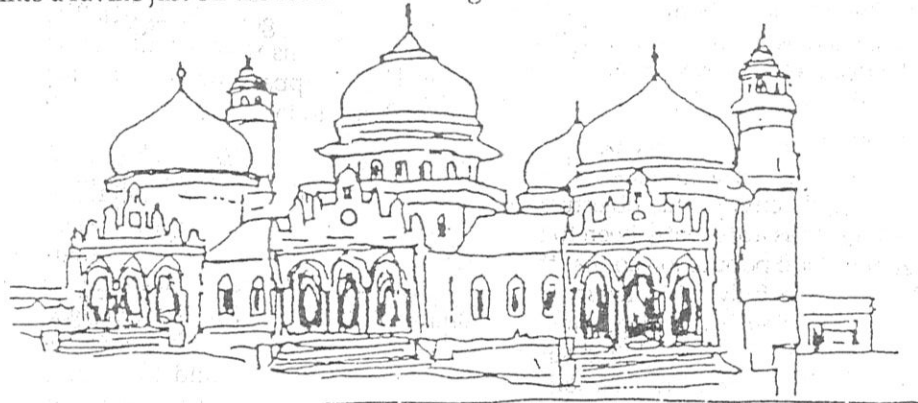
## Aceh

lieved to be buried there. However, to Amnesty International's knowledge no thorough forensic investigation of any of the reported grave sites had been conducted by June 1993.

According to one report, a group of 56 detainees were summarily executed by Indonesian troops on 12 September 1990 at Bukit Panglima, about 27 kilometers along the road from Bireuen, Aceh Utara, to Takengon. Witnesses said that the detainees were ordered off the military trucks in which they were being transported from the Kopassus camp at Rancong and then shot. Their bodies were reportedly allowed to fall into a ravine just off the road.

According to another report, a mass grave containing some 200 bodies was discovered near the village of Alue Mira in mid-1990. Commenting on the report, Major General HR.. Pramono disputed the number of corpses but, significantly, did not deny the existence of the grave itself.

An Indonesian journalist who visited the village in late 1990, confirmed that residents had found dozens of corpses in the vicinity within the previous two months, thereby suggesting that the figure of 200 dead was too high, but not disputing the occurrence of mass killings or the existence of a mass grave.



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# Indonesia Solidarity Action

AKSI is Indonesian for action. It is an Australian organisation building support and understanding for Indonesians fighting for social justice and democracy and an end to the current military dictatorship.

### Against destructive tourist development

In Bali, Lombok and elsewhere, farming communities are being driven from their land to make way for developments such as seaside resorts and golf courses - as well as dams, supermarkets and luxury housing.

### Build links with new workers' groups

Tens of thousands of workers have taken industrial action against their appalling working conditions and are establishing worker organisations..

### Solidarity with student movement

The Free the Students Campaign demands the release of all imprisoned students in Indonesia, including East Timorese students.

### Expose Australian complicity

Cyanide dumped in rivers, reports of appalling safety conditions, open support for Suharto's occupation of East Timor; betrayal of the East Timorese for the sake of the Timor Gap oil dollar both Australian big business and government are complicit in exploitation, oppression and environmental carnage in Indonesia. AKSI wishes to make available more information about these involvements.

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### Send to your nearest group:

**Adelaide:**

PO Box 781, Adelaide 5001. Phone Adam or Chris on (08) 231 6982 (BH)

**Brisbane:**

PO Box 1293, Fortitude Valley 4006. Phone Nick on (07) 358 4875

**Canberra :**

c/- 103 Scrivener St, O'Connor, ACT 2601. Phone Steven on (06) 257 3195

**Melbourne:**

PO Box 4345, Melbourne Uni, Parkville 3053. Phone (03) 392 1320

**Perth:**

c/- Room 4, 193 William St Arcade, Northbridge 6000.

**Sydney:**

PO Box 458, Broadway 2007. Phone Jon on (02) 690 1977.



# Military attacks on students



*Student demonstration in Jogjakarta.*

Indonesian military attempts to break up student strikes and demonstrations in Jakarta initiated quick responses from AKSI groups in Melbourne and Sydney. AKSI called the demonstrations after the military was used in two instances, beating and arresting a number of students.

In Melbourne, 30 people demonstrated outside Garuda Indonesia Airways offices. In Sydney an AKSI delegation to the Indonesian consulate demanded that all students be unconditionally released, that an inquiry into human rights abuses during the events be initiated and that the students demands be met. AKSI's actions received coverage on SBS's *Dateline*, as part of a report about the increased militancy of Indonesian students.

The military's attacks add to a wave of repressive measures by the military against the students. The military's activities have prompted speculations about an attempt to re establish their political authority.

In May at the Universitas Nasional, and again on on June 24 at the National Institute of Science and Technology (ISTN), students demonstrated against excessive education fees and corruption within the university administra-

tion. In both cases the military, using tear gas, wooden batons and carrying guns, attempted to break up those demonstrations.

At the ISTN around 1000 students maintained their action for three days despite military attacks, resulting in the damaging of several university buildings. Despite the stalemate the university administration refused to discuss the issue.

Students remained on the ISTN campus even after a raid by a combined force of army and police. More than 50 students were arrested and loaded onto military trucks. Many of the students were released soon after. Some were found later severely beaten and dumped in rice patties some distance from the campus.

Fourteen students remained in custody and were only released some days after military interrogation. Their release followed a confrontation at a hearing of one of the parliament's commissions, attended by students from a range of campuses, demanding an end to military intervention on campus. Parliamentarians refused to discuss with the students, but 'promised to look into their complaints'.