

URGENT ACTION

Religious minority members forcibly evicted

At least 12 members of the Ahmadiyya religious minority have been forced to leave their homes in Bangka Island on 5 February. Nine others are facing ongoing intimidation.

At least **12 members of the religious minority group Ahmadiyya**, mostly women and children, were forced to leave their homes in Srimenanti village, Bangka Island, Bangka Belitung Islands province, off the east coast of Sumatra on 5 February and have not been able to return to their homes. The head of the district military command (Kodim 0413) visited the Ahmadiyya office in Bangka district giving them, both those who live in Srimenanti village and other villages in Bangka district, the order to leave the district on the morning of 5 February. A group of at least 100 local residents opposed to the Ahmadiyya later gathered as the families were forced to leave under police escort to a location that has not been made public. According to human rights groups monitoring the situation, at least nine male members of the Ahmadiyya community have chosen to remain in Srimenanti village but are facing on-going intimidation and threats of damage to their homes and property from other local residents.

The group has been under the threat of expulsion since 5 January when the Bangka District government issued the group a letter requesting they convert to mainstream Sunni Islam or leave the district. The group was given until 5 February to make a decision. On 24 January at least a hundred individuals gathered to demonstrate against Ahmadiyya outside their offices monitored by members of the police and military. The Indonesian Home Minister, Tjahjo Kumolo objected to the planned evictions of the Ahmadiyya community initiated by Bangka's local government and had instructed the local authorities to withdraw the threats. However this instruction was ignored by the local authorities.

Members of the Ahmadiyya community have faced intimidation and threats in various other parts of Indonesia because their teachings are viewed as "deviant" by the government.

Please write immediately in Indonesian or your own language:

- √ Urging the authorities to ensure the safety of the 12 Ahmadiyya members in Srimenanti village;
- √ Urging them to ensure that the affected Ahmadiyya community has access to complete information and engage in genuine consultation on their relocation; and guarantee the safe, voluntary and dignified return of the Ahmadiyya community to their homes or other place of choice;
- √ Urging them to investigate reports that the local authorities are coercing Ahmadiyya followers to renounce their faith or face a forced eviction.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 MARCH 2016 TO:

Co-ordinating Minister of Political, Legal and Security Affairs

Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan

Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs

Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat No.15,

Jakarta Pusat, 10110, Indonesia

Fax: +62 21 345 0918

Twitter: @lapor1708

Salutation: Dear Minister

Ministry of Home Affairs

Tjahjo Kumolo

Minister of Home Affairs

Jl. Medan Merdeka Utara No. 7

Jakarta 10110

Fax: +62 21-381 1120

Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Chairperson National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM)

Mr. Nur Kholis

Chairperson National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM)

Jl Lathuhary No.4 Menteng Jakarta Pusat 10310 Indonesia

Fax: +62 21 39 25 227

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR T M HAMZAH THAYEB, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, 38 Grosvenor Square W1K 2HW, 02074997661, Fax 02074914993, kbri@btconnect.com, www.indonesianembassy.org.uk, Salutation: Your Excellency - Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADditional Information

The Ahmadiyya are a religious group who consider themselves part of Islam; however many Muslim groups say they do not adhere to the accepted belief system. In 2008, the government issued a Joint Ministerial Decree that prohibits the Ahmadiyya from promoting their activities and spreading their teachings. A violation of the decree can lead to a maximum five years in prison. In September 2010, Indonesia's former Minister of Religion, Suryadharma Ali, called for the Ahmadiyya to be banned. Local authorities have closed a number of Ahmadiyya places of worship including Ciamis (June 2014) in Bekasi (May 2014) and Depok (December 2013).

Religious minority groups in Indonesia, including Shi'a, Ahmadiyya and Christian communities often face harassment, intimidation and attacks. At least 1,500 members of the religious minority group the Fajar Nusantara Movement (Gafatar) were forcibly evicted from their villages in Menpawah, West Kalimantan in January. In December 2011, a mob set fire to a place of worship, a boarding school and number of homes belonging to the Shi'a community on Madura Island. In Lombok, East Nusa Tenggara province, an Ahmadiyya community has been living in inadequate housing since their homes were attacked and burnt by a mob in February 2006. Both the Ahmadiyya and Shia communities have not been able to return to their homes and have lived in temporary accommodation since.

The right to freedom of religion is guaranteed in the Indonesian Constitution. Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Indonesia is a state party, states that "this right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice" and that "no one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice". In May 2012, during its Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council, the Indonesian government reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring the protection of freedom of religion and to address cases of religious intolerance. However, those who commit acts of violence against religious minorities are rarely punished and communities have been displaced by attacks.

Name: At least 12 members of the Ahmadiyya religious minority group.

Gender m/f: both

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