

Police intentionally dragging out Munir murder investigation - expert

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West Bandung — The investigation into the murder of human rights fighter Munir continues to roll along.

A new suspect linked with the case has emerged although the national police are keeping the individual's identity confidential.

"On the question of the new suspect, police will of course give out the name. Currently we are in the process of gathering material evidence, witnesses and other information. We will inform [the public] as soon as possible", said Indonesian Police Chief General Sutanto after attending the closing ceremony of the High Level Administrative Leadership and Staff School (Sespati) G-14 and the National Police Regular Education Leadership and School Staff School (Sespim Dikreg) in Lembang, West Bandung, on Friday June 13.

Sutanto was reluctant to mention the name or initials of the new suspect. "Later. A rogue individual basically. They are the one that did and carried it out (the murder of Munir)", he said.

Speaking separately, legal expert I Gde Panta Astawa from the University of Padjadjaran in the West Java provincial capital of Bandung said that the Munir murder case is being dragged out. This is being done intentionally by police because of a certain motive. The motive, among other things, is that for the sake of the national interest the police are not revealing the mastermind behind Munir's murder.

Whereas, said Panta Astawa, with the network and methods at the police's disposal, it would not be difficult to expose Munir's murderer. Right from the start the police could have traced the brains behind Munir's murder, but this was not done he said.

Panta Astawa explained that the police are intentionally and repeatedly delaying making a disclosure with the aim that the public will forget

about Munir's murder. At the same time the principle actor remains safe.

However, he continued, it will be difficult for these efforts to succeed because Munir was not just a national figure. The whole world is well acquainted with Munir so the public will not easily forget the case.

Panta Astawa said that the key to successfully cracking the Munir murder case is how daring the police are. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has already given them the green light. "It depends on whether the police have the courage or not to expose the case in an explicit manner," he said. (MHF)

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