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Indonesian rights activists welcome reopening of Munir case, but urge publication of 2005 Fact Finding Report as first step

Friday 28 September 2018, by [Kumparan News](#) (Date first published: 4 September 2018).

The authorities have so far tried to hide or destroy evidence of Government involvement in the poisoning of human rights activist Munir in 2004

Indonesian police chief General (Kapolri) Tito Karnavian has instructed

Criminal Investigation Bureau chief (Kabareskrim) Inspector General Arief Sulistyanto to reopen the investigation into the assassination of human rights activist Munir who was poisoned in September 2004.

"Yes there has been a new order from the Reskrim [criminal investigation

bureau] to investigate the Munir case. Yes we will reopen his dossier [although] how far it goes, well that depends on the case", said Sulistyanto at the national police headquarters public relations office.

In response, Saleh Al Ghifari from the Jakarta Legal Aid Foundation (LBH)

has welcomed Karnavian's order to reopen the investigation. According to Saleh however, the most important thing is to reveal the contents of the 2005 Munir Fact Finding Team (TPF) report to the public.

"We welcome this [renewed] seriousness from the police and government, [but] of course the first step is to open the TPF [report], (in order to) development the investigation and reveal the other higher-left perpetrators", said Saleh when contacted by Kumparan on Monday September 3.

According to Saleh, the work of Bareskrim (the Criminal Investigation Directorate) will be far more difficult if it does not use data from the TPF report. Saleh believes that without this, it will be like Bareskrim is starting all over again from scratch in trying to uncover the mystery behind Munir's assassination.

"Yes they'd be doing it all over again, if they start from zero. It would

be pointless, now (the TPF report) ended up with the government, it's already with the president", said Saleh.

Although he welcomes the order from Karnavian, Saleh doubts the government's seriousness in uncovering the facts behind Munir's death. The only way the government can demonstrate its seriousness, according to Saleh, is by fully disclosing the TPF's findings.

"It shouldn't be difficult for the government to find it. Including the national police, all that's left is the will to reveal it to the public and use it to further investigate the Munir case", he added.

The Munir TPF was formed during President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's (SBY) first term in office in 2004. The special team was made up of 14 people and headed by police Brigadier General Marsudi Nahafi.

After three months of work, the TPF's investigation was completed in 2005. The public awaited the full disclosure of the findings.

Instead of being released to the public however, in March 2016 the State Secretariat declared that the report had gone missing. The whereabouts of the six copies of the TPF's report — which were handed over to the government in 2005 — remain unknown.

To this day Saleh is critical of the document's loss. According to Saleh, it makes no sense for the documents to have just disappeared.

"(Perhaps) it was mismanagement by the presidential office, only we're not convinced. The documents were handed over in public, the media was there, there was a presidential press conference, [then] they just disappeared, where were they put? They can be searched for, it's impossible that they don't exist. Everyone knows about the documents, all of the TPF members said that they were handed over [to the government]", he explained.

Saleh is still convinced that the documents exist. On the question of their disappearance, he says it's just a matter of how serious the government is [in finding them].

Saleh says that if the government is indeed serious about solving the Munir case, this can only demonstrate this by revealing the TPF's findings to the public.

"[The government can] demonstrate its seriousness like that, yes we welcome the [police chief's] instruction, but it's like something isn't quite right. Because the documents are indeed being held by the government", he concluded.

Notes

Renowned human rights defender Munir died of arsenic poisoning onboard a Garuda Indonesia flight in September 2004. Although off-duty pilot Pollycarpus Priyanto was convicted of the murder in 2005 the alleged mastermind behind the assassination, former National Intelligence Agency (BIN) deputy Muchdi Purwopranjono, was later acquitted of all charges. Also implicated in the murder but never investigated was former BIN chief Hendropriyono. A close ally of Megawati Sukarnoputri — the chairperson of President Joko Widodo's ruling Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle

(PDI-P) — according to US diplomatic cables leaked in 2011 Hendropriyono was involved in the planning of Munir's murder.

Following a ruling by the Central Information Commission (KIP) in October 2016 ordering the State Secretariat to disclose the fact-finding team's report on Munir's murder to the public, the Secretariat claimed that the document had mysteriously gone missing, prompting allegations that the files were deliberately misplaced by the government.

The full Munir TPF report in PDF format can be read here:

<http://www.asia-pacific-solidarity.net/southeastasia/indonesia/reports/24802>

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Translated by James Balowski

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