

Israeli spyware being used to monitor Indonesian LGBT community, religious minorities

Tuesday 11 December 2018, by [LIBERTI Pasti](#) (Date first published: 3 December 2018).



LGBT rights rally in Jakarta (Matamata Politik)

Pasti Liberti, Jakarta - We'll just call him Teguh, who along with Hartoyo and his friends are active with Suara Kita (Our Voice), an organisation fighting against discrimination and for the rights of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community in Indonesia.

Teguh was only able to make a brief comment when he was shown an article from Haaretz, an Israeli publication, which was uploaded to its website several weeks ago.

"Wow... I didn't know what to say", Teguh told *detikX* several days ago. The article reported on the results of a months-long *Haaretz* investigation on Israeli companies that sell spyware and bugging devices.

Haaretz claims to have interviewed more than 100 sources from 15 different countries that have bought Israeli made spyware including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Mexico, India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Botswana.

In relation to the spyware sold to Indonesia, a journalist from Israel interviewed three sources who knew about the sales from the company, Verint System.

Although it was established by Israeli citizens and around half of its employees work out of offices at Herzliya Pituah in Israel, the company's stocks are listed on the US stock exchange and its central office is in Melville, New York.

The Haaretz article does not cite which institutions in Indonesia have bought and are using Verint products. A source said that Verint products are used by these institutions to spy on the activities of the LGBT community and religious minority groups in Indonesia.

One source said that some time ago they traveled to Indonesia to train people on how to use the equipment. "Upon arriving in Indonesia, I was asked to assist in a stalled investigation into a public figure who was caught up in a religious blasphemy case", said Natanel, not his real name.

As a community that still finds it hard to be accepted in Indonesia, according to Teguh he and his friend know how to "play safe" on the internet and social media. "We have several kinds of basic

training related to digital security”, Teguh said.

On key issue for example is how to send secure emails. Once, the Suara Kita website was hacked by an unknown party. But thanks to some help from a friend the site was able to be restored.

“[We] don’t know who the perpetrator was. We’re also not interested in finding out. The site can be accessed again, that’s enough...”.

Verint, according to an analyst from a security company in Indonesia, is a big player in the spyware business. Verint has representative offices at the Batavia Tower in Jakarta where it shares an office with PT Ciboodle Indonesia. Verint is written in large letters displayed on the wall of the office lobby located on the 26 floor of the Batavia Tower.

When detikX visited the office and expressed a desire to conduct an interview, the receptionist who greeted us said that PT Ciboodle Indonesia does not have a special employee representing the company that could issue an official statement on Verint.

In the end we left a number of questions and a phone number for a company senior official. As of this report being posted however, there has been no response from PT Ciboodle Indonesia.

Which institution is spying on the LGBT community, read the full report at *DetikX*:

<https://x.detik.com/detail/intermeso/20181127/Siapa-Memata-matai-Komunitas-LGBT-Indonesia/index.php>.

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<https://www.indoleft.org/news/2018-12-03/israeli-spyware-being-used-to-monitor-lgbt-community-religious-minorities.html>

Source *Detik News* - December 3, 2018.

<https://news.detik.com/berita/d-4327601/siapa-yang-memata-matai-komunitas-lgbt-indonesia>

• Translated by James Balowski. The original title of the article was “Siapa yang Memata-matai Komunitas LGBT Indonesia?”.