

**Indonesian Socialite Jailed in Massive Bribe Case**  
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**By Our Correspondent**

*Witness eluded authorities in several different countries while pleading memory loss*

Nunun Nubaeti, the key witness in an Indonesian bribery case that has seen 28 lawmakers jailed so far, was handed a two-and-a-half year jail sentence and a fine equivalent to US\$16,350, both characterized as a slap on the wrist, in a Jakarta Anti-Corruption Court session yesterday.

Nunun immediately asked to be taken to a hospital, saying she was “shocked and sickened.”

The case in which Nunun, a prominent Jakarta socialite and wife of a national deputy police chief, was jailed is significant in that the individual who gave her a bagful of 480 travelers’ checks to be delivered to the jailed lawmakers, has never been identified. It is also significant because Nunun led authorities on a multi-country chase after having fled for Singapore to avoid arrest, claiming she had to seek medical treatment for a strange malady that made her forget everything.

The anti-corruption judges ruled that Nunun had channeled Rp20.8 billion (US\$2.26 million) worth of checks in bribes to lawmakers to support the election of Miranda Swaray Goeltom as the senior deputy governor of Bank Indonesia. Goeltom was recently named as a suspect in the case.

What nobody seems to want to ask is why the unnamed parties wanted Goeltom reappointed so fervently. The travelers’ checks were purchased by a company called First Mujur, a palm oil company, from Artha Graha Bank. Both First Mujur and Artha Graha are subsidiaries of the Artha Graha Group, owned by a Sumatran businessman named Tommy Winata. The checks, according to testimony, were delivered in paper sacks to some lawmakers, color-coded envelopes to others. Officials from First Mujur told officials of Indonesia’s Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) they had no idea how the checks had ended up the hands of the lawmakers.

They had been purchased to finance a palm oil plantation project, they said. Although the names of the bank and the palm oil company have been made public, Winata’s name was never mentioned in the trial, and it is unlikely that it ever will be. He is considered too powerful to mess with.

Nunun was on the run for almost two years. At one point she was thought to be in Cambodia although no one was sure. Busyro Mugoddas, the chairman of the KPK, said last October charged that “large powers” had prevented his organization, perhaps the country’s most incorruptible, from tracking the woman down.

The businesswoman is the wife of Adang Daradjatun, a prominent Prosperous Justice Party lawmaker and former Deputy National Police chief. The Prosperous Justice Party is a key component of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s ruling Democratic Party coalition. While Nunun was on the run, Daradjatun repeatedly told reporters he was only a common person who didn’t have the power to protect his wife or hinder any efforts to bring her home.

“It's impossible that I, a common person, can organize security [for Nunun],” Daradjatun claimed, saying he had no idea what Mugoddas was talking about. A member of the House of Representatives Commission III, which oversees legal affairs, he said he was not present during the hearing in which Mugoddas made the statement, to avoid conflict of interest.

Nunun was hardly alone in her flight. A long series of Indonesian politicians and public figures have decamped from Jakarta for Singapore, pleading illness, although the memory loss syndrome has become a running joke in Jakarta.

The most publicized was Muhammad Nazaruddin, the former treasurer of the Democratic Party, who led investigators on a long chase before they tracked him down in Cartagena, a resort city on the coast of Colombia, last year. Nazaruddin was sentenced in late April to five years in prison and a fine of just US\$22,000 for accepting bribes totaling US\$ 514,000. He was not ordered to return the amount stolen in bribes.

Nazaruddin's testimony against top officials of the Democratic Party, including its titular head, Anas Urbangingrum, has nearly wrecked the party and resulted in tarring the president's own name.

“There was not even one remark about the stunning difference between the total amount of the bribe Nazarrudin took and the "fine",” a Jakarta-based expatriate businessman told Asia Sentinel. “Ignoring the ridiculously lean sentence of five years, stiff in comparison to 99 percent of other KPK cases, where on earth did the balance of US\$ 492,000 go? This is how ALL KPK cases end up in court. The fine is only symbolic, and a tiny fraction of the total amount stolen in bribes.”

Police are still looking for Nazaruddin's wife, Neneng Sri Wahyuni, who is also suspected of being involved in a corruption case concerning the 2008 construction of a solar power plant for the Manpower and Transmigration Ministry. KPK officials said last week that Neneng had been detected in a “certain country,” which they declined to name, but that she could not be found. Interpol has been alerted, a KPK official said.

“[She] has not been found,” spokesman of the commission, Johan Budi, told reporters. “She was detected as being in a certain country. The problem is, that country is large.”

Neneng was the commissioner of Alfindo, the tender winner of the project. Alfindo subcontracted the work to Sundaya Indonesia, getting benefits and causing the state a loss worth Rp 2.7 billion (\$294,300), prosecutors alleged.

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