

Acehnese People's Party preparatory committee launched

Friday 17 March 2006, by [Aceh Kita](#) (Date first published: 16 March 2006).

Aceh Kita - March 16, 2006

Radzie, Banda Aceh - Civilian activist have launched the Acehnese People's Party Preparatory Committee (Komite Persiapan Partai Rakyat Aceh, KP PRA), which represents the precursor for the formation of the first local political party in Aceh. The launch - which took place at a restaurant in the Lamnyong area of Banda Aceh on Thursday March 16 - was attended by around 500 party supporters and a number of other invited guests including Juha Christensen from the Aceh Monitoring Mission.

The chairperson of KP PRA, Thamrin Ananda, said in a political speech that preparatory committees have already been formed in 11 regencies/cities in Aceh and they are targeting a total of 12. "In the regulations it says that branches must exist in 50 percent of the regencies/cities that exist in Aceh", said Ananda.

Ananda said that the idea of forming a local political party was because there is already a clear legal basis that flows from the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) that was signed in Helsinki on August 15 last year.

In addition to this, during the congress of the Acehnese Popular Democratic Resistance Front (FPDRA) that was held at the beginning of 2006, they agreed to form a local political party in Aceh. This was because a local political party can be the entry point for improving the welfare of the people who for too long have been afflicted by conflict.

The formation of the party received warm greetings among a number of circles both within in Aceh, nationally and from political parties in other countries including Malaysia, Bolivia, Venezuela and Germany.

In the election of regional heads or Pilkada that will be held next June after the enactment of the Law on a Government for Aceh, the KP PRA will not be putting forward its own candidates even though this is possible through the nomination of independent candidates. This is to demonstrate a commitment to an alternative government supported by a united national front.

“We will support candidates that are put up in the form a national united front with a platform of a clean, democratic, populist government that is free of foreign intervention”, said Ananda.

The former Student Solidarity for the People (SMUR) activist added that a local political party must have a different character from the national parties that have long existed in Aceh. “The character I mean is a local party’s courage to place the people or the masses as the subject, not just an object during elections”, he said adding that the soon to be formed PRA will place the people as subjects. It is because of this that the PRA will orientate its membership towards farmers, the urban poor and students.

In its future program, the PRA will focus on the nationalisation of the management of natural resources. To date the natural wealth of Aceh has largely been controlled by superpower countries such as the United States and Japan. The distribution of natural wealth between the central government and Aceh has also been unclear, even though a 70 percent (Aceh) and 30 percent (Jakarta) share has already been agreed to. “This kinds of issues are not clearly referred to in the Draft Law on a Government for Aceh and the MoU”, said Ananda. “So in the future it will reopen up the possibility foreign control”. [dzie]

[Translated by James Balowski.]

The INDOLEFT news service is produced by the Indonesian Centre for Reform and Social Emancipation (INCREASE) and Action in Solidarity with Asia and the Pacific.

INDOLEFT News Service
Jl. Tebet Timur Dalam VIII No. 6A
Jakarta Selatan 12820

Indonesia

Phone: 6221 830 7235

E-mail: jamesbalowski yahoo.com