

Actions, demos, protests...

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Kupang students demand investigation into Poso riots

Dozens of students from the Kupang People's Justice Forum (FKR) in East Nusa Tenggara demonstrated on September 30 demanding that the government immediately investigate those responsible for the riots in Poso. The protesters said that with the execution of Fabianus Tibo, Marinus Riwu and Dominggus da Silva, government has in fact made it more difficult to find the masterminds behind the Poso riots and at the very least the police should investigate the 16 names that were mention by Tibo as being behind the riots. (Liputan 6, 2/10/2006)

Farmers protest again over dam floodgate closure

Thousands of farmers demonstrated again on October 2 in the Sukoharjo regency of Central Java asking that the closure of Colo Dam floodgates in Sukoharjo be delayed by a month as they are still desperately in need of water to irrigate rice field that were only planted two months ago.

The 2,000 or so farmers, who arrived in trucks, came from the regencies of Sukoharjo, Karanganyar, Sragen and Wonogiri, immediately tried to prevent officials from closing off the water. According to one of the farmers, Suparno, closing off the irrigation water would hurt thousands of farmers who rely on water from the dam for irrigation. Because of this therefore, the farmers are threatening to occupy the dam in order to prevent officials from closing the floodgates. (Liputan 6, 2/10/2006)

Blue Bird taxi drivers in Bali protest over dismissals

On October 2 around 200 Blue Bird taxi drivers demonstrated on at the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in Denpasar, the capital city of Bali, demanding that the Blue Bird management

annul a decision to dismiss a number of drivers.

"We are asking that our friend's letters of dismissal be revoked and the general manager of Blue Bird be replaced. If our demands are not met, Blue Bird's operating license must be revoked", said Made, one of the drivers.

Disappointed at not being received by DPRD speaker Gede Adnyana, the drivers grew tired of waiting and broke down the door to Adnyana's office resulting in the cancellation of a meeting assembly members. The situation only calmed down after Adnyana agreed to discuss the issue with them. The outcome of the meeting is still unknown. (Detik.com, 2/10/2006)

Transvestites, gays and lesbians want discriminative bylaws revoked

Around 10 people from the community of transvestites, gays and lesbians went to the Department of Justice and Human Rights in the South Sumatra city of Palembang on October 2 to demand that the government revoke Palembang Bylaw No. 2/2004 on the elimination of prostitution.

The protesters, who came from the non-government organisation Arus Pelangi, the Jakarta Transvestites Association (PWKJ) and the Heroines Advance Foundation (YSM), were received by director of bylaw planning Perda Wahidudin Adam.

"In the Palembang bylaw, transvestites are referred to as criminals even though they have never engaged in prostitution", said Arus Pelangi director Rido Triawan during a meeting with Adam. Triawan explained that this phenomenon is not just taking place Palembang but that all over the country bylaws are being enacted that discriminate against transvestites, gays and lesbians.

In response to their concerns, Adam admitted that there are currently 41 problematic bylaws in force and promised to follow the matter up with the minister, but added a decision to revoke a bylaw takes at least six months. (Detik.com, 2/10/2006)

Bridgestone Tyre employees demand annual bonus increase

Around 170 employees of PT Bridgestone Tyre Indonesia in the Karawang regency of West Java

demonstrated on October 2 in front of the Bekasi city transportation offices demanding increases to their annual bonuses.

The head of the Karawang branch of the PT Bridgestone Tyre All Indonesia Workers Union (SPSI), Tri Dadi, said that the employees were demanding bonus increases of between 120 to 275 percent of their basic wage adding that the company was quite capable of paying this. Another union leader agreed saying that the company controls almost half of the tyre market in Indonesia and the company's profits are sufficient to meet their demands. (Kompas Cyber Media, 2/10/2006)

Semarang students demand justice minister be tried

Students from the West Semarang Greater Student Community (KMSB) demonstrated in the East Java provincial capital on October 2 accusing that the Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Hamid Awaludin, of being linked to a corruption case at the General Elections Commission (KPU).

In speeches the students said that all people are equal before the law so if the KPU is considered corrupt then all of its personal must take responsibility, including Awaludin. "The law in our country has been proven to still be discriminative. Hamid, who has now become a minister, has not been touch at all [by the law] even though there have been several KPU members that have been punished", said action coordinator Abdul Qodir Zakariyya.

After giving speeches at the Fountain Roundabout the students set fire to posters that they had brought with messages such as "All corrupters must be arrested and tried", "Arrest Hamid!" and the like. (Detik.com, 2/10/2006)

Ministerial visit to Sidoarjo marred by protest

Fifteen victims of the Lapindo Brantas mudflow disaster demonstrated on October 3 when Social Affairs Minister Bachtiar Chamsyah paid a working visit to distribute 10 tons of rice and 500 boxes of instant noodles.

After listening to an explanation by the Sidoarjo regent about the mud disaster, Chamsyah and his entourage hurried to visit the site of the mud outflow. But the moment they set foot outside of the

open veranda, they were confronted by the 15 victims who were holding an action demanding that the mud not be dumped into the sea.

In addition to giving speeches, the protester put up a six-meter banner with the writing "The community of mud victims opposes dumping the mud into the sea". Chamsyah and his entourage however, ignored the protesters and hurried off to the site.
(Detik.com, 3/10/2006)

Gresik residents oppose oil and gas exploration

Hundreds of protesters from the Residents Forum of Concern for the Survival of the New Gresik City Housing Complex and Griya Kembangan Asri protested again on October 3 opposing oil and gas exploration at the Lengowangi 1 well site in the village of Suci in the Manyar sub-district of Gresik, East Java.

They also called on the president of Indonesia through the related minister to review the exploration license belonging to the Joint Operating Body Pertamina-Petrochina East Java (JOB PPEJ) as exploration activities must be accompanied with an environmental impact analysis because of the high level of risk involved.

Forum coordinator Bambang Suryadi explained that they were protesting because they did not want to suffer the same fate as the victims of the Lapindo mud disaster. "We are calling on JOB PPEJ to make an agreement or Memorandum of Understanding before conducting exploration and exploitation activities", said another protester. (Kompas Cyber Media, 3/10/2006)

Anti-corruption protesters demand suspension of governor

Hundreds of protesters from the Peoples Anti-Corruption Alliance (ARAK) demonstrated in front of the offices of the Department of Home Affairs in Jakarta on October 4 urging the government to immediately suspend South East Sulawesi Governor Ali Mazi.

The call was made because Mazi has been named a defendant in a corruption case involving the extension of the Hilton Hotel's building permit. In speeches the protesters asked Home Affairs Minister Mohammad Ma'ruf to immediately send a letter to

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono asking for Mazi's temporary suspension. They also asked the government not to be discriminative in eradicating corruption and to avoid political intervention in corruption cases.

They also said that the situation in South East Sulawesi is becoming increasingly troubled since Mazi was named as suspect in the case because of acts of terror such as the torching of DPRD members' houses and the vandalising of the Association of Islamic Students (HMI) offices in Kendari that have indications of being politically motivated in order to stifle the voices of those campaigning to eradicate corruption. (Media Indonesia, 4/10/2006)

Action by hundreds of student marks Banten anniversary

Coinciding with the sixth anniversary of the creation of Banten Province, hundreds of students from the Banten Student Challenge Alliance (AMBM) held a demonstration on October 4 over the lack of development in the province.

The protesters, who came from a number of Banten student organisations such as Tirta University Student Executive Council (BEM), the Banten STIA BEM, the University of Indonesian Education (UPI) BEM, the Dipanegara Computer and Information Technology Institute (STMIK) BEM, the State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) BEM, the Banten Indonesian Law Students Senate Association (ISMAHI) and the Banten Indonesian Muslim Students Action Front (KAMMI), held the protest at the Banten DPRD in Serang.

"The goal of the people of Banten in separating from West Java six years ago was to improve prosperity and end backwardness, but to this day these hopes have still not become a reality", said action coordinator Muhamad Hafidz. The students said that socio-economic data for Banten showed that Banten is facing a number of problems such as malnutrition, hunger, polio and other diseases as well as corruption and thuggery that have slowed development. (Kompas Cyber Media, 4/10/2006)

Protesters cover mouths with tape over defamation trial

On October 4, some 20 students sat down in a line

with their mouths covered with masking tape in front of the South Jakarta District Court. They were demanding the release of Fahrur 'Paung' Rohman who is being tried for insulting President Yudhoyono.

The students, who came from the City Network (Jarkot) and wore black headbands with the writing "Release Paung", also brought a number of posters with a picture of Paung's in a jail cell and the writing "Release our comrade" and a large banner with "Release Paung".

"We have covered our mouths as a symbol of the gagging of the people's voice. This gagging is through the South Jakarta District Court and justice will not be upheld by bringing Paung to trial", said one of the students in a speech. (Detik.com, 4/10/2006)

NGO and social organisations' turn to protest the KPUD

After a demonstration several days ago by supporters of the one of the candidates for the governor of Banten, on October 5 it was the turn of the Banten Inter-Non Government and Social Organisations Forum to protest at the provincial offices of the General Elections Commission (KPUD).

The protesters, who were stopped some 50 meters from the KPUD as the road was blocked by hundreds of police, ended up giving speeches in which they declared that the KPUD was incapable of conducting the Banten 2006 election of regional heads (Pilkada).

"We don't support anyone, we only wish to convey a moral message and state that the KPUD's determination of candidates for Banten governor was legally flawed", said Forum chairperson Firman Santosa. The protesters also accused the KPUD of behaving like the Mafia in its tenders for the supply of logistics.

Ten representatives of the protesters were finally able to meet with the head of the KPUD, Didi Hidayat Laksana and convey their concerns. Laksana responded by saying they would learn from the protesters' suggestions but that they had already set out the schedule and stipulations for the elections. Following the meeting the protesters disbanded peacefully. (Kompas Cyber Media, 5/10/2006)

Students clash during protest in Kendari, two injured

Scores of students from the from the Student Representative Assembly (PMP) held a demonstration at the Sultan Qaimuddin State College of Islamic Religious Studies (STAIN) in Kendari on October 5 demanding that STAIN Rector Muhamad Daming K resign.

The protesters, who also sealed of the rectorate, said Daming should resign because he no longer has the student's trust, has enacted arbitrary policies and appointed particular companies to carry out projects.

The action, which has no been going on for the last three days, is opposed by the BEM students who support Daming. When scores of students tried to enter the rectorate and meet with Daming, a clash broke out between the opponents and supporters of Daming resulting in two students being injured. (Media Indonesia, 5/10/2006)

Greenpeace protests forest fires, peat land conversion

Protests against the clearing of Indonesia's forest by burning are continuing. This time it was the turn of activist from the international environmental group Greenpeace who demonstrated at the Environmental Department in Jakarta on October 5.

The Greenpeace activists were urging the government to halt the conversion of peat lands which they said was one of the reasons for the forest fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan, adding that one of the triggers for this was the department issuing peat land conversion licensees to businesses.

Officials at the Environment Department were startled when the activists started up a smoke machine inundating the offices with thick smoke like the fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan. The protesters also put up posters and banners calling for the government to immediately deal with the forest fires. (Liputan 6, 5/10/2006)

Jakarta mini-bus drivers strike over new busway corridor

Hundreds of Microlet M-01 mini-bus drivers plying the route between Kampung Malayu in South Jakarta

and Senen in Central Jakarta went on strike this morning. The drivers, who come from the Drivers Concern Forum were protesting work being done on Corridor V busway project between Kampung Malayu and Senen.

After parking their vehicles on the busway lane along Jl. Kramat Raya, the drivers gave speeches calling for a postponement of the construction and operation of Corridor V that they said would bankrupt them. Later this afternoon, the drivers plan to take their protests to the Jakarta Transportation Offices. (Liputan 6, 5/10/2006)

Banten students call for end to 'shameful acts'

Hundreds of students demonstrated at the Banten DPRD building on October 6 to coincide with a plenary hearing to discuss the up coming sixth anniversary of Banten province. The students were calling on candidates for governor and deputy governor in the coming election of regional heads not to commit shameful acts as has been happening up until now. (Liputan 6, 6/10/2006)

Yogyakarta traders protest road closure

Street traders, parking inspectors and buskers working on Jl. Kaliurang in the Central Java city of Yogyakarta demonstrated recently at the local DPRD against plans to close the road off. The protesters said that the planned closure, which is being done in the interests of the Gajah Mada University, would kill off their businesses. (Liputan 6, 6/10/2006)

Ambon primary school students protest

Lacking adequate facilities to study, hundreds of students from the Mashie 11 State Primary School in Ambon, Central Maluku, demonstrated at the DPRD on October 7. The protest was coordinated by their teachers.

At the DPRD the students took turns in reading out written speeches in which they complained about not having desks, seats or a permanent building to study in. The students said that their school had been burnt during the 1999 Ambon riots and had still not been rebuilt by the government, leaving them with nowhere to study. (Detik.com, 7/10/2006)

Coconut traders in Ternate clash with police

An attempt by civil service police to evict coconut traders in the North Maluku city of Ternate ended in a clash on October 7. The incident occurred when the officials tried to seize their goods and a clash as unavoidable. The clash did not last long after officials decided to cancel the raid even though they had been able to seize thousands of coconuts owned by the traders. (Liputan 6, 7/10/2006)

Students demand suspension of South East Sulawesi governor, again

Students from the city of Kendari demonstrated again at the South East Sulawesi DPRD on October 7 calling on assembly members to pressure President Yudhoyono to suspend Governor Ali Mazi. The calls were made in relation to Mazi's status as a defendant in a corruption case over the Hilton Hotel. (Liputan 6, 7/10/2006)

PT Naintex workers demand severance pay

More than 100 workers from PT Naintex demonstrated again at in front of the Gedung Sate Building complex in Bandung on October 7. They were calling in a promise made by members of the West Java DPRD to mediate in a dispute between the workers and the company. The workers, who said the company abandoned them eight months ago, are demanding the immediate payment of outstanding severance pay. (Liputan 6, 7/10/2006)