

Actions, demos, protests...

## **Indonesia Roundup #8 - March 27-April 2, 2006**

Saturday 22 April 2006, by [INDOLEFT News Service](#), [PRD](#) (Date first published: 2 April 2006).

### **Students in Malang oppose foreign intervention**

Around 500 students from the Peoples Opposition Front (BOR) demonstrated at the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) and the Malang city hall in East Java on March 27 calling on the government to oppose foreign intervention in the economy.

BOR spokesperson Tino Rahardian said that foreign domination is gripping Indonesia through capitalist agents in the form of foreign companies and transnational corporations to appropriate Indonesia's wealth. "Foreigners only exploit the sweat of the Indonesian nation", he said in a speech.

Rahardian gave as an example the agreements between the political elite and PT Freeport Indonesia in Papua, ExxonMobile in the Cepu Block and PT Newmont in North Sulawesi. BOR he said is therefore calling on the government to immediately withdraw the operational permits for Freeport, ExxonMobile and Newmont. (Tempo Interactive, 27/3/2006)

### **3,000 Sanyo workers go on strike in Depok**

Around 3,000 workers from PT Sanyo Jaya Components Indonesia in the Jakarta satellite city of Depok went on strike on the morning of March 29. "We are asking the company to implement article 46 of the joint work agreement on periodic wage increases", said the head of the Sanyo Indonesian Electronic-Electric and Metal Trade Union Federation, Iswan Abdulah.

"In earlier years these have always been met, [but] this year, so far it has not been done", said Abdulah. He added that the wage rises should take effect on January 1 each year.

Abdulah said that the company was using the excuse that internationally, PT Sanyo was currently suffering losses of as much as 233 billion Yen. "The company has in fact already submitted a proposal of as much as US\$21 billion to the Sanyo head offices, but it's not to be allocated for wage increases but rather for rationalisation", said Abdulah. (Tempo Interactive, 29/3/2006)

### **Sukoharjo workers reject labour law revisions**

Actions by workers against revisions to the 2003 labour law continue with more than 5,000 workers and factory employees in Sukoharjo, Central Java, demonstrating at the DPRD on March 28. The protesters, who want the revisions annulled - were urging the people's representatives to convey their demands to the central government.

Sukoharjo DPRD speaker Wardoyo Wijaya said assembly members supported the workers' demands and promised to struggle on their behalf. Wijaya said that the new law would only benefit business and turn workers into slaves. Despite the support of the DPRD protesters remained unsatisfied asking that their demands be conveyed immediately to the minister for labour and transmigration. A similar action was launched by hundreds of workers in Gresik, West Java. (Liputan 6, 29/3/2006)

### **More protesters join hunger strike in Semarang**

As of March 28, the number of hunger strikers opposing land evictions from settlements in the Cakrawala area of Semarang, Central Java, had reached 21 people. Residents plan to continue the action until the dispute is resolved without any land evictions.

The plan to demolish residents' homes follows a land dispute over some 1.2 hectares of land with a foundation owned by the Islamic mass organisation Muhammadiyah. Some 200 families had built homes and been living on the vacant land since 1988. Residents initially won an appeal in the Supreme Court however after a review the decision was later overturned in favor of the foundation. (Liputan 6, 29/3/2006)

### **Yogyakarta workers call for pro-foreign government to resign**

A demonstration by thousands of workers opposing

planned revisions to the labour law that was held in Central Java city of Yogyakarta on March 29, has called on the pro-foreign government to resign.

The action by the Yogyakarta Worker Alliance (ABY) began at the Yogyakarta Monument followed by a march to the DPRD, the local governor offices, Jl. Malioboro and ending at the Agung Building.

In a speech at the DPRD, in addition to opposing the labour law revisions they also called for the overthrow of the pro-foreign government. "We don't want workers' labour to just be exploited after which they are discarded and tossed aside. We have the right to demand wage increases as well as benefits and health allowances", exclaimed ABY secretary general Tigansolin.

They also demanded the repeal of a presidential decree on policies to improve the investment climate, a wage increase of 100 percent, opposition to mass dismissals and the called for the dissolution of foreign donor institutions.  
(Detik.com, 29/3/2005)

### **Thousands of workers in Bandung oppose labour law revisions**

On March 20, some 4,000 workers from a number of textile and garment industries in the West Java provincial capital of Bandung took to the streets to oppose revisions to the labour law. The workers - who came from the regencies of Cimahi, Bandung, Majalaya and Cisalengka - marched to the offices of the provincial government and the West Java DPRD to convey their demands.

The protesters held speeches and repeatedly sang the song "Hello Hello Bandung. A number of trade union flags were displayed and they brought posters with messages such as "Oppose the draft law on labour now" and "The draft law on labour is the mass murder of workers or the National Crusher Body".  
(Detik.com, 29/3/2006)

### **Candidate civil servants protest by sleeping on road**

Protests against the acceptance of candidate civil servants have taken place in several parts of the country. In Mamuju, West Sulawesi for example, dozens of residents took action by sleeping on the main road. They were disappointed because initially

they had been told they had passed the civil service exam only to later find their names had been removed.

The action, which was organised by residents from the Joint Forum (Forbes), called on the DPRD and the local government to explain the reasons for the cancellations.

Meanwhile, hundreds of assistant teachers from Balikpapan in East Kalimantan demonstrated at the city government offices. The teachers said they were disappointed because they had loyally served the government for decades yet not one of them had been accepted as a civil servant.

A similar action took place in Semarang where protesters from the Movement for Regional Transparency (GUTR) went to the offices of the East Java governor to demand the resignation of the heads of the civil servant acceptance committee. Protesters said the officials were responsible for the elimination of 2,801 honorary workers in the civil servant selection process. (Liputan 6, 30/3/2006)

### **Lhokseumawe residents protest over direct cash assistance**

As many as 200 residents from the sub-district of Banda Sakti demonstrated at the Lhokseumawe DPRD in North Aceh on March 30. The protesters, the majority of which were women, said that the distribution of direct cash assistance had not reach those who need it. The majority of recipients were well off while the poor had been neglected.

Members of the DPRD who met with the protesters promised to seek an explanation from the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Lhokseumawe government. Similar complaints had earlier been made by residents from eight villages in the Lhokseumawe area who also said the assistance to compensate for recent fuel price hikes had missed its target. (Liputan 6, 31/3/2006)

### **Bandung students oppose 'enforced leave'**

Dozens of students from the Bandung Islamic University held a protest on March 31 by setting fire to tyres and blockading the road in front of their campus. The students were protesting plans by

the university rector to suspend 20 students that have been unable to pay their university fees. The students were calling on the university to put forward the time limit for payment of tuition fees until final semester exams. (Tempo Interactive, 31/3/2006)

### **Yogyakarta students demonstrate against foreign intervention**

Dozens of students in Yogyakarta demonstrated on April 1 against foreign intervention in the management of natural resources in Indonesia. The protesters said that this intervention is a new form of the colonialism. The protest was held shortly after a visit to Indonesia by British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Demonstrations against Blair also took place in the city of Serang in Banten where protesters said that Blair and US President George Bush are the ringleaders behind the outbreak of war in Iraq. (Liputan 6, 1/4/2006)

### **Workers in Semarang oppose planned labour law revisions**

Hundreds of workers demonstrated in front of the official residence of the Central Java governor in Semarang on April 1. The workers were demanding that the government pay attention to their welfare and expressed their opposition to the planned revisions to the labour law. The protest was not held at the DPRD as is normal because it was a holiday and government offices were closed. (Liputan 6, 1/4/2006)

### **Rights activists demand release of death-row convicts**

Hundreds of people from the National Alliance for the Release of Tibo and Friends protested at the State Palace in Central Jakarta on April 1. They were demanding that President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) release three death row convicts from Poso - Pabianus Tibo, Dominggus Da Silva and Marinus Riwu.

The protesters brought banners reading "Free Tibo", "Investigate the Mastermind of the Poso III Riot" and "The Lives of Tibo, Riwu, Da Silva are in the hands of President SBY".

Budiman Sudjatmiko, a politician from the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle said "I'm not from Flores, I'm a Christian, but I offer [my] solidarity to Tibo", while asking the president to grant amnesty to the three.

The National Alliance is made up of the Muslim Social Alliance Defenders of Truth (AMMPK), the Institute for Public Research and Advocacy (Elsam), Indonesian Human Rights Watch (Imparsial), the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence (Kontras), the Flabamora Community of Indonesia, Patma Indonesia and the Jakarta Legal Aid Foundation. (Tempo Interactive, 1/4/2006)

### **Shop employees in West Java demonstrate**

On the morning of April 1, around 50 employees from Toko Serba Ada Yogya in Cirebon, West Java, demonstrated at the shop's parking lot against plans to disband their trade union.

According to one of the shop's employees, Burhan, the action was held as an act of solidarity in support of five employees who are also the heads of the Confederation of the All-Indonesian Workers Union for the shop who had been transferred without clear reasons.

"It appears that they were transferred because [they] persisted in defending employees who were arbitrarily dismissed by the management", said Burhan. The demonstration ended after the regional manager of the shop promised to pay attention to their grievances and that protesters would not incur any sanctions. (Tempo Interactive, 1/4/2006)

### **Workers Alliance challenges labour law revisions**

Actions opposing proposed revisions to the labour law continue to role on. On March 1 hundreds of workers from the Workers Challenge Alliance (ABM) held demonstration at PT Kawasan Berikat Nusantara in North Jakarta.

In speeches protesters said revisions to a number of articles will severely damage workers by removing employers' obligation to provide protection, welfare and health benefits to workers and drastic reductions in severance pay. (Liputan 6, 1/4/2006)

### **Vice presidential visit to Bogor marred by**

## **demonstration**

A visit by Vice President Jusuf Kalla to the West Java city of Bogor on April 1 was marred by a demonstration by students who set fire to tyres blocking the entourage's route and forcing them to take a different road.

Based on SCTV reports, the protesters who numbered around 100 students had wanted to meet with the vice president but were blocked by police. Not surprisingly students and police began pushing and shoving each other. Disappointed they then set fire to tyres and blocked the road.

In speeches the protesters demanded that the government take a firm position on carrying out reform and eliminating corruption. They also called on the government to oppose foreign interference in the country. (Liputan 6, 1/4/2006)

## **Residents from South-East Sulawesi demand new regency**

Dozens of representatives of residents from six regencies in the Muna Islands demonstrated on April 2 at the South-East Sulawesi DPRD. The protesters were demanding to be allowed to separate from the Muna regency on the grounds that in terms of development they have been left behind by other sub-districts due to a lack of attention by the Muna regional government.

In order to attract attention to the demonstration, protesters set fire to things and gave speeches. The deputy head of the DPRD who met with protesters promised that the Muna regent would meet with them next week. (Liputan 6, 2/4/2006)

## **Hundreds of students call for regent's resignation**

Hundreds of students in West Java demonstrated on April 2 demanding that the Pandeglang regent, Ahmad Dimiyati Natakusumah, resign as he had failed to side with ordinary people. The action coincided with the 132 anniversary of the Pandeglang regency. During the action students protested by sleeping on the road resulting in a traffic jam. They failed however to enter the offices of the Pandeglang DPRD because they were blockaded by police. (Liputan 6, 2/4/2006)

## **High school students go on strike in Pekanbaru**

Around 2,000 high school students in the Riau capital of Pekanbaru went on strike on April 1. They were protesting the dismissal of four teachers by the management of the Prayoga Foundation. The conflict started when the teachers demanded that the management of the foundation act transparently in the management of school funds. The foundation however responded by sacking the four teachers who they claimed were provocateurs. (Liputan 6, 2/4/2006)