

Actions, demos, protests...

## **Indonesia Roundup #11 - April 16-23, 2006**

Saturday 29 April 2006, by [INDOLEFT News Service](#), [PRD](#) (Date first published: 23 April 2006).

### **Makassar residents blockade road**

Following a decision by the Makassar municipal government in South Sulawesi to implement a one-way system on Jl. Sungai Saddang Baru, local residents responded by blocking the road for a length of one kilometer on April 17. They also set fire to tyres at either end of the road forcing police to redirect traffic though an alternative route.

One of the residents, Gasing, told Detik.com that they could not accept the government's decision because it would destroy local people's source of income. The majority of residents are street traders and shop owners and the road is one of the business and trade centres of Makassar. This is the second such protest with residents organising a similar blockade two weeks ago. (Detik.com, 17/4/2006)

### **Volunteer teachers in Depok protest**

Around 50 volunteer teachers protested at the Depok city hall in West Java on April 17 demanding to become civil servants. "We are honorary labourers, so [we] must be treated in accordance with the government regulation on candidate state civil servants", said Natalius, the head of the Depok City Education Concern Forum.

Natalius said that according to the regulation volunteer teachers must be guaranteed to become state civil servants by 2009. Suliana, a 35-year-old primary school teacher said that she had served as a sports teacher for four years but her honorarium was only 250,000 rupiah per month. "It's not enough, it is because of this that I must also work at a motorbike showroom", she said. (Tempo Interactive, 17/4/2006)

### **Former Texmaco employees clash with police**

A peaceful demonstration by around 1,000 former Texmaco employees on April 18 ended in chaos. The incident occurred at around 2.15pm when the former employees were holding an action at the department of finance in Central Jakarta demanding the immediate payment of outstanding severance pay.

The protest became headed when the action coordinator called on the protesters to enter the finance department building. When they tried to force their way past a police cordon protesters and police began pushing and shoving each other. Demonstrator then began throwing bamboo sticks then anything else they could lay their hands on.

Fortunately the confrontation did not last long and police were able to contain protesters after the action coordinator appealed to demonstrators not to be provoked. One protester was arrested in the incident. (Detik.com, 18/4/2006)

### **Blue Bird taxi drivers protest Bandung government decision**

Hundreds of Blue Bird taxi drivers demonstrated together with their children and wives in the West Java capital of Bandung on April 17. The protest was organised after a recent decision by the Bandung municipal government to cut the number of Blue Bird taxis operating in Bandung from 200 to 100. In speeches the protesters said the decision to cut the number of taxis by half will destroy their income. (Liputan 6, 18/4/2006)

### **Leprosy sufferers protest in Makassar**

Dozens of leprosy sufferers in from Jongaya, Tamalanrea and Makassar in South Sulawesi demonstrated on April 18 over the distribution of direct cash subsidies to compensate for last years fuel price increases.

They were protesting against government officials at the Makassar Central Bureau of Statistics because they had failed to register leprosy sufferers as recipients of the cash subsidies. Based on SCTV's observations, out of the 130 leprosy sufferers in Jongaya not one has been registered by the BPS or the Makassar municipal government despite the fact that they work as beggars. (Liputan 6, 18/4/2006)

### **Makassar students protest draft law on the TNI**

Dozens of students from the Anti-RUU TNI Student Circle demonstrated at the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in Makassar on April 18. The protesters were opposing the draft law on the Indonesian military (RUU-TNI) because they say it will flow on to repressive military acts against civilians.

On arriving at the DPRD the students immediately tried to enter the building through the main gate but were blocked by security personnel. Unable to enter the students held speeches. "The TNI as an institution that is obliged to safeguard national defense, should be neutral and a-political", said action coordinator Ibnu Hajar.

Still unable to enter students began pushing and shoving security personnel and the situation only calmed down after an assembly member met with the students. The dialogue did not last long however and the students, who were angered because the member would not give an clear response to their demands, left and closed off one half of the road. The students even chased a TNI owned truck that passed nearby. They later moved to a nearby intersection and set fire to tyres before returning to their respective campuses at around 1pm. (Detik.com, 18/4/2006)

### **Jambi farmers call on regent to fulfil election promises**

Hundreds of residents from the Bungku Village in the Batanghari regency of Jambi protested on April 18 calling on Regent Syahirsyah to fulfil the promises he made during his election campaign five months ago. One of the demands was for a resolution to be found to a protracted dispute between farmers and the palm oil company PT Asiatic Persada. As of Tuesday evening the protesters had yet to meet with Syahirsyah who is believed to be in Jakarta. (Liputan 6, 19/4/2006)

### **Residents call for village head to be sacked**

Around 150 residents from the Petunjungan Village in the Bulakamba sub-district of Brebes Regency, Central Java, protested at the local DPRD on April 18. They were demanding that the head of their village be dismissed accusing him of manipulating direct cash subsidies for his own interests. Residents complained that deductions of between 50-150,000 rupiah had been taken from the subsidies.

(Liputan 6, 19/4/2006)

### **Bekasi workers oppose revisions to labour law**

Demonstrations against revisions to the labour law continue. On April 20 thousands of workers in the West Java city of Bekasi protested at the Bekasi DPRD condemning the government for not siding with workers. The protest ended after the speaker of the DPRD received demonstrators. (Liputan 6, 20/4/2006)

### **Nurses occupy hospital in Medan**

Around 51 nurses demonstrated and occupied the Santha Elizabet hospital in the North Sumatra provincial capital of Medan on April 20. The nurses were protesting because they said they had been arbitrarily dismissed after taking part in a civil service entrance exam. The nurses were demanding to be re-employed saying that they had served the hospital for many years. (Liputan 6, 20/4/2006)

### **Meeting over land dispute ends in chaos**

A meeting between farmers from the North Mamuju regency and representatives of the company PT Unggul that was held at the North Mamuju DPRD in West Sulawesi on April 19 ended in chaos. The farmers were accusing the company of taking over 780 hectares of oil palm land owed by farmers. PT Unggul however countered the farmers' claims by accusing them of annexing the land. (Liputan 6, 20/4/2006)

### **Hereditary landowners protest at Bitung district court**

Dozens of hereditary landowners of disputed land being used as a depot by the state-owned oil company Pertamina protested at the Bitung district court in North Sulawesi on April 20. They were urging the court to evict Pertamina from the land because the court had still not executed a 2004 Supreme Court decision that found in favour of the hereditary owners. The court is refusing to execute the order as the dispute is still being negotiated. (Liputan 6, 20/4/2006)

### **Poso residents demand compensation**

On April 20, around 300 residents from North Pamona in the Poso regency of Central Sulawesi protested again at the site of a hydroelectric generator project at the Sulewana Village. They were demanding

compensation for their land after they were evicted to make way for the project. Responding to the action, a spokesperson for the company PT Bukaka Utama promised they would resolve the issue within two weeks. (Liputan 6, 20/4/2006)

### **Plywood farmers 'close' bank in Banjarmasin**

Around 70 former employees of PT Guci held an action at Banjarmasin branch of the Bank Negara Indonesia in South Kalimantan on April 20. They were demanding that the bank release funds resulting from the sale of PT Guci's assets that were auctioned off following bankruptcy. The former plywood company employees, who said that they had been dismissed two years ago but PT Guci had failed to pay them severance pay, then "closed" the bank. (Liputan 6, 20/4/2006)

### **Workers blockage Pulogadung traffic circle**

Around 300 workers and activists from the East Jakarta Worker and Student Alliance blockaded a traffic circle in the Pulogadung industrial zone in East Jakarta on April 20. The action was held as part of preparations for a national general strike on May Day. "The May 1 action is to [demand] the annulment of Law Number 13/2006 [on Labour] and the formulation of a new law", said action coordinator Jumisih.

The alliance represents a coalition of trade unions including the Indonesian Automotive Trade Union, the Jonsons Trade Union, the Automotive Trade Union Forum, the Indonesia 92 Trade Union, the Indonesia Youth Struggle forum and the Democratic Student Network. The group plans to hold a joint action tomorrow with an alliance from North Jakarta at the Cakung industrial zone in East Jakarta. (Tempo Interactive, 20/4/2006)

### **Palembang bus drivers protest over new routes**

Hundreds of bus drivers in the city of Palembang, South Sumatra, demonstrated on April 20 at the Palembang mayor's office demanding the restoration of formerly designated public transport routes. The drivers said that with the new routes that have been in operation for two months their income has declined dramatically. They are threatening to go on strike and leave passengers stranded if their demands are not met. (Liputan 6, 21/4/2006)

### **Residents blockade road leading to rubber plantation**

Hundreds of residents from the Tambangan village in the Bulan Tengah Suku Ulu sub-district of Musirawas in South Sumatra blockaded a road leading to a plantation owned by PT Musi Hutan Persada on April 20. The residents were angry because the company has failed to fulfil a promise to establish rubber plantations for some 103 families and instead their land has been turned into an acacia tree plantation. They are also disappointed because the company called in fully armed Mobile Brigade troops to intimidate residents. (Liputan 6, 21/4/2006)

### **Rangkasbitung Market traders reject new rental rates**

A protest by traders from the Rangkasbitung Market in Lebak, Banten regency, who were opposing new kiosk rental rates almost ending in chaos yesterday. Police prohibited the traders from holding an action at the offices of the Lebak regent. At the Rangkasbitung Market meanwhile, thousands of kiosks were closed and abandoned by traders in protest over the new rates. (Liputan 6, 21/4/2006)

### **Housewives set fire to tyres and blockade road**

Dozens of farmers set fire to tyres and blockaded the entrance to the Naringgul Kampung in Cisolok in the West Java city of Sukabumi on April 20. The protest was triggered after the plantation company PT Perkebunan Nusantara VIII cut down thousands of trees owned by residents on the pretext of using the land for a rubber plantation.

Based on SCTV reports, the majority of protesters were housewives who that the trees represented their main source of income. In speeches protesters said that the company's actions showed it had no sense of right or wrong and had violated an earlier promise to only cut down a certain number of trees. (Liputan 6, 21/4/2006)

### **Residents blockade Jakarta toll road**

On April 23 residents from the Pamahan in the village of Jatimekar blockaded access to the outer Jakarta toll road circle at Jatiasih. The residents said they would keep the two access lanes closed until the company PT Jasamarga and the public works department pay compensation for land owned by the late Matin Anam.

The department of public works said in a letter that compensation for the land cleared for the toll road project was paid in 1997 and therefore there is no need to pay additional compensation as demanded by residents. The blockade has now been in place for two days. (Kompas Cyber Media, 22/4/2006)

### **Komnas HAM offices pelted with rotten eggs**

A number of people from the Indonesian Association of the Families of Missing Persons (Ikohi) pelted the offices of the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) with rotten eggs on April 21. They said they were disappointed with the commission's performance in dealing with cases of missing persons and victims of violence.

They called on Komnas HAM to immediately release findings of their investigations and to have the courage to summon and question those suspected of being involved including military and police personnel.

The protesters had wanted to meet with commission chair Abdul Hakim Garuda Nusantara but he was not at the offices so they instead sealed off Nusantara's office on the second floor. The families of the victims say they plan to continue to protesting at Komnas HAM until they receive a satisfactory explanation about the disappearance of their family members. (Liputan 6, 22/4/2006)

### **Residents threaten to boycott local elections**

Hundreds of victims of a land eviction protested at the Makassar DPRD on April 22. The demonstrators demanded that the local government pay them suitable compensation for their land. They threatened that if their demands were not met they would boycott the elections for the governor and vice governor next year. (Liputan 6, 22/4/2006)

### **Presidential visit to Makassar greeted by protests**

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's arrival for a two-day visit to Makassar on April 22 was greeted by protests by around 200 students from the Association of Islamic Students (HMI) and the Student Executive Council (BEM). The students were accusing the government of being unable to overcome the problems of poverty, the economy, politics and security.

The students also called on the government to complete the process of reformasi, solve horizontal conflicts in various parts of the country and resolve corruption cases that have occurred in the regional and central government.

Initially the protests failed to disrupt the visit but when students attempted to approach the Aryaduta Imperial Hotel where the president was staying, they were blockaded by tight security surrounding the hotel. At one stage in the demonstration students even hijacked a fuel truck that was passing by that was only released after three hours. (Liputan 6, 22/4/2006)