

Indonesia Roundup #7 - March 20-26, 2006

Saturday 29 April 2006, by [INDOLEFT News Service](#), [PRD](#) (Date first published: 26 March 2006).

Students protest exploitation of local resources

Dozens of students from the province of Bangka-Belitung demonstrated on March 19 over the continued exploitation of natural resources in their area.

They said that the exploitation by foreign companies has led to the destruction of more than 50 percent of the land in the province and resulted in thousands of farmers losing their jobs. They also said that local people had not benefited from the revenue generated by the exploitation and that it has only been enjoyed by the bureaucrats and government officials. (Liputan 6, 19/3/2006)

Hundreds of trishaw drivers in Aceh protest BRR

Around 200 people from the Aceh Three Wheeled Association (Pertisa), Up Link Indonesia and the Udeep Beusare Network demonstrated at the Aceh-Nias Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR) on March 20. Arriving on hundreds of motorised trishaws, they were demanding that the government pay attention to people renting homes.

They said that the BRR tends to pay more attention to the rich who own more than one house while it is still unclear if victims of the tsunami disaster who do not own land and are only able to rent houses will be given assistance.

In a written press release the protesters called on the government to prioritise giving land and houses to those who had neither and that the government only give one house to each family. They also said that the construction of houses must emphasise a direct role for people rather than contractors and demanded the formation of an independent team to monitor BRR projects. (Aceh Kita, 20/3/2006)

Students protest against water rate hike in North Maluku

Dozens of students demonstrated at the Ternate

mayor's office in North Maluku on March 20 in protest against increases to drinking water rates that were arbitrarily set by the local state-owned West Halmahera water company.

During the action protesters threatened to hold a hunger strike if the water rate increases were not canceled. The water company however, has insisted on maintaining the new rates because of increases in operational costs following the fuel price hikes last year. (Liputan 6, 20/3/2006)

Manado traders protest illegal fees

Hundreds of traders from markets in the North Sulawesi city of Manado protested at the mayor's office on March 20 over illegal fees collected by the management of PD Manado Markets. Ramon Pakaya, one of the directors of PD Manado Markets denied the charges claiming that the action was only a expression of anger by a former PD Manado Markets director who was made non-active over a morality case. (Liputan 6, 21/3/2006)

Banten journalists condemn police violence

On March 20, a number of journalist went to the Banten police headquarters in Serang to condemn violence committed by the Mobile Brigade against journalists were covering the riots in Papua. During their action they brought posters with messages condemning the incidents that left three journalists wounded. They were also demanding that the case be thoroughly investigated. (Liputan 6, 21/3/2006)

Journalists in Maluku protest police violence

Dozens of print and electronic media journalists held a protest in front of the Sirimau police headquarters in Ambon, Maluku, on March 20. The action, which was organised by the Maluku Television Journalists Forum, was protesting brutal actions by rogue police officers against a number of journalists covering the Freeport protests in Papua. In speeches the journalists called on Indonesian police chief Sutanto to be serious about investigating the perpetrators. (Liputan 6, 21/3/2006)

Civil servants in Pemalang demonstrate

Failing to become state civil servants, dozens of

candidate civil servants in Pemalang, Central Java, demonstrated against the local government. They were angry because initially, their names had been included in the announcement of the results on the Internet and print media as having passed the selection process. In the second announcement however, which was the result of a decision by the Pemalang regent, their names had been removed. (Liputan 6, 21/3/2006)

Residents question election verification process

Around 200 residents demonstrated at the Sragen Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in Central Java on March 20. They were calling on the DPRD to ask the Sragen National Elections Commission to clarify the verification process of two candidates for the position of Sragen regent that passed the selection process. The residents said that they suspected that one of the pair of candidates had used a false diploma. (Liputan 6, 21/3/2006)

Students demand KPK take over corruption case in Banten

Around 50 students from the Banten Student Communication Forum held an action on March 20 in Jakarta demanding that the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) take over corruption cases in the province that are currently in the hands of the state prosecutor.

"For example, the Karang Sari corruption cases, which for two years has stalled at the chief public prosecutor", said action coordinator M. Romli in a speech at the KPK offices in Jakarta. The protesters suspect that because the Karang Sari case involves government officials it has not been taken to court. Police tightly guarded the protest and six student representatives were received by the KPK public relations officer. (Tempo Interactive, 21/3/2006)

Bekasi primary school students protest poor sanitation

Hundreds of students from the Jatiwaringin I and II state junior high school in Bekasi, West Java, went out into the streets on March 21 protesting the Bekasi government's lack of concern about the environment. Together with teachers, they were angry because the area around their school is littered with heaps of rubbish.

The action proceeded peacefully with protesters marched out of the school carrying brooms and other cleaning equipment. Like other protesters, the youths brought banners and a loud speaker to convey their demands. The action was centered on the side of a road near their school and created a traffic jam with police even having to lend a hand to maintain security. The students then marched to the Pondok Gede sub-district offices to continue the protest. (Liputan 6, 21/3/2006)

Acehnese refugees demand clean water supply

Hundreds of refugees living in barracks in the Mon Geudong village in the Banda Sakti sub-district of Lhokseumawe demonstrated at the offices of the Regional Housing and Infrastructure Agency on March 21 demanding to be provided with clean water.

The protesters said that for the last three days, the 225 families or 960 people living in the barracks had not been able to obtain clean water. There has not even been water to wash before prayers and because the barracks could not be cleaned there was unpleasant smell.

"Now, [we] don't bath, there is no water to wash rice. So what else [can we do] if [we] don't protest", said Kartika when speaking to Aceh Kita. "The refugees that were here before got a supply of clean water every day, as many as three water trucks. But now it's stopped, because funding for fuel for the trucks has been stalled", said Kartika. Another refugee said that because of the lack of water they had been forced to sell food aid such as bread and rice to purchase water at 4,000 rupiah per jerrycan.

Kartika said that the problem should not have occurred since Aceh is in a period of reconstruction and non-government organisation assistance was in abundance. "But [we] don't know yeah, why the Lhokseumawe government can't even resolve small problems. Let alone housing assistance", he said. (Aceh Kita, 22/3/2006)

Rubber processing factory workers demonstrate in Sumatra

Feeling that they have been treated unfairly, hundreds of workers from a rubber-processing factory in the Banyuasin regency of South Sumatra

demonstrated at the governor's offices on March 24. They said that there had been violations of their basic rights such as the failure to pay the regional minimum wage for rubber plantations. The workers said they were only being paid 20,000 rupiah a day and deductions were still being taken for this. (Liputan 6, 24/3/2006)

Assistant teachers demonstrate in East Lampung

Hundreds of assistant teachers from East Lampung in South Sumatra demonstrated at the DPRD on March 24 after failing to be allowed to sit an exam as candidate state civil servants. They said that the government had discriminated against them because of requirements over age limits and period of employment. (Liputan 6, 24/3/2006)

Village heads protest Tegal regent

Hundreds of village heads went to the offices of the Tegal regent in Central Java on March 24 threatening to boycott government activities if their demands for revisions to the regional autonomy law are not granted. The village heads also threatened to go the offices of the minister for home affairs on April 3 even though a letter has already been issued forbidding village heads from demonstrating in Jakarta. (Liputan 6, 24/3/2006)

Kudus journalists protest violence against the press

At least 30 journalists from the Kudus Journalist Communication Forum in Central Java demonstrated on March 24 demanding an end to violence against working journalists.

"We strongly condemn acts of violence that are directed against journalists", said action coordinator Edi Supratno. As well as giving speeches, the journalists unfurled banners and posters and distributed leaflets containing a list of journalists that have been the victims of violence.

The demonstrators were protesting the recent incidents of violence against journalists that have taken place in Abepura, Papua, when a clash broke out between security forces and students at the Cenderawasih University last week. (Tempo Interactive, 24/3/2006)