

Actions, demos, protests...

Indonesia Roundup #18 - June 5-11, 2006

Sunday 18 June 2006, by [INDOLEFT News Service](#), [PRD](#) (Date first published: 11 June 2006).

Papuan activists protest at Plaza 89

Dozens of activist from the West Papua Pepera Front protested again at the Plaza 89 Building in South Jakarta on June 5 demanding the closure of PT Freeport Indonesia.

During the action they demanded the unconditional release of those arrested during the earlier protests at Plaza 89, Abepura and the 62-63 military incident, for an immediate tripartite dialogue between the Papuan people, the Indonesian government and PT Freeport and for the opening up of democratic space and end to TNI (Indonesian military) and police repression in West Papua.

As a result of the protest the flow of traffic in the direction of Menteng was blocked as the slow-lane that passes in front of Plaza 89 was closed. The action was tightly guarded by police who formed up in front of the building in two ranks in anticipation of an attack on the offices. (Detk.com, 5/6/2006)

Demonstration in Manado rejects mining companies

Around 500 people from the Social Alliance Against Mining Waste (AMMLT) commemorated World Environment Day in the North Sulawesi city of Manado on June 5. The protest was organised by the North Sulawesi Indonesian Environment Forum (Walhi) to oppose the operations of two mining companies, PT Meares Soputan Mining and PT Hamparan Pasir Besi. They also demanded that PT Newmont Minahasa Raya be prosecuted for polluting the Buyat Bay.

"We don't want a repeat of the Buyat case", said one of the protesters referring to the operations of Meares Soputan Mining. The alliance, which also presented a statement to the North Sulawesi governor, said that they want an end to the use of

submarine tailing disposal and the disposal of mining wastes into the sea. (Tempo Interactive, 5/6/2006)

Hundreds of ceramic workers demonstrate in Probolinggo

Hundreds of workers from a number of ceramic factories in the East Java town of Probolinggo protested on June 5 over the recent dismissal of fellow factory workers. They blockaded the main highway between Probolinggo and Lumajang resulting in a two kilometre traffic jam. (Liputan 6, 5/6/2006)

Makassar students continue protests against university

Student protests against a prohibition on demonstrations by the Makassar State Islamic University rectorate in South Sulawesi continued on June 5 with students setting fire to tyres and blockading roads. The students say that the policy "amputates" social control and the democratic process on campus. (Liputan 6, 5/6/2006)

Police clash with public transport drivers

Hundreds of drivers from the Sriwijaya University Public Transport Trade Union (SBTA) clashed with police in the South Sumatra city of Palembang on June 5. As a result of the incident four drivers and a police officer were injured and two of the protesters were arrested.

The incident occurred when drivers were protesting at the South Sumatra public relations offices demanding changes to existing bus routes. Because the head of the office was not prepared to meet with the drivers they responded by blockading the road causing a three-hour traffic jam. When the protesters ignored a call by police to leave, police officers tried to forcibly disband the protest and a clash broke out. (Liputan 6, 5/6/2006)

Fisherpeople blockade road in North Jakarta

On June 6, around 1000 fisherpeople from the Marunda, Cilincing and Lagoa areas of North Jakarta held a long march to the industrial zone where the company PT Boga Sari is located. The protesters said they planned to blockade the Cilincing highway and

would hold a demonstration in front of the company offices.

The fisherpeople started the action in the Cilincing area at 9am. As a result traffic in the area was paralysed with traffic jams estimated to be as long as five kilometres. "We will blockade all the roads", shouted the protesters. (Tempo Interactive, 6/6/2006)

Makassar students oppose fee increase

A demonstration by students from the Makassar Bongayya College of Economic and Management ended in chaos on June 8. The demonstrators were opposing a 20 percent increase to education management contributions. The students were also protesting the rectorate for allowing students to purchase credits above the 24-semester credit system, a policy they say is the same as the commercialisation of education and will cause financial losses to students. (Liputan 6, 8/6/2006)

Residents protest diversion of river channel

Hundreds of family heads from the Dead River village in Medan, North Sumatra, almost clashed with housing construction workers on the Deli River flood plain at Gang Merdeka on June 7. The incident took place shortly after they had been protesting over a diversion of the Deli River channel being carried out by developers.

During the action they hijacked heavy equipment owned by the developers and brought construction activities to a halt. They also pelted construction workers with rocks and wood. According to the protesters, the diversion that is being carried out for the expansion of land for luxury housing, will threaten the safety of 360 families living along the river edge. They also said that it would cause their area to be susceptible to flooding. (Liputan 6, 7/6/2006)

Human rights victims celebrate Suharto's birthday

Cakes and candles with the figure 85 adorned the South Jakarta District Court during a celebration of former President Suharto's 85th birthday organised by the Committee for the Victims of Human Rights Violations (KPP-HAM) on June 8.

As part of the event, a male activists appeared bare chested with his entire body covered with a picture of Suharto. Using his mouth, he wrote the words "Happy birthday, have a long and healthy life, so that [you] can be brought to justice quickly" on a 3x1 metre white cloth. There was also a recycle symbol upon which was written the years Suharto committed human rights violations: 1965, 1974, 1989, 1991, 1996 and finally 1998.

Protesters also wore a variety of bamboo head coverings with pictures of the victims of human rights violations — one of which was human rights activist Munir. A wreath of red and yellow flowers with the writing "Families of the Victims Bring Suharto to Justice" was also handed over to the public prosecutor following a hearing of a pre-trial suit against Suharto. (Detik.com, 8/6/2006)

Students give Suharto a gift for his 85th birthday

A seat made of black coloured steel with a bamboo frame photograph of Suharto and a wreath of flowers with the writing "I'm ready to be tried". This was the gift that was presented to Suharto by students on his 85th birthday. The students also sent a wreath of flowers with the writing "Happy 85th birthday, get well quickly so you can be tried soon".

The action was organised by around 20 people from the Try Suharto Movement (GAS) who held a march from the Suropati Gardens toward Suharto's residence on Jl. Cendana. GAS is made up of activists from the Student Action Front for Reform and Democracy (FAMRED), the Socialist Student Movement (GMS), the University of Indonesia Student Action Front (FAM), the National Student League for Democracy (LMND) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PRD).

Upon arriving at Jl. Teuku Umar they were blocked by around 100 police. As a result they were forced to halt but still gave speeches demanding that the ruler of the New Order regime be tried. "We are going to Cendana to give a gift to Suharto", said Lalu Herman from LMND which was greeted by shouts of "Try Suharto, if not, SBY-JK resign". (Detik.com, 8/6/2006)

Anti-Suharto protesters arrested in Jakarta

Around 20 students who were protesting on Jl. Teuku

Umar in Central Jakarta were arrested by police on June 9 for violating the 1998 law on freedom of expression.

The students, who came from the Try Suharto Movement, had intended to go to Suharto's residence on Jl. Cendana but were blocked by around 100 police on Jl. Teuku Umar.

At 5pm, police ordered the students to leave. After three warnings however, the students had still not dispersed and instead started singing "not afraid anymore, not afraid anymore!". Around 100 police officers then moved in and forced 20 or so students into a police holding van who were then taken to the Central Jakarta district police station. (Kompas Cyber Media, 9/6/2006)

No end to demands for Suharto to be tried

Protests demanding that Suharto be tried continued on June 10 when dozens of students from the People's Hall for the Trial of Suharto (Brantas) demonstrated in front of the Christian University of Indonesia in Central Jakarta.

In a speech, Brantas action coordinator Riki called for Suharto and his cronies to be tried and for President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Vice President Jusuf Kalla to resign because had failed to carry out reform. "Suharto and his cronies should be arrested and their assets must be surrendered to the state [and used] for the interests of the people", he said.

Riki also said that issuing the order to end the investigation into the Suharto case demonstrated the failure of the Yudhoyono government. Giving amnesty to the ruler of the New Order regime is a betrayal by Yudhoyono and Kalla against the Indonesian people and the spirit of the 1998 reform movement.

Aside from calling for Suharto to be tried and his assets sized, Brantas also condemned repressive actions by security forces and accused the Yudhoyono government of bringing suffering to the Indonesian people. They also called on all Indonesian people to unite to resist the Yudhoyono regime and the New Order. (Detik.com, 10/6/2006)

Students protest over corruption in Riau

Dozens of students and youths from the Youth Movement for the Elimination of Riau Corruption (GPPKR) and the Anti Corruption Students Union (Kampak) demonstrated at the offices of the Riau chief public prosecutor in the provincial capital of Pekanbaru on June 9. As well as protesting the poor performance of the Riau public prosecutor they also set fire to a black bier to symbolise their disappointment with delays in corruption cases in Riau.

In speeches the protesters said that the Riau chief public prosecutor has been unable to carry out his function of arresting corrupters in Riau. The evidence for this is that out of the many suspects that have been named not one has been arrested.

"We see that the Riau chief public prosecutor has gone into suspended animation in carrying out his duties. Because not one Riau corrupter has been thrown into jail", said action coordinator Andi during a break in a speech.

The students said that if the prosecutor's office continues to be unable to arrest and jail the corrupters they will give the chief prosecutor a gift of a hen. "The hen will represent students' disappointment with the performance of the Riau chief public prosecutor", said one of the protesters. (Media Indonesia, 10/6/2006)

Residents protest inauguration of Tuban regent, deputy regent

Hundreds of people from the Tuban People's Forum (FRT) demonstrated at the Tuban Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in East Java on June 9. They were calling on the DPRD to cancel the inauguration of recently elected Tuban regent and deputy regent Haeny Relawati and Lilik Suhardjono because an appeal submitted to the Supreme Court over the election of regional heads is still being heard. (Liputan 6, 10/6/2006)

Fisherpeople protest over pollution in North Jakarta

For the second time now, hundreds of fisherpeople from Cilincing and Marunda in North Jakarta protested at Bogasari Flour Mills in Tanjung Priok on June 9. The fisherpeople, who come from the Jakarta Fisherpeople's Communication Forum (FKNJ) were demanding that the corn flour company take

responsibility for the pollution that has been damaging North Jakarta beaches.

The fisherpeople said the pollution is being caused by waste from the Bogasari factory and has killed off their green mussel and fish farms located in the vicinity of the beaches. The company has denied that it has contributed to the pollution saying that other companies that use chemicals are responsible.

The demonstrators said that they would continue to protest until the company pays material compensation of 2 billion rupiah. Conversely, the company has said it will sue the fisherpeople if they continue their protests on the grounds that they have damaged the company's good name and disrupted the operations of the factory. (Liputan 6, 10/6/2006)

Residents accuse newly elected regent of corruption

Hundreds of residents from the Central Tapanuli district in North Sumatra have demanded that the government cancel the inauguration of newly elected regent Tuani Lumbantobing that is to be held on June 12. They accused Pohan and the deputy regent of colluding with the local National Elections Commission. The resident's demands were conveyed during a protest at the offices of the North Sumatra governor on June 9. (Liputan 6, 10/6/2006)

Residents go on rampage over unpaid cash subsidies

Dozens of residents from the village of Pappolo ran riot at Bone regional offices of the National Statistics Agency (BPS) in South Sulawesi on June 10. The angry protesters smashed office windows because the BPS had not entered their names as recipients of direct cash subsidies whereas they had been declared eligible to receive the funds when they were registered by village officials. The demonstrators finally calmed down after a BPS official promised to look into their complaint. (Liputan 6, 10/6/2006)

Attorney General's visit to Semarang greeted with protests

The arrival of Attorney General Abdul Rahman Saleh in the East Java provincial capital of Semarang was greeted by a student protest at the chief public prosecutor's offices on June 10. The protesters were demanding that the public prosecutor be serious in

handling local and national corruption cases including the Suharto case. The students also said they were disappointed by the Attorney General's order to stop the investigation into Suharto, which they said went against the mandate of reform. (Liputan 6, 10/6/2006)

Residents plant banana trees in middle of road

Residents from the North Samarinda sub-district of East Kalimantan planted banana trees in the middle of a road at the village of Pelita on June 10. Residents held the action to protest the poor state of the road that should have been repaired by the local government. Because the road was full of banana trees, four wheeled vehicles were unable to pass. The protesters said they were determined to defend the trees until the Samarinda municipal government carries out the repairs. (Liputan 6, 10/6/2006)

Veterans League demands compensation

Hundreds of members of the South Kalimantan Veterans League and their families protested in the South Kalimantan provincial capital of Banjarmasin on June 11. They were demanding compensation from the local government for their homes and land in Martapura, Banjar regency, which were taken over for the construction of a Haj embarkation building and a mall. (Liputan 6, 11/6/2006)