

Indonesia: Brief Profile of The Working People's Association (PRP)

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Brief Profile of The Working People's Association (PRP/Perhimpunan Rakyat Pekerja)

Background

PRP was founded in the National Meeting for Left Unification on May 13th - 15th 2004 in Surakarta, Solo, Indonesia. All participants in the Meeting unanimously agreed on the formation of the Preparation Committee for Unification which will work nationally. This preparation is henceforth called the Working People's Association - Preparation Committee (KP-PRP).

It was a meeting designed to be the forum to exercise the will to unite among many activists of mass organization — from student movement, progressive intellectuals, popular culture artists, peasant activists, and trade unionists. From 15 provinces in Indonesia they came and rounded up together in the spirit of gathering the collective energy and strength towards a task to response the actual problems of political reality, which were interpreted as:

First, It is a present fact that the power of national bourgeoisies and the neoliberal are the ones that really have led the way of democratic process in Indonesia in recent years since the end of authoritarian regime of New Order. They have arranged the framework for the governance, moreover now they have even been able to intervene against so many agendas of the civil society organizations.

Second, in general the strength of social movements has been weakened in the sense that the condition which enables them to develop so that they can be the bargaining power of the people has been carefully controlled by the regime. Many social movements have become some sort of state auxiliaries or were integrated into the power structure of the national bourgeoisie and some even become the proponent of the neoliberal regimes.

Third, the process of political reforms have failed to change the conservative character of the power structure of national bourgeoisie, which have led to open the opportunity for the capitalist to exploit and repress the working class, peasants, fishermen, and women.

In short, among the founders of PRP share the same analysis that the present democratic problems of Indonesia is the domination of capitalist class in the political arena while at the same time there is an absence of the working class power in politics. The meeting raised a deep concern for the fact that, amid the rising politics of the ruling class, the working people is losing their identity and unable to recognizes their own interest in face of the political decision of the government which sides with the capital owner. In other words, the Surakarta National Meeting conclude that rebuilding the class politics of the working people is an immediate task to be carried on by the organization that will be borne out of the meeting.

PRP then held its first congress on September 2006 in Jakarta. Among the many important resolutions agreed on the Congress, one of the most important was the resolution to put the

organization's program further as well as to enforce PRP's program to build a working class' party. The party building strategy of PRP was to be developed in further national meetings of PRP. The second congress was held on January 2009, and achieved a lot of progress in terms of expansions of branches, increasing in membership, and bigger influenced had been acknowledge by many other social movements groups - from trade unions, feminists, human rights, up to environmental activists - due to many of our intensive and persistence propaganda in attacking capitalism as the source of so many suffering and deprivation experience by the common people in Indonesia. PRP's platform to endorse unification have also been recognized in our practice to lead by example in form of developing political alliances among social movement groups - the latest one is the biggest with the name, Indonesian People Opposition Front (FOR Indonesia) - as the means to fight against so many neoliberal policies of the Indonesian government. Alliances that we have built always in national scope, so we can expand the influence and outreach to many groups that resist in local level.

Fundamentals and Principles

Our fundamentals are the scientific principles of socialism and staying close to the mass line. Our principles of action are class struggle, which are:

1. A politics of class will always fuse the proletariat to the economical, political, and theoretical power (in ideology and consciousness).
2. The struggle for power in economy, politics, and ideology is done through the organization of proletarian party, however when the time comes, the People's Council will be the only tools of the proletariat to hold real power.
3. A party can only be called a proletarian party if and only if it is dominated by the proletariat. Other classes inside the party are under the leadership of the proletariat and focus their struggle for the victory of the proletariat.
4. One of the conditions for this domination of the proletariat is on the "class composition" in the organization; a proletarian party must be able within itself to be dominated by the proletariat.
5. Since the majority of the proletariat is under the hegemony of the ideology of the ruling class, then a vanguard organization is needed, which will carry the burden to further the consciousness of the proletariat in their back.
6. To become a vanguard, the organization must be centralized in themselves, a centralism which enables it to move in one body and soul. However, this centralism cannot based merely on sole authority to the central leadership, but must be based on a common understanding on the actions that should be taken in certain situation.
7. A class struggle can only be a true power if it is also based on internationalism.

Four Enemies of the Working People

The National Meeting in Solo (2004) also decided on the Four Enemies of the Working People, the four powers which will obstruct the working people's struggle in reaching for their power and (through their power) obtaining prosperity. They are:

- 1) The Ruling bourgeoisie,
- 2) Imperialism,

3) Militarism, whereas in Indonesian context it still become the latent threats to democracy and progressive politics, and

4) The Illusion of religious fundamentalism, whereas we conclude that such reactionary consciousness have functioned to divert the people understanding of the problems that caused by the neoliberalism project and make them unaware of it's danger and implication that has deepened the disintegration of societal cohesion.

Our working program consists of ideological, political, and organizational program. The ideological programs are political education, internal publications, mass publication, distribution and translation of ideological materials, and ideological education for members and cadres. PRP's Political programs are

1) to put forward the demands for the proletariat's prosperity in face of the bourgeoisie regime,

2) to build a network of national and international party/organization with the same ideology,

3) opposition to bourgeois power,

4) Anti-imperialism movement, and

5) to establish the conception of people power. Our Organizational program is

1) to prepare a party with the characters of proletarian politics,

2) Building/expanding/empowering the organization,

3) encouraging a mass organization with the characters of the working people,

4) Building an independent source of logistics and funding,

5) an education in organizational expertise.

Organizational Structure

1) Congress is held once every three years.

2) National Assembly held once every years

3) The Central Committee of the PRP. Its members are:

a) Rendro Prayogo (Secretary-General)

b) Anwar "Sastro" Ma'aruf (National Chairperson)

c) Irwansyah (National Vice Chairperson)

d) Ruth Indiah Rahayu (Chairperson of Education and Propaganda Department)

e) Ari Yurino (Vice Chairperson of Education and Propaganda Department)

f) M. Zaki H (Second Vice Chairperson of Education and Propaganda Department)

g) Zainal Muttaqin (Chairperson of Organization Development Department)

h) Muhammad Ridha (Chairperson Funds Department / ad hoc Chairperson of International Department)

i) Tommy Ardian Pratama (Staff of International Relations Department)

j) Rini Kusnadi (Secretarial Bureau)

P.S.

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