

Actions, demos, protests...

Indonesia Roundup #28 - August 14-20, 2006

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Residents blockade road to ceramic industrial center

Dozens of residents from the villages of Cianting, Anjun, Plered and Citeko in the Purwakarta regency of West Java blockaded a road leading to a local ceramic industrial center on August 13. The action was taken to prevent trucks transporting stones from entering or passing through the villages because they said they are damaging the road and cause traffic jams and dust pollution.

"There are around 300 trucks that operate 24 hours a day, most have a load of more than 20 tons that is vehicles of class III and IV", said H. Arifin, a local public figure. He added that the roads are not capable of supporting such loads and as result after only a few months since it was repaired the road is already damaged again.

Arifin said that the trucks should use the Liunggunung-Cilalawi route but drivers are disinclined to use it because it is also damaged, far from the main routes and prone to accidents. He said that nine out of the 15 companies operating the truck had promised to build a new road but this has yet to happen. He also added that the number of trucks using the road is growing day by day. (Kompas Cyber Media, 13/8/2006)

Klaten earthquake victims demand assistance

Around 1,000 earthquake victims from the Klaten regency of Central Java demonstrated at the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) and the Klaten regent's office on August 14. They were demanding that the government fulfill its promise to provide living allowances, money for clothing and household goods as well as funds for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Arriving in around 25 trucks, the protesters

gathered at the Klatan Trikoyo Stadium then marched to the regents offices carrying hundreds of banners expressing their disappointment with the government. "[Vice President] Jusuf Kalla promised to provide 30 million rupiah for repairs to houses, but up until now there has been no assistance. Don't trick us with false promises, the people are already suffering", said one of the protesters

After giving speeches, representatives of the protesters were received by the Klaten regent in the DPRD's assembly hall where he promised them he would do the utmost to help them but added that he did not have authority over policy decisions. (Kompas Cyber Media, 14/8/2006)

Lampung workers demonstrate again

Hundreds of workers from the company PT Keong Nusantara Abadi demonstrated at the Lampung DPRD in South Sumatra on August 14 demanding the payment of outstanding wages. The demonstration was one in a series of protests that workers have held since late July after the company arbitrarily change their employment status. (Kompas Cyber Media, 14/8/2006)

Adam Air flight operation officers on strike

Around 40 Adam Air flight operation officers have been on strike since August 11 in protest over the dismissal of four colleagues. The four were dismissed on August 10 and there have been rumors that others would also be sacked. "All of a sudden, without any clear reason, we were dismissed after working an average of around three years. We protest these arbitrary sackings", said one of the strikers.

Aside from protesting against the dismissals, the workers are also demanding a wage increase. "To date our wages have been very low, on average we receive 1.5 million rupiah a month. Whereas our homes are located far away. Just for transportation it can cost as much as 1.2 million. This does not yet include food and other operational needs", he added. (Detik.com, 14/8/2006)

Damri bus drivers in Surabaya protest again

Hundreds of Damri bus drivers and conductors demonstrated again at the Surabaya City office of public relations in East Java on August 14. Their demands were the same as an earlier protest, that

the municipal government action taken against minibuses working the Surabaya-Malang and Surabaya-Mojokerto bus routes that they say are cutting into their incomes. A similar protest was held last week at the Surabaya DPRD. (Liputan 6, 15/8/2006)

Acehnese students in Java commemorate one year of peace

Some 50 Acehnese students from the Association of Acehnese High School, Youth and University Students (IPPMA) studying in the East Java city of Malang commemorated one year of peace in Aceh on August 15.

The students held a march through the city then gathered at the Malang Town Square where they distributed flowers, stickers and posters to pedestrians with messages for continued support for the peace process in Aceh.

Action coordinator Muhammad Hatta said that the action was to commemorate one year since the signing of the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement. "We hope that all parties involved in the signing of the MoU will maintain their commitment to what has been agreed to and provide a real sense of security, peace and justice to the Acehnese people", he said.

In a press release the IPPMA criticised a number of articles in the recently enacted Aceh Governance Law that they said were not in accordance with the MoU. "We hope that both parties will truly build a sense of mutual trust in order that peace in Aceh will be ongoing. It is hoped that the government will adhere to what was agreed to in the MoU", said IPPMA general chairperson Fauzi FZ. (Aceh Kita, 15/8/2006)

High school students vandalise chairs and desks

Hundreds of students from the SMUN 9 public high school Makassar gave rein to their anger by vandalising chairs and desks. The students said that the school principal, Jamaluddin, had acted in an authoritarian manner by expelling students that violated school regulations without giving them a warning first and that he was not transparent in the management of school finances. Their teachers also supported the student's action. (Liputan 6, 15/8/2006)

Selection of IPDN student applicants protested

Hundreds of protesters went to the South Sumatra provincial government offices in Palembang on August 18 to demand transparency in the selection of students applying to study the Domestic Education Institute (IPDN). They were demanding the cancellation of the IPDN selection process that they said was thick with corruption, collusion and nepotism. One of the indications of this was that IPDN applicants with high grades were not selected while those with a ranking of 7-9 passed. (Liputan 6, 16/8/2006)

Ambon refugees demand monthly allowance

Dozens of people displaced by the 1999 Ambon riots demonstrated at the North Sumatra governor's office in city of Ternate on August 15. The protesters, the majority of whom were women and children, were questioning the local government's failure to fulfil a promise three years ago to provide them with financial assistance. (Liputan 6, 16/8/2006)

Makassar students protest university policies

Hundreds of students from the Hasanuddin Makassar University demonstrated in Makassar on August 15 against threats by university rector to expel 12 students from the agriculture and forestry faculty. The 12 students threatened with expulsion have often opposed campus policies, in particular issues of financial transparency in the management of educational forestry funds. (Liputan 6, 16/8/2006)

Students oppose appointment of chief public prosecutor

A group of students demonstrated at the offices of the chief public prosecutor in the Central Java provincial capital of Semarang on August 15. They were protesting the appointment of Nana Juwana as the Central Java chief public prosecutor. The students said that Juwana acted in an unprofessional manner in handing down a verdict in a dispute over the election of regional heads in the Jakarta satellite city of Depok. (Liputan 6, 16/8/2006)

Makassar residents blockade road

Residents from Karunrung in the sub-district of Rappocini in Makassar blockaded the road leading to

their residential area on August 16. The protesters were angry with the mayor of Makassar, Ilham Arif Siradjuddin, for failing carry out road repairs. As a result of the action traffic flow in the direction of the Gowa regency was severely disrupted. (Liputan 6, 16/8/2006)

Victims of hot mud disaster demand compensation

Hundreds of residents from the villages of Siring and Jatirejo in Porong, Central Java, who are victims of the hot mud outflow from the PT Lapindo Brantas drill site demonstrated on August 16. They were demanding that PT Lapindo buy them house to replace those that have had to be abandoned after being inundated with mud. They also rejected an offer by PT Lapindo to pay rent on the inundated houses.

Bring banners and poster the residents marched to the Porong flyover where they closed off the road and prevented vehicles from passing though Jl. Raya Porong, the main highway connecting the cities of Surabaya and Malang. Although the action caused a one-kilometer traffic jam the protesters refused to allow police to reopen the road. (Liputan 6, 16/8/2006)

Strike action by fuel transport drivers in Lombok

On August 16 some 88 fuel truck drivers went on strike parking their trucks at the state-owned oil company Pertamina depot in the city of Ampenan, Lombok, in protest over the suspension of two fellow drivers, Barnabas Lodan and M. Gazali.

"The suspensions were arbitrary", said Transport Service Trade Union (SBJT) secretary general Tauhid Hidayat. "We are asking that our friends be rehired", he said. The drivers refused to fill up their tankers and as a result 28 fuel stations in Lombok suffered fuel delivery delays. (Tempo Interactive, 16/8/2006)

Earthquake victims oppose assistance projects

Hundreds of earthquake victims from the Central Java regencies of Bantul and Gunungkidul in Yogyakarta held a joint demonstration with non-government organisation activists and students on August 18. They were opposing the use of reconstruction assistance funds for assistance projects and

administration. They said that the 20 billion rupiah in reconstruction funds would be better used to rebuild the houses of earthquake victims. They also opposed borrowing additional money from overseas saying the foreign debt burden had already brought suffering to the people. (Liputan 6, 18/8/2006)

Flores students occupy state prosecutor's office

At least 1,600 students from the Flores University (Unflor) occupied the offices of the regional state prosecutor in Ende, East Nusa Tenggara on August 18. The students, who had marched from the campus together with a number of lecturers and university employees were demanding that the Attorney General postpone the execution of three death row prisoners from Poso — Fabianus Tibo, Marinus Riwu and Dominggus da Silva.

"We are urging the Attorney General to immediately issue a decision postponing the execution of Tibo and friends until the legal process is completed and there is legal authority to process the 16 witnesses or new suspect that were mentioned by Tibo, Marinus and da Silva", said the secretary of the Unflor Student Executive Council Claudia Febriani Bebok in a statement. Next week the students plan to hold another peaceful action at the offices of the state prosecutor. (Kompas Cyber Media, 18/8/2006)