

Actions, demos, protests...

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Fish processing company workers demand holiday bonuses

As many as 500 workers from the fish processing company Dharma Samudra Fishing Indonesia went on strike in the South East Sulawesi city of Kendari on October 9 demanding the payment of reasonable holiday bonuses.

The workers said they were disappointed by the management for using a technical issue to renege on a promise to pay allowances. "The technical details for the payment of holiday bonuses are regulated in the contract", said Miling, an employee from the fillet production section adding that each employee has the right to receive bonuses in accordance with their period of employment.

While conceding that there was an agreement between the management and workers on bonuses, production manager M. Marbun said, "But right now it is very difficult for us to fulfil it". Marbun added that as a result of the strike the company had suffered losses of hundreds of millions of rupiah. (Tempo Interactive, 9/10/2006)

Protesters demand Awaludin be named suspect

Around 70 people from the Student Action Front (KAM) and Anti-Corruption Youth (PAK) demonstrated at the offices of the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in Jakarta on October 11 demanding that General Election Commission (KPU) member Hamid Awaludin be named as a suspect in a corruption case involving the procurement of ballot box seals in the 2004 presidential elections.

According to the protesters, Awaludin, who is also the Minister of Justice and Human Rights, had given a false testimony during the trial of KPU member Daan Dimara. "The charges by the prosecution and the

judges' verdict said he had been present when the price was determined", said action coordinator Cupli Risman. The protesters also called on President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to suspect Awaludin to demonstrate his government's commitment to eradicating corruption. "Hamid has legal immunity because there are powers that are protecting him", said Risman. (Tempo Interactive, 11/10/2006)

Students protest Danish trade offices in Medan

Hundreds of members of the North Sumatra Indonesian Muslim Student Action Front (KAMMI) demonstrated at the Danish Trade Representative Offices in the provincial capital of Medan on October 10. The demonstrators were protesting a cartoon drawing contest of the Prophet Muhammad that was organised by Denmark youth organisations and demanded that the Danish government sanction its citizens if they offend the Islamic community. (Liputan 6, 11/10/2006)

Garment workers demand wages, holiday bonuses

Hundreds of workers from the garment company PT Golden Kangaroo Internusa in Cibinong, West Java, demonstrated at the Bogor Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) on October 11. The workers were demanded that the company pay holiday bonuses and outstanding wages owing from July. (Liputan 6, 11/10/2006)

Demonstrators call for Tommy's unconditional release

Demonstrators calling themselves the Coalition of Social Organisations went to the offices of Hamid Awaludin in the Kuningan area of South Jakarta on October 11 demanding that the minister immediately release Tommy Suharto who is serving 10 years for ordering the murder of a judge.

The reason being they said was that Tommy's release would help overcome unemployment. "We feel that Hutomo Mandala Putra would be much use in the future. Hutomo Mandala Putra is concerned about the little people, like unemployment", said action coordinator Aziz Subekti.

The youths, who said they came from a number of non-government organisations, said Awaludin's reasons for refusing to release Tommy made no sense. They added that they came voluntarily to ask Awaludin to

release Tommy. "There was no money for transportation, we were only provided with vehicles, only that", said Subekti. (Liputan 6, 11/10/2006)

Semarang residents protest waste from poultry slaughterhouse

Hundreds of residents living in the area of the Kobong Market in the Central Java provincial capital of Semarang went on strike today protesting against waste being produced by poultry slaughterhouse. The protesters, who said the waste was polluting the local environment, are also concerned that they will contract avian flu. (Liputan 6, 12/10/2006)

Makassar students protest unfair policies on campus

Hundreds of students from the Makassar State University in South Sulawesi demonstrated on October 12 against the policies of the university rector who has threatened to expel nine leaders of a campus based student organisation who have been protesting against education fee increases.

The protesters also said that the rector had been treating the nine students unfairly by giving them a mark of zero in all of their exams. As a result they are in danger of dropping out or being unable to continue their studies. (Liputan 6, 12/10/2006)

Manado residents protest rotating blackouts

Scores of residents from the North Sulawesi Peoples Electricity Concern Alliance (ARPL) demonstrated at the offices of the Sulutenggo state-owned electricity company PLN in Manado on October 12. They were protesting because of PLN's policy of daily rotating blackouts that have been taking place over the last two months. (Liputan 6, 12/10/2006)

Chaos breaks out during worker protest in Mojokerto

Chaos broke out during a demonstration by hundreds of former workers from the paper factory PT Euro Aba in Mojokerto in the East Java city of Mojokerto on October 12 who were demanding the payment outstanding wages and severance pay.

During a dialogue between worker representatives and the company management, three paid thugs barred other protesters from entering the factory grounds. Angry, the workers then broke down the front gate

and forced their way inside. Concerned that that workers would mob the thugs, police who had been on guard at the location eventually detained the three and took them away. (Liputan 6, 12/10/2006)

Bekasi students demand corruption case be investigated

Hundreds of students in the West Java city of Bekasi demonstrated at state prosecutor's offices on October 12 demanding that a corruption case involving the regional state budget be investigated immediately. The students said that the prosecutor's office has been slow in investigating the case because it involved officials from the municipal government and members of the Bekasi DPRD. (Liputan 6, 12/10/2006)

Bandung workers demand outstanding wages, holiday bonuses

Some 100 workers from the company PT Tiga Negeri Raya demonstrated again at the Bandung DPRD in West Java on October 12 demanding the payment of outstanding wages and holiday bonuses.

The workers, who came from the Independent Trade Union (SBM) and the Indonesian Trade Union Congress Alliance (Kasbi), condemned the company for fleeing from its responsibilities saying they felt that they had been tricked by their employer who closed down the factory without informing them first.

After giving speeches for around an hour, worker representatives met with the head of the DPRD Commission D, Kadar Slamet, who promised to contact representatives of Jamsostek (social security program), the Department of Labour and the company management in order to resolve the issue. (Kompas Cyber Media, 12/10/2006)

Police breakup environmental protest Pekanbaru

A protest by 34 environmental groups including the Indonesian Environmental Forum (Walhi), the World Wildlife Fund, Jikakahari, the Sumatra Nature Foundation (YAS) and the Hutan Tesso Nilo Society was forcibly broken by police up during a demonstration at the ASIAN Ministerial Level meeting in the Riau provincial capital of Pekanbaru on October 14.

The protesters, who were demonstrating in front of the Pekanbaru Aryaduta Hotel where delegates from the five ASIAN countries were staying, were demanding to meet directly with the ministers in order to express their views and hand over investigative data on the companies that are starting fires to clear land.

When Environment Minister Rahmat Witoelar, who it was reported had earlier promised to meet with the protesters, failed to do so following Friday prayers, the protesters again began demanding to be able to participate in the ministerial meeting.

Riau Police Chief Brigadier General Ito Sumardi then asked the demonstrators to disband saying they only had a permit allowing them to protest until 1pm. Ignoring the request, the demonstrators continued giving speeches and Sumardi ordered his officers to forcibly disband the protest. Several of the more determined demonstrators were dragged away and kicked by police. (Kompas Cyber Media, 13/10/2006)

Hundreds of Great River workers damage factory

Angered over the company's refusal to meet their demands, some 460 PT Great River International workers damaged the gates and a number of buildings at the company's Campaka complex in Purwakarta regency, West Java, on October 13.

Among other things, the workers were demanding the payment of outstanding wages from July to September, holiday bonuses, wage increases in accordance with the regional minimum wage and the payment of contributions to the Jamsostek social security program.

The angry workers also ripped up a wire fence surrounding the main building, broke down doors and smashed chairs, tables and other equipment inside the buildings, which they then throw outside. Campaka sectoral police officers that were present were unable to control the situation.

"This is an accumulation of friend's disappointment because on several occasion their rights have not been fulfilled by the company. In the lead up to the Lebaran [holidays], they have pressing needs so it is natural if they are angry", said the secretary of the Purwakarta National Workers Union (SPN), Apip Sahrial.

The protest follows several others that were organised in January and July. As of September 13, activities at the factory have come to a complete stop. (Kompas Cyber Media, 13/10/2006)

Kupang residents oppose additional budgetary allocations

Hundreds of residents in the city of Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara, demonstrated at the Kupang DPRD this morning demanding the cancellation of additional budgetary allocations for the construction of an office for the mayor and the procurement of nine cars for members of the DPRD.

The protesters, who came from the Kupang City Alliance of Peoples Concern (ARPKK), said in speeches that the additional budget allocations have only added to the people's pain. A scuffle almost broke out with police guarding the front gate when the protesters tried to force their way in to meet with the speaker of the DPRD who was in the middle of chairing a plenary meeting. (Liputan 6, 13/10/2006)

ASEAN meeting in Riau marred by protest

A Ministerial Level Meeting of five ASEAN countries in Pekanbaru held to discuss the haze from forest fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan was marred by a demonstration and an incident in which protesters ended up in a heated argument with security personnel who tried to chase the demonstrators away.

The protesters, who came from various non-government organisations (NGO), also brought a number of banners with messages such as "[Forestry Minister] M.S. Kaban must resign", "Malaysian companies are also burning land in Riau", "Arrest Pulp Tycoon Sukanto Tanoto", "Close Indah Kiat Pulp & Paper" and "Try the perpetrators of illegal logging". "They are the ringleaders of the haze", said the director of the Walhi Jhoni S. Mundung in front of the Pekanbaru Arya Duta Hotel on October 13.

Mundung said that in general it was large-scale plantation companies that are lighting fires to clear land and that they continue to evade the law. "The evidence is that not one of the heads of plantation companies has been tried", he said. (Tempo Interactive, 13/10/2006)

NGOs in Jambi condemn lack of action on forest fires

Scores of environmental activist from a number of NGOs in the province of Jambi held a demonstration at the Jambi Governor's office on October 14 condemning the central and regional governments for their handling of the haze from forest fires.

The protesters, who said that the government was not serious about overcoming the problem, said that the haze would not be like it is now if firm action had been taken against those lighting the fires. They also called on the Jambi regional government to declare a state of alert as thick smoke was still billowing from the fires in the regencies of Bungo, Tanjung Jabung Timur and Batang Hari. (Liputan 6, 14/10/2006)

Islamic Community Forum protests drawing contest

Members of the Islamic Community Forum (FUI) demonstrated at the Danish Embassy in Jakarta on October 13 in protest against a contest to draw a caricature of the Prophet Mohammed that is to be held in Denmark in August.

The protesters, who said that the contest was an insult to Muhammad, called on the Danish government to apologies to the Islamic community and take legal action against the organisers of the event. In response to the protest, an embassy representative promised to arrange a meeting between FUI and the Danish Ambassador Niels Erik Andersen the following Monday. (Liputan 6, 14/10/2006)

Protesters call for national exam system to be abolished

Around 100 people demonstrated at the offices of the governor of Lampung on October 14 calling on the National Education Minister, Bambang Sudibyo, who was currently attending a meeting in Lampung to abolish the national exam system. (Liputan 6, 14/10/2006)

Earthquake victims demand new verification process

Victims of the Central Java earthquake from the Wijirejo village in Bantul, Yogyakarta, demonstrated on October 14 demanding that a verification process be repeated because many earthquake victims have been unable to obtain reconstruction funds even

though their homes were badly damaged. The action was marred by an uproar when the protesters forced the village head to come out of his office to meet with them. The demonstrators accused the village head of being responsible for the errors in the verification that should have been carried out by a technical team from the Bantul regional government. (Liputan 6, 14/10/2006)