

Actions, demos, protests...

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Rattan factory employees strike, demand holiday bonuses

Some 1,400 employees from the rattan manufacturing company PT Mutiara Habemindo Rotan in the West Java city of Cirebon went on strike on October 16 demanding that the company pay them holiday bonuses equivalent to one month's pay.

Sumarni, one of the employees, said that in the company had earlier promised to pay bonuses equal to one month's wage as it did last year but because of the company's financial situation they had decided to pay only 50 percent. "In a situation where goods are as expensive as this, how can a holiday bonus of 250,000 rupiah be enough", said Sumarni.

Timber and Forestry Trade Union (SPKahut) Secretary Sanija said that strike action was taken as a last resort after efforts at negotiation had failed. "Financial difficulties are a classic excuse. The reason, when the company reaps high profits, employees still don't get any bonuses", said Sanija. The treasurer of SPKahut added that if the company is having financial difficulties they should show them the results of an audit, adding that they will remain on strike until a new agreement is reached. (Kompas Cyber Media, 16/10/2006)

Presidential visit to Samarinda marred by clash

Security personnel and students were involved in two separate clashes in the Samarinda city of East Kalimantan on October 16 when President Yudhoyono was traveling from Balikpapan to Samarinda on a "Ramadan Safari".

The first clash occurred when students from the East Kalimantan Challenge Movement (GKM) were

demonstrating in front of the Bumi Senyur Hotel. As a result the students decided to return to the State College of Islamic Religious Studies (STAIN) campus and continue the protests there. Although the reasons are unclear, another clash broke out on campus with civil service police resulting in several students being seriously injured.

The deputy chief of the Samarinda police said the clash was unavoidable but promised to question those officers and security personnel involved in the incident. (Kompas Cyber Media, 16/10/2006)

Residents ask for release of land for gold mining

Around 6,000 people from the Dumoga Communication Forum went to the Bolaang Mongondow Regional House of Representatives (DPRD) in North Sumatra on October 15 asking for the release of 350 hectares of the land in the Bogani Nani Wartabone National Park so they can mine for gold.

Forum secretary Ramli Mamonto said that the DPRD had promised to support them and fight for the release of the land adding that "We have been conveying our request since 2000". Gold was first discovered in 1985 and has resulted in a protracted dispute over the land and the murder of a local miner. (Tempo Interactive, 16/10/2006)

Residents in Southern Aceh complain about cash subsidies

Hundreds of poor people from a number of sub-districts in Southern Aceh went to the DPRD on October 16 seeking an explanation over delays in the disbursement of direct cash subsidies (BLT) to compensate for last year's fuel price increases.

Upon arriving at the DPRD the representatives of the residents were received the head of Commission A, Azmir SH and the head of the South Aceh National Statistics Agency (BPS) M Nasir. The residents told Nasir that that they had yet to receive the subsidies and that there were irregularities in the disbursement of the funds.

"When we ask officials why the funds have not been released, they often just passed the buck", said Mufrizal from the village of Duriankawan. According to another resident, Karim, there are six people in Duriankawan that should have received BLT but they

had not been issued with BLT cards and were not therefore eligible. "The six people have now got cards, but at the sub-district they disappeared, and the official, Asril, also vanished", said Karim.

In response to the residents' complaints, Nasir promise to take action against the officials distributing BLT and asked the residents to make an official report against the officials concerned. (Aceh Kita, 16/10/2006)

Demonstrators set fire to PT Freeport Indonesia paraphernalia

Scores of Timika residents along with the families of the seven suspects charged for the shootings at Mile 62-63 in August 2002, West Papua protested on October 16 saying that they suspect that PT Freeport Indonesia is the brains behind the arrests. They also called for the seven not to be tried in Jakarta as the incident occurred in West Papua.

The demonstration began with a march around Timika city followed by a sit-in on the road. They then pelted Freeport paraphernalia with rotten eggs then set it alight.

Last week around 300 Timika residents demonstrated in front of the Timika District Court also saying that because the shootings occurred in West Papua and the suspects are Papuans that they should be tried in Timika. (Liputan 6, 17/10/2006)

Tuban residents demand jobs from local company

Hundreds of residents from the Sumber Arum village in the Kerek sub-district of Tuban regency, East Java, demonstrated in front of the offices of PT Swabina Gatra on October 17 demanding to be given jobs saying that the appointment of employees was unfair and lacked transparency.

A scuffle broke out between protesters and security personnel when demonstrators tried to enter the company grounds to find shade. A number of representatives were eventually invited to discuss their grievances with the office manager who promised to try to their concerns to the management. (Liputan 6, 17/10/2006)

Andi Rudianto Asapa supporters protest over appointment

Hundreds of supporters of Andi Rudianto Asapa went to the Regional Leadership Board (DPD) of the Indonesian of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) in the South Sulawesi regional capital of Makassar on October 18 where they set fire to PDI-P paraphernalia in protest over the Central Leadership Board's intervention in the election of the Makassar DPD chairperson.

The protesters said they were disappointed because the central leadership directly appointed former South Sulawesi governor Zainal Basril Palaguna as the regional PDI-P chairperson whereas the majority of branch representatives had opposed this. (Liputan 6, 18/10/2006)

Workers protest deductions to compensation for mud disaster

Around 160 workers from CV Sari Inti Pratama, a company has been inundated by mud from the PT Lapindo Brantas drill site, demonstrated at the Labour Offices in the East Java regency of Sidoarjo on October 18. They were demanding that the Labour Office intervene to resolve threats of arbitrary dismissals by the company.

The workers were also protesting the company's management for making deductions to compensation funds of 700,000 rupiah per month that are being provided by Lapindo saying that they are only receiving 300,000 rupiah. The company has said that they will only get the full amount if they resign.

The head of the Sidoarjo labour office, Bambang Widagdo, denied that they had been slow in dealing with the workers' complains and promised to fine the company if it is proved they committed a violation. (Liputan 6, 18/10/2006)

Garment workers demand outstanding wages, holiday bonuses

Scores of workers from the Singapore owned company PT Jagu International Garments in the Berikat Nusantara Cakung industrial zones of North Jakarta demonstrated on October 18 demanding holiday bonuses and the payment of two months outstanding wages.

The workers, the majority of whom were women, presented two demands to the management: the immediate payment of wages for September and October

and a holiday bonus equivalent to one months wage.

"Up until now monthly wages keep being paid on the 25th of the following month, or even as late as the 4th the second month after. Wages for August for example, were paid on September 25", said one of the workers, Ohan Rohana. Rohan added that it is unclear when wages for September will be paid even though the Lebaran holidays are already close. (Kompas Cyber Media, 18/10/2006)

Public transport drivers demonstrate in Kupang

Hundreds of city public transport drivers and conductors demonstrated at the Kupang DPRD in East Nusa Tenggara on October 19 calling on the Kupang municipal transport office to fulfil its promise to withdraw the operating license for the Oebufu designated transport route. A number of protesters were later involved in scuffle with police who were guarding the DPRD building. (Liputan 6, 19/10/2006)

Andi Rudianto Asapa supporters protest again

Hundreds of supporters of Andi Rudianto Asapa protested again in Makassar on October 19. This time round they set fire to a bier in a symbolic protest over Zainal Basri Palaguna's appointment as the regional chairperson of PDI-P. (Liputan 6, 19/10/2006)

Residents oppose construction of permanent mud containment dam

Residents from the Jatirejo village in the Porong sub-district of Sidoarjo attempted to hold a demonstration on October 18 against the Lapindo Mud National Relief Team's plan to build a permanent mud containment dam at their village. The residents oppose the plan because there has yet to be any clear decision on compensation for their homes and land that will be covered for the dam.

Troops from the East Java regional Mobile Brigade however drove the residents away so the protesters, who had planned to blockade the dam, could only look on from a distance. The residents, who said that that the compensation offered was inadequate and that local people had been lied to, threatened to hold a larger action if the compensation issue is not clarified. (Liputan 6, 19/10/2006)

Youths, activists demand police solve Kongkoli shooting

At least one hundreds youths and activists from non-government organisations demonstrated at the Palu regional police headquarters in Central Sulawesi on October 18 demanding that police investigate the fatal shooting of Reverand Irianto Kongkoli.

The protesters, who came from the Anti-Violence Community, marched to the police headquarters where they gave speeches calling for an investigation into the assassination. After meeting with the head of the public relations section the protesters disbanded.

Kongkoli was shot dead while buying construction materials at a shop in Palu on October 16. It is believed that his assassination is linked with efforts to resolve the conflict in the province. (Liputan 6, 19/10/2006)

Teachers, civil servants demand holiday bonuses

Teachers and civil servants from the Kendal regional government in Central Java held a protest on October 18 against Kendal Regent Hendy Budoro who they said had reneged on a promise by canceling the disbursement of holiday bonuses to Kendal government officials. (Liputan 6, 19/10/2006)

'Black' protesters rock US Embassy

Some 200 people dressed entirely in black demonstrated at the US Embassy in Central Jakarta on October 20 demanding an end to US interference in Palestine. "America and its allies represent the principle supporters in the occupation in Palestine by Israel", said action coordinator Teddy in a speech.

The protesters, who came from Indonesian Muslim Solidarity for Al-quds (Palestine), said they held the action today because it was the last Friday of the Ramadan fasting month that is commemorated across the world as a day of liberation for Palestine. "So it is not just us that are holding an action here, but also other Muslims throughout the world", said Teddy. (Detik.com, 20/10/2006)

Protesters commemorate Palestine Solidarity Day in Surabaya

Hundreds of people from the Palestine Concern Society demonstrated at the US Consulate General in the East Java provincial capital of Surabaya on October 21. The action was held to commemorate Palestine Solidarity Day that falls on the last Friday of Ramadan. During the action they called on the US government and Israel to acknowledge the rights of the Palestine people. (Liputan 6, 21/10/2006)

Youth Pledge day in Yogyakarta commemorated by demonstration

Activists in the Central Java city of Yogyakarta held a demonstration on October 28 to commemorate the 1948 Youth Pledge. Wearing traditional clothing in order not to lose the spirit of the Youth Pledge, they said that the action was also a protest against colonialism that is causing poverty and suffering for those hit by the recent earthquake in Central Java. (Liputan 6, 28/10/2006)