

Compilation of protests commemorating nine years since fall of Suharto

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The following is a compilation of abridged translations taken from Detik.com on demonstrations commemorating nine years since the fall of former President Suharto on May 21, 1998.

'Get ready for an increase in traffic jams'

Nurvita Indarini, Jakarta — Jakartan residents today are haunted with the possibility of facing daylong traffic jams. As well as being the end of a long-weekend, a flood of demonstrations will also mark nine years since former President Suharto resigned. So, watch out for the traffic jams!

"Yeah, get ready for an increase in traffic jams", said Bripka Heri Triyatno from the Metro Jaya Regional Police Traffic Management Center (TMC) when speaking with Detik.com on Monday May 21.

According to the TMC around 100 protesters from the West Sumatra Association for Destitute and Poor Abandoned Children (Isafat) will be meeting at the House of Representatives (DPR) building in South Jakarta. Around 200 students from Jakarta State Islamic University Student Executive Council (BEM) will also be visiting the DPR and well as protesters from Thunder 49.

The TMC also said that protesters from the Jakarta Legal Aid Foundation will be holding a demonstration at the State Palace at 10am which will be followed by a protest by students from the University of Indonesia BEM at 12.30pm following a long-march from the Hotel Indonesia roundabout. At 11am the Association of Indonesian Law Student Senates (Ishami) will also be demonstrating at the State Prosecutor's office, the State Palace and the Attorney General's Office (AGO).

The Committee of United Student Organisations (KMBE)

which includes students from the Bung Karno University, the National Student League for Democracy (LMND) and Bogor Institute of Agriculture Student Movement (Gema IPB) will hold an actions at the AGO, Hotel Indonesia and the State Palace at 1pm. Also at 1pm, protesters from the Islamic Student Association (HMI) will march from the Indonesian Persada University to Hotel Indonesia.

"As of 9am local time mass mobilisations have already started at a number of points, but they have yet to 'crystallize'", said Triyatno in a disparaging tone. (nvt/sss)

Yogyakarta students call for Suharto and his cronies to be tried

Bagus Kurniawan, Yogyakarta — Hundreds of students from the Gajah Mada University in the Central Java city of Yogyakarta commemorated nine years of reformasi on May 21 by demanding that Suharto and his cronies be tried.

"Seize their assets for the people. The student [movement] must be on guard against the return of Suharto's lackeys in new guises", shouted action coordinator Muhammad Rico from the Student Alliance Against Neoliberalism (AMAN) during a speech.

According to AMAN, nine years reformasi has yet to produce anything, in fact on the contrary, in recent times the old forces from Suharto's New Order regime are rising up again. "Nine years of reformasi has instead left the people facing even more problems", said Rico adding that AMAN is calling on the current regime to try Suharto and his cronies.

The students brought a number of posters and banners to the action with messages such as "Fully investigate human rights violations", "Nationalise foreign assets", "Indonesia is not a province of the US" and "Revoke the Law on Capital Investment". (djo/sss)

Victims of 1965 demand Suharto be brought to trial

Nograhany Widhi K, Jakarta — Even though his body is old and frail, 85-year-old Yasman Setyo Prawiro was still able to give a spirited speech in front of the State Palace on May 21, demanding that Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) bring Suharto to trial.

Wearing a gray safari suit and black trousers, Prawiro voiced the feeling of people stigmatized as being members of the banned Indonesian Communist Party (PKI).

"The coup d'etat was actually Suharto's doing on the instructions of the CIA. The CIA has admitted this itself. Basically SBY must bring Suharto to trial because he is a gross violator of human rights, slaughtering 3 million people", shouted Prawiro.

Although Prawiro quickly tired and had to rest, his friends continued demonstrating waving placards with demands such as "Suharto is the same as Hitler", "Suharto in the October 1 1965 coup d'etat", "Try General Suharto" and "Rehabilitate the victims of 65 only then reconciliation".

Following the speech, Prawiro was immediately mobbed by journalists, and he related how he had been victimised by the stigma of the PKI. In 1965, Prawiro, who was the head of a trade union, was incarcerated at the Nusa Kambangan Prison without trial for 14 years. He never received his pension after being a civil servant for 41 years and his children were also stigmatised.

"Basically SBY must bring Suharto to trial... if he is not able to try Suharto over 1965 then in the 2009 [elections] we will mobilise the masses not to vote for SBY", threatened Prawiro who claimed to have 20 million people. (ana/ss)

Protesters call Yudhoyono and Kalla 'banci'

Anwar Khumaini, Jakarta — The government has yet to fully investigate outstanding human rights cases after nine years of reformasi. The government of Yudhoyono and Vice President Kalla (JK) are 'banci'.

The epithet 'banci', meaning effeminate or powerless, was expressed in a banner brought by around 100 students from Ismahi during a demonstration in front of the State Palace on May 21.

In speeches they demanded that the government continue with cases involving former President Suharto including the Bank Indonesia Liquidity Fund support scheme, human rights vocations such Tanjung Priok, the Military Operational Zone in Aceh and the Trisakti and Semanggi I and II shootings.

The also brought a number of posters with messages such as "SBY-JK are powerless", "SBY-JK have failed", "Investigated the flow of non-budgetary funds at the Department of Maritime and Fishery Affairs" and "SBY-JK enjoy the funds of corrupters".

Action coordinator Cecep Agam Nugraha said that the action was also held to draw attention to the recent cabinet reshuffle. "The reshuffle was carried out for political reasons so SBY should be removed", he asserted. (nik/sss)

Five 'provocateurs' arrested at State Palace

Anwar Khumaini, Jakarta — Shortly after shouting "Come on fight the police", police arrested five youths who were suspected as being the provocateurs behind a clash between police and City Forum (Forkot) demonstrators at the State Palace on May 21.

Although the attention of protesters was distracted by the arrests, they continued giving speeches. "This is the evidence that the state doesn't side with the ordinary people. We are here to rightly voice our wishes, so why are police acting repressively", said one of the speakers.

Not just that, police also proceeded to confiscate paraphernalia belonging to the demonstrators including pamphlets and five wooden tombstones that were then thrown onto a pile of rubbish. "Why was our stuff confiscated, whereas we didn't do anything anarchic", said one of the demonstrators.

At 2.25pm, some 50 students from the Student Action Front (FAM), LMND and the University of Indonesia's School of Social and Political Science arrived and were almost involved in clashed with police before they gathered in front of the Palace. As of 3pm protesters were still lining up waiting for their turn to speak. (aan/sss)

Protesters burn posters of Suharto, two arrested

Indra Shalihin, Jakarta — Posters of former President Suharto were burnt during a demonstration commemorating nine years of reformasi in front of the State Palace on May 21. As a result two students were arrested and taken away by police.

Police moved in as soon as they saw the Suharto

posters being burnt. The two who were arrested initially tried to resist with students and police pushing and shoving each other. In the end however police were able to take control of the situation.

As well as burning the posters, during the action by around 500 students from Forkot and BEM Greater Jakarta they called for Suharto to be tried and criticised President Yudhoyono for failing to bring prosperity to the people. The students also brought posters of Yudhoyono and a wreath of flowers. "SBY's [promises] are just rhetoric", shouted the demonstrators. As a result of the action, the heavy traffic on Jl. Medan Merdeka Utara slowed to a crawl. (nvt/ss)

P.S.

* Translated by James Balowski.