

Indonesia: Gebrak consolidates basis in factories, campus for mass rally against fuel price hike

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The Labour Movement with the People (Gebrak) along with a number of other social organisations, including students, will hold a mass demonstration against the recent fuel (BBM) price hike next week, on Tuesday September 13.

“KASBI [the Indonesian Trade Union Congress Alliance Confederation], Gebrak and students will hold a big demonstration on September 13. Right now comrades are consolidating our basis in the factories and campuses,” KASBI Secretary General Sunarno told CNN Indonesia in a message on Friday September 9.

Sunarno said that today Gebrak will also hold a public discussion with the theme “BBM Goes Up, the People are Being Strangled” following a consolidation at the Jakarta Legal Aid Foundation (LBH) offices in Central Jakarta. Gebrak has invited a number of parties, including students, to take part in the consolidation.

“There will be a public discussion and consolidation of workers and students at the LBH building in Jakarta,” said Sunarno.

Over the last few days, protest actions against the fuel price hike have been taking place in various parts of the country — from the east to the west — including in cities such as Banda Aceh (Aceh), Medan (North Sumatra), Jakarta, Semarang (East Java) and Makassar (South Sulawesi).

Earlier on Saturday September 3 at 1.30 pm, President Joko “Jokowi” Widodo announced an increase in the price of Pertalite, Solar (diesel) and Pertamax petrol.

The price of Pertalite which was previously sold for 7,650 rupiah per litre rose to 10,000 rupiah per litre, Solar rose from 5,150 per litre to 6,800 per litre and Pertamax rose 12,500 rupiah per litre to 14,500 per litre.

The government’s decision to increase fuel prices has received a negative response from the public with demonstrations breaking out in several Indonesian cities opposing the decision.

Senior economist Indef Faisal Basri has said that increasing fuel prices will be just like heaping up the existing problems in the country.

“The government’s method is piling up the problems one by one. The price of fuel has not increased for five years, electricity [prices] have not increased for the sake of price stability so that low inflation has been praised, the cost of this is piling up the problems,” Basri some time ago.

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