

Indonesia: Gebrak workers in Jakarta call for reduction in cost of fuel, basic necessities

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Workers from the Labour Movement with the People (Gebrak) held a protest action near the Horse Statue in Central Jakarta on Thursday October 20. They brought a number of demands ranging from calls for a reduction in the price of fuel (BBM) to revoking the Jobs Law (Ciptaker).

Based on Detik.com's observations at the location, a dangdut (Arabic and Indian-infused pop music) version of the song "Workers Farmers' (Buruh Tani) was heard playing from the command vehicle.

A number of participants at the demonstration began arriving and dancing near the command vehicle. Other participants meanwhile could be seen sitting while the others danced. Some people were also seen inviting their colleagues to come forward to the dangdut dance 'stage'.

When the song ended after being played twice, a call was heard from the crowd who were dancing indicating their disappointment.

"You want more?", asked the speaker.

"Yes", replied the crowd.

The Workers Farmers song was then played for a third time after a growing number of requests from those dancing near the command vehicle.

During the action, the Gebrak protesters brought a number of demands, namely:

1. Bring down the price of fuel and the people's basic necessities
2. Revoke the Omnibus Law on Job Creation and its derivative regulations
3. Fully investigate violence against the ordinary people by the authorities
4. Reject revisions to the National Education Law
5. Revoke Law Number 12/2011 on the Drafting of Laws and Regulations (UU P3) and cancel the revisions to the Draft Criminal Code (RKUHP)
6. Realise a decent national minimum wage
7. Realise genuine agrarian reform

Earlier, thousands of security personnel were mobilised to safeguard and watch over the demonstration in order to ensure it proceeded in an orderly manner.

"In total 2,846 personnel were mobilised to safeguard and watch over the activities conveying the public's aspirations so that it would proceed in an orderly and smooth manner", said Metro Jaya regional police public relations chief Senior Commissioner Endra Zulpan in a press release on Thursday.

“From the Regional Task Force (Satgasda) there was a total of 2,801 personnel. The District Task Force (Satgasres) a total of 225 personnel, and 540 personnel from the TNI’s [Indonesian military’s] Under Operational Control (BKO), the Korsabhara [Tactical Police Unit Corps] and the pemda [regional government]”, he said.

Silvia Ng

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