

Indonesia: IWD march in Jakarta calls for fight against sexual violence, patriarchy

Wednesday 10 March 2021, by [AZZAHRA Tiara](#), [CNN Indonesia](#) (Date first published: 8 March 2021).

Tiara Azzahra, Jakarta — On March 8 protesters held a long-march from the central business district on Jalan MH Thamrin to the State Palace in Central Jakarta to commemorate International Women's Day (IWD) 2021.

At around 10 am the demonstrators carrying banners taking up women's issues began to fill the roads in front of the Elections Supervisory Board (Bawaslu) building on Jalan MH Thamrin.

Carrying banners with messages such as "Women are harassed, debased", at 11 am they moved off while giving speeches then stopped in front of the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology building.

"Fight sexual violence!", shouted one of the participants. "Fight, fight patriarchy, fight patriarchy now!", they added.

A short time later at 11.30 am a group from the Indonesian Trade Union Congress Alliance Confederation (KASBI) alighted from a bus and joined the IWD protesters. They wore red shirts and brought a banner reading "Reject the Draft Law on Family Resilience".

"I want to remind comrades today at this IWD that we will be putting up a fight!, so that there is no more violence against the ordinary Indonesian people, especially women", said a speaker from atop of a car.

Aside from women activists and minority groups, the long-march also included labour groups who took up the issues of the Job Creation Law who took to the streets articulating the problems that exist in Indonesia.

"Because if we act in unison the greater the unity will be then our movement will broaden and the impact will be bigger. So in the end, this year's Jakarta Women's March, which is usually held separately from International Women's Day, is being held together with the Jakarta Women's March so that the numbers will be really big, this year we decided to combine them so the movement will be bigger, can be heard and have even more impact", said Jakarta Women's March spokesperson Metthew told the crowd in front of the Bawaslu building.

"Then to the government our principle hope is that the government will listen because in fact there are a great many people who support this issue and we have posters aimed at showing this, remember all the cases [of sexual violence] that are happening in society. And every year there are more and more victims", said Metthew.

The protesters then continued the march to the Palace View Garden on Jalan Medan Merdeka Utara which is located opposite the State Palace. (dkp/dkp)

[Translated by James Balowski. The original title of the article was "Peringati Hari Perempuan Internasional, Massa Longmarch ke Depan Istana".]

IWD rally in Malang ends in chaos after police disperse, arrest protesters

Surabaya — Police broke up an International Women's Day (IWD) action by the Women's Movement with the People (Gempur) Alliance in Malang, East Java on Monday. A number of protesters were also arrested by police because of the chaos that ensued when they tried to disperse the crowd.

"Several people were secured by the Malang Polresta [municipal police] in relation to the actions in committing vandalism", East Java regional police public relations head Senior Commissioner Gatot Repli Handoko told CNN Indonesia on Monday March 8.

The incident, said Handoko, began when Gempur, which represents an allegiance of groups including the Papua Students Alliance (AMP), the Indonesian People's Front for West Papua (FRI West Papua) and other student groups, held a protest action to commemorate IWD.

"At 9 am local time protesters from the Gempur Alliance began arriving at the gathering point at the Gajayana Stadium on Jalan Semeru, Malang", he said.

Based on reports received by police, Handoko said that at 9.20 am the protesters began handing out leaflets containing the action's demands to road users passing by the Gajayana Stadium.

Then, around five minutes later, officers from the district police (Polres) and the Malang municipal government Public Order Agency (Satpol PP) appealed to the demonstrators not to continue the protest action because they did not have a police permit.

"Because there was no written notification [submitted] to the Malang city Polres and it was still during the Covid-19 pandemic and also the enforcement of the Micro PPKM [Enforcement of Restrictions on Public Activities]", said Handoko.

Despite the appeal, at 9.40 am the protesters were still holding the action by giving speeches and unfurling banners with messages such as "Smash capitalism", "Enact the Draft Law on the Elimination of Sexual Violence" and "Create gender based social justice".

In the end the municipal police chief (Kapolresta) and the 0833/Kota Malang district military commander asked the demonstrators to disperse voluntarily within 15 minutes.

"We gave them 15 minutes to convey their aspirations, after that we invited them to disband voluntarily and return to the respective locations. If they did not immediately disband voluntarily then we would forcibly disperse them for the sake of security and the conduciveness of Malang city", said Handoko relating the process by which they were dispersed.

Not only that, it turned out that one of the demonstrators was holding a poster with the message "Reject Special Autonomy Chapter 2, the solution is a referendum for West Papua" and "Withdraw the Indonesian military from all of the land of Papua". Police saw this as deviating from the principle demands of the IWD action.

Chaos broke out when officers tried to forcibly disperse the demonstrators after they insisted on refusing to disband.

Several protesters were taken away in a police truck in Tlogosari. But in the middle of the journey as they were being transported in the Malang district police truck, the demonstrators allegedly

vandalised the truck by kicking out the trucks window.

“Because of this, the Malang city Kapolresta ordered the demonstrators to be taken to the Malang Polresta headquarters for questioning. Meanwhile the protesters who were secured totalled 21 people”, said Handoko.

In an official release meanwhile, the Gempur Alliance asserted that based on Law Number 9/1998 on the freedom to express an opinion in public, demonstrators only have to submit a notification with police. They stated that a prior notification of the demonstrations had been submitted.

Not only that, on the issue of the damage to the truck’s window, the Gempur Alliance said that it was a spontaneous act triggered by the repressive behaviour of the police who allegedly assaulted protesters. They were then placed in separate trucks.

“(We were concerned because) the comrades in the Dalmas [crowd control unit] truck which had begun to move off were stamping their feet, we asked for the truck to stop. But the truck continued moving so one of the comrades in the truck spontaneously threw a shoe at the window”, read the Gempur statement.

In response to the police’s actions, Gempur condemned the repression, curbing of democracy and the arbitrary actions by police against the protesters who were commemorating IWD. They also condemned the statements and disinformation being made by police. (frd/kid)

[Translated by James Balowski. The original title of the article was “Aksi Hari Perempuan di Malang Ricuh, Demonstran Ditangkap”.]

Tiara Azzahra
CNN Indonesia

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