

# Indonesia: protests to cancel debt, support development

Wednesday 6 February 2008, by [KING Sam](#) (Date first published: 1 February 2008).

Hundreds of people took protest action in North Sumatra, East Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, East and West Java and Jogjakarta on January 15-17 to demand cancellation of Indonesia's foreign debt, nationalisation of the mining industries and for strengthening the economy through a nationwide industrialisation.

The actions were organised by over 20 trade unions, student and urban poor organisations in alliance with the People's Democratic Party-Struggle Committee of the Poor (KPRM-PRD). The KPRM-PRD is the result of a minority split from the People's Democratic Party (PRD) — by far the most well known and influential element of the Indonesian left as a result of its crucial leadership role in the movement that overthrew Suharto in 1998.

The split has occurred over tactics relating to elections, which the PRD sees as a way to reach the population with its political program. The PRD is building the National Liberation Party of Unity (Papernas), and is advocating Papernas seek electoral alliances with other parties on the basis of agreement on a joint platform.

The KPRM-PRD, on the other hand, is against participation in the 2009 elections if the tough registration laws make participation in its own name and with its own program too difficult, counter-posing to the elections the need to rebuild from the grass roots.

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