

Rempang Protest in Indonesia: Protesting Government Subordination to Chinese Capitalism

News:

Protests have erupted in Indonesia's Riau Islands province, particularly on Rempang Island, as residents oppose government plans to relocate thousands of people to make way for a Chinese-owned glass factory and "Eco-City" development. The government's decision to move residents 60 km inland from their coastal homes, where many rely on fishing, has led to escalating protests, with police accused of using excessive force, including tear gas, near schools. The catalyst for the protests is the construction of a Chinese glass factory to meet the global demand for solar panels, backed by significant investment but criticized for displacing local communities. Indigenous groups have also joined the protests, emphasizing the importance of understanding the history and culture of the local community. Critics argue that such relocations misunderstand the nature of Indigenous communities and disrupt their livelihoods. (Source: Aljazeera.com)

Comment:

The Indonesian government's attempts to relocate thousands of residents on Rempang Island in Batam, aiming to develop tourism and industry, prove that Indonesia often favors investors at the expense of its citizens. Despite substantial investments pouring into Indonesia from Western nations, Japan, China, and Singapore, the country has not witnessed significant improvements. It continues to grapple with debt and poverty. Under President Jokowi's leadership, Indonesia's debt has steadily risen, reaching \$396.3 billion. According to World Bank criteria, poverty affects approximately 40% of Indonesia's population, meaning that more than 100 million people out of a total population of around 270 million live in impoverished conditions according to World Bank criteria.

Over recent years, the escalating Chinese investments in Indonesia have sparked concerns among Indonesians about the potential pitfalls of falling into a cycle of Chinese debt and political reliance. This trend has also brought about noticeable social consequences, with clashes occurring between local and foreign Chinese workers in certain areas, along with negative environmental impacts.

In the case of Rempang, the local community is being forcibly uprooted from their ancestral lands to make way for government-driven investments despite their objections. This action runs counter to Sharia law, which prohibits unjust property seizures. Leaders or imams must serve their people by establishing security, justice, and prosperity. This situation underscores that the governing framework is grounded in a secular capitalist ideology that consistently places business interests and entrepreneurs at the forefront.

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