

Indonesian Palm Oil Dispute at 'Crisis Point'

By **webadmin** on 12:23 pm November 25, 2011.
Category **Archive**

Ulma Haryanto

Villagers in East Kalimantan's West Kutai district are demanding an inquiry to resolve an ongoing land dispute with a palm oil company, an environmental group said on Thursday.

Sheila Kartika, a spokeswoman for the environmental group Telapak, said the residents of Muara Tae village no longer trust the authorities to resolve the dispute over the 683 hectares of ancestral forest land that palm oil firm Munte Waniq Jaya Perkasa has started bulldozing.

"A representative is coming to Jakarta to seek out an independent team for help," Sheila said.

Telapak's British counterpart, the Environmental Investigation Agency, said on Wednesday that the palm oil firm had moved into the forests around Muara Tae to clear land for palm oil production. It said the firm was backed by the police and other security personnel, who witnesses alleged were out-of-uniform military officers.

The EIA said sources reported that the firm's bulldozers had been clearing approximately five hectares a day for the past week.

"With the situation at crisis point, the EIA and its Indonesian partner Telapak fear the conflict could spill over into violence," the group said in a statement posted on its Web site.

The group said a major cause of the conflict was the failure to recognize traditional ownership of the forest land, which the indigenous Dayak Benuaq people have used for generations.

Sheila said the palm oil firm had actually purchased land from residents of a neighboring village, Kampung Ponaq. Because the village borders had not been clearly defined, she said, the villages were still trying to determine their respective land ownership when "suddenly the bulldozers came and cleared everything away."

Residents in Muara Tae presented their case to the East Kalimantan legislature during a public hearing, Sheila said.

"Previously, the subdistrict office offered to help mediate in the dispute, but the people refused because the office never involved them in the first place when it was drafting the area's zoning map," she said.

Munte Waniq Jaya Perkasa seems to hold a valid commercial plantation license, Telapak said. However, the company does not yet possess a commercial usage right permit from the National Land Agency (BPN).

In a similar land conflict in the Mesuji district of Lampung, a villager was killed and several others were injured after security officers at a palm oil company there opened fire on them. When the shooting occurred the villagers were harvesting crops from their ancestral land,

which was in dispute with the company.

Hadi Daryanto, the Forestry Ministry secretary general, said the central government was powerless to provide villages a direct solution to such disputes because local authorities were in charge of land management.

“What we can do is help coordinate with the BKPTN [National Spatial Planning Coordination Agency], the Home Affairs Ministry and the Industry Ministry,” he said.



Related Articles:



Wilmar Buys 27.5% Stake in Morocco Sugar Firm



Kalimantan Man Murders Wife, Three Children While They Sleep



Indonesia Palm Oil Exports Set for Biggest Drop in Two Years



Palm Oil Exports From Indonesia Climb to Highest in Five Years



Indonesian Government to Revoke Palm Oil Licenses Without Sustainable Credentials



Articles

Latest

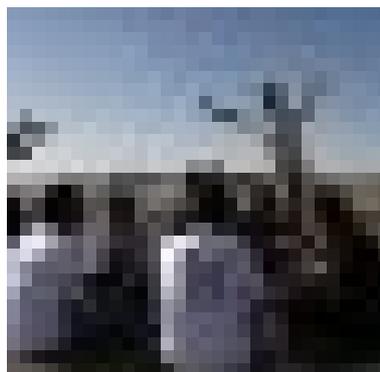
Popular

Comments



Convicted Terrorist Escapes From Prison in Central Sulawesi

by Farouk Arnaz - Comments Off



**Syrian Air Strikes, Shelling Batter
Rebels in Damascus Suburbs**

by Reuters - Comments Off



**More Indonesians Eating Bread as
Incomes Rise**

by Francezka Nangoy - Comments Off



**Southeast Asia's 2015 Unity Dream
Collides With Reality**

by Reuters - Comments Off

► **Indonesian Coffee Premium Seen
Rising as London Futures Decline**

by Bloomberg - Comments Off



Alpaca Hairdos

by Reuters - Comments Off



Porsche Enters Hybrid Market With

Sporty Panamera

by Ariefin Makaminan - Comments Off



Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is

by Sylviana Hamdani - Comments Off

What's On Twitter
The Jakarta Globe

JG [thejakartaglobe](#) Convicted Terrorist Escapes From Prison in Central #Sulawesi [jglo.be/i2kl](#)
59 minutes ago · reply · retweet · favorite



Join the conversation

Indonesian Palm Oil Dispute at 'Crisis Point'

By **webadmin** on 12:23 pm November 25, 2011.

Category **Archive**

Ulma Haryanto

Villagers in East Kalimantan's West Kutai district are demanding an inquiry to resolve an ongoing land dispute with a palm oil company, an environmental group said on Thursday.

Sheila Kartika, a spokeswoman for the environmental group Telapak, said the residents of Muara Tae village no longer trust the authorities to resolve the dispute over the 683 hectares of ancestral forest land that palm oil firm Munte Waniq Jaya Perkasa has started bulldozing.

"A representative is coming to Jakarta to seek out an independent team for help," Sheila said.

Telapak's British counterpart, the Environmental Investigation Agency, said on Wednesday that the palm oil firm had moved into the forests around Muara Tae to clear land for palm oil production. It said the firm was backed by the police and other security personnel, who witnesses alleged were out-of-uniform military officers.

The EIA said sources reported that the firm's bulldozers had been clearing approximately five hectares a day for the past week.

“With the situation at crisis point, the EIA and its Indonesian partner Telapak fear the conflict could spill over into violence,” the group said in a statement posted on its Web site.

The group said a major cause of the conflict was the failure to recognize traditional ownership of the forest land, which the indigenous Dayak Benuaq people have used for generations.

Sheila said the palm oil firm had actually purchased land from residents of a neighboring village, Kampung Ponaq. Because the village borders had not been clearly defined, she said, the villages were still trying to determine their respective land ownership when “suddenly the bulldozers came and cleared everything away.”

Residents in Muara Tae presented their case to the East Kalimantan legislature during a public hearing, Sheila said.

“Previously, the subdistrict office offered to help mediate in the dispute, but the people refused because the office never involved them in the first place when it was drafting the area’s zoning map,” she said.

Munte Waniq Jaya Perkasa seems to hold a valid commercial plantation license, Telapak said. However, the company does not yet possess a commercial usage right permit from the National Land Agency (BPN).

In a similar land conflict in the Mesuji district of Lampung, a villager was killed and several others were injured after security officers at a palm oil company there opened fire on them. When the shooting occurred the villagers were harvesting crops from their ancestral land, which was in dispute with the company.

Hadi Daryanto, the Forestry Ministry secretary general, said the central government was powerless to provide villages a direct solution to such disputes because local authorities were in charge of land management.

“What we can do is help coordinate with the BKPTN [National Spatial Planning Coordination Agency], the Home Affairs Ministry and the Industry Ministry,” he said.



Related Articles:



Wilmar Buys 27.5% Stake in Morocco Sugar Firm



Kalimantan Man Murders Wife, Three Children While They Sleep



Indonesia Palm Oil Exports Set for Biggest Drop in Two Years



Palm Oil Exports From Indonesia Climb to Highest in Five Years



Indonesian Government to Revoke Palm Oil Licenses Without Sustainable Credentials