

CONTESTING INDONESIA SEMINAR SERIES



Nicolaas Warouw

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Yogyakarta

Chair: Toby Carroll
Research Fellow, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy

Date: Thursday, 12 March 2009

Time: 12.15 p.m. - 1.30 p.m.

Venue: Seminar Room 3-1, Level 3
Manasseh Meyer
Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
469C Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 259772

This is a brown bag seminar and you are most welcome to bring your own packed lunch

The 2009 Indonesian Election: Labour's (Dis)identification from Party Politics

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Nicolaas Warouw teaches at the Department of Anthropology, Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM), Yogyakarta. He is also affiliated to the UGM's Centre of Southeast Asian Social Studies. His published work includes, 'Community-based Agencies as the Entrepreneur's Instruments of Control in Post-Soeharto's Indonesia' (in *Asia Pacific Business Review* 12(2)) and 'Industrial Workers in Transition: Women's Experiences of Factory Work in Tangerang' (in Ford and Parker, Routledge, 2008). He is also the editor of a forthcoming book, *Democracy Building on the Sand: Problems and Options of Indonesian Democratisation*.

SYNOPSIS

Almost ten years after the fall of Soeharto, Indonesian labour shows little potential for developing into a more politicised and organised movement, let alone a class instrument. Despite the current proliferation of trade unions and labour organisations, which enjoy bargaining power on a scale unthinkable under the New Order, the level of politicisation of industrial workers and their engagement in organised politics remains low. This seminar discusses the division of both interests and aspirations between different groups of workers and contrasts them with the experience of a previous generation of industrial workers associated with labour activism in the 1990s. It suggests that the exposure of contemporary workers to modernity and a globalised popular discourse, together with improved living conditions, have affected their capacity to adopt a more politicised role, and amplified their disassociation with party politics and the forging of a stronger labour movement. This has occurred at the same time that political forces have displayed a distinct unwillingness to connect their ideologies and discourses towards the interests of workers.

This seminar is part of the Contesting Indonesia series organised by the Centre on Asia and Globalisation, at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. The series provides an opportunity for scholars and practitioners within the region to present their take on the world's third largest democracy. It runs from October 2 2008 into early 2009. For more information on the series please contact spymle@nus.edu.sg or visit <http://www.spp.nus.edu.sg/CAG/home.aspx>