

# UGM Expert: Lampung Conflict, Part of Previous Conflict

Friday, 02 November 2012 WIB, By: marwati

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YOGYAKARTA- The recent clash between residents of South Lampung (28-29/10) is part of previous conflicts. The conflict did not only involve the ethnic groups existing there, but it also has the cause rooted deeper.

Expert in conflict resolution of Centre for Security and Peace Studies of UGM, Prof. Mohtar Mas'oeed, exemplified some conflicts occurring earlier, including transmigration, People's Core Plantation or shrimp farming.

"This is a case reemerging with deeper rooted cause. It happened that this was triggered by women issue which was then expanding into a bigger issue, taking up people's lives," said Mas'oeed in a discussion at the Centre on Thursday (1/11).

The Head of the Centre said that the Lampung conflict was also related to historical and sociological factors. He cited the ethical politics during the Dutch occupation in irrigation, education and transmigration programmes. These caused the process of state building and capital accumulation which then created demographic change. The change also caused frictions between indigenous community and the newcomers.

"What often happened was newcomers were more hard working, which caused the indigenous people on the defensive," he added.



Another researcher from the Centre, Drs. Samsu Rizal Panggabean, M.Sc. Rizal, shared this view. He said that the reoccurrence of conflict showed the failure of the government, particularly security forces to prevent the conflict from re-emerging as it happened in the place vulnerable to repetitive conflict.

“Conflict handling here has to be more seriously done than the one by regional government, police, and local leaders,” Rizal said.

Authorities, Rizal said, were unable to reduce tensions and prevented acts of violence because their intervention was made when the conflict had almost gone widespread. What happened was not ignorance but failure to prevent violence in the early stage of conflict.

Besides, communities in the vulnerable areas did not have preventive mentality but mentality to mitigate conflict when it is happening or afterwards. For regions that have many indicators of conflict, including incident and violence such as those in South Lampung, prevention has to be the main approach of the government, security forces and society.

“This experience displayed the poor record of the policy, the military and society in tackling acts of violence that had happened previously,” he ended.

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