

Violence Against Women in Indonesia Is Systemic and the Government Is Not Doing Enough to Unravel It: Rights Activists

Via [International Viewpoint](#)

The National Commission for Women's annual report in 2019 recorded a 14 percent increase in cases of violence against women to a total of 406,178 cases.

"Violence against women is systemic because it occurs repeatedly in a neverending circle. The government has been neglecting the marginalization and repression of women," Mutiara Ika, the coordinator of women's group Perempuan Mahardika, said at the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation headquarters in Jakarta on Thursday.

Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI) director Asfinawati said violence against women is a very complex issue in Indonesia because women experience it not only in public but also inside the home.

In the National Commission for Women's report, domestic violence is the most reported case at 71 percent.

Asfinawati said violence against women comes in many forms, including physical abuse, psychological violence and sexual violence. The perpetrators, aside from individuals, can also be governmental or non-governmental institutions – cultural, religious and educational.

"It's systemic violence because it happens multiple times in

all sectors and spaces,” Asfinawati said.

Asfinawati also pointed out that violence against women leads to violence against human rights, often in the form of stereotyping and discrimination against women.

“For instance, a patriarchal job market refuses to hire skilled women for high-paying jobs because employers think women are not capable. In the end, women are segregated into low-paying, menial jobs,” she said.

Domesticating Bills

Gerak Perempuan also criticizes recent bills that potentially domesticate women even more.

“The job creation omnibus bill and family resilience bill contain clauses that will further domesticate women. If these bills are passed into laws, the government will effectively legitimize violence and discrimination against women. We demand the government abolish these bills,” said Nining Elitos, the chairwoman of the Indonesian Trade Unions Alliance (Kasbi).

Nining said instead of deliberating on the job creation and family resilience bills, lawmakers should use their time to pass the long-awaited elimination of sexual violence bill.

The alliance also demands the government resolve longstanding mass-rape and murder cases from the May 1998 riot [1], when at least 52 Chinese-Indonesian women became victims of gang rape.

“Those were also the results of systemic violence against women. We have the data on the cases, but the government has never gone ahead with the trial,” Mutiara said.

The alliance also pointed out that the LGBTQ community in recent years is increasingly becoming the subject of discrimination.

“To commemorate International Women’s Day on March 8, we will march to the Presidential Palace to remind the government they have been neglecting this issue of systemic violence against women,” Mutiara said.