

## *City to continue reclamation project*

The Jakarta administration will proceed with its planned reclamation project along the North Jakarta coast after a recent Supreme Court edict approved the plan. Jakarta Deputy Governor Prijanto said the administration respected the Supreme Court's decision and expected other parties to as well.

"The reclamation project was planned and designed with environmental considerations and the public needs in mind. We will continue with the plan," Prijanto told reporters at City Hall.

In an about-face, the Supreme Court approved the Jakarta administration's request last week to permit the project. The Supreme Court previously ruled in favor of the Environment Ministry, allowing the Ministry to uphold its 2003 decree against the planned reclamation project.

In October last year, the Supreme Court ordered the city administration to halt the reclamation project until developers could meet environmental impact assessment requirements set in 2003. Six companies involved in the planned 2,700-hectare reclamation project were ordered to conduct a new analysis because the environmental impact analysis they submitted was deemed inadequate.

Separately, M. Tauchid Cakra Amidjaya, the city's deputy for development and environment, said the Supreme Court's ruling affirmed the city's legal base in the reclamation project.

"The ministerial decree only ordered the city to complete the environmental impact analysis. We are doing that right now," Tauchid said.

He added that the reclamation project would promote economic growth, increase the green area and provide more residential areas. NGO Indonesian Forum for the Environment (Walhi) protested on Friday against the court ruling.

"We truly regret the ruling because it is a 180-degree setback," Walhi Jakarta executive director Ubaidillah said. The reclamation project should be stalled, he said, as developers failed to include the required analysis as stipulated in the spatial plan.

"In our opinion, all projects related to the land reclamation should be delayed pending the analysis," he said. He added that there were indications that several developers had influenced the court's decision, adding that his organization was investigating the possible intervention.

"Should we find any indication of corruption [in the ruling], we will report the case to the Constitutional Court," Ubaidillah said.

In the administration's plan, the reclaimed area would be in the form of islets, spanning Green Beach, Kapuk Naga Indah, Angke, Mutiara, Sunda Kelapa, Ancol, Tanjung Priok and Marunda. High-rise buildings, landed residential estates, offices, shopping centers, mangroves, a golf course, a public beach and ports are all planned for development on the reclaimed land.

The projects would affect 32 kilometers of coastline in total, covering 2,700 hectares of land extending 1.5 kilometers from the coast. The deepest areas lie 8 meters below sea level.