

Former Gafatar Members Need to Be Empowered

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Thousands of former followers of the *Gerakan Fajar Nusantara* movement, or popularly known as Gafatar, have been returned to their city of origin after they had been expelled from Kalimantan. Gafatar is a syncretism movement that combines teachings from the Koran, Bible and Judaism. Social observer, Prof. Dr. Susetiawan, SU, said that the former Gafatar members need to be given a briefing and coaching before being returned to the community. This is needed in order for them to return to the right path.


"(They are) Not only provided with nationalism ideology, but also be prepared to get back to their old community," he said on Friday (29/1) at UGM.

In addition to providing insights into the former members of Gafatar, Susetiawan assessed that the public also needs to be given knowledge not to intimidate them. Because, that kind of action will only further alienate Gafatar former members from society.

Society is expected to accept the return of these former members. The rejection of society and the family, he said, will open up opportunities for them to return to deviant group.

"The family and society need to be able to accept them back. The circumstances that could make the former members and communities can live together again is the main thing that needs to be provided," he explained.

Susetiawan added that the government also needs to make empowerment programs for former



followers of Gafatar. Not only in the form of physical assistance, but also more sustainable support. One important thing is to guarantee their survival to not be trapped in the poverty.

"The government should think of providing jobs for these refugees," he said.

Separately, Social Psychologist of UGM, Prof. Faturachman, said that the acceptance by the family and the environment is an effective way to restore a former member of Gafatar to return to the society.

"If they had the awareness to go back, the most fundamental thing needed is the support of family, neighbors, and the environment," he said.

According to the man, the psychological approach is needed for them. Psychological guidance should be given by a psychologist so that they are assured to live a normal life again among society.

"It could be done through a realistic approach to convince them that it is not easy to create the desired perfect life as promised by the Gafatar group," he explained.(UGM /adelily)

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