

UGM Researcher Joins Research Expedition in Antarctica

Wednesday, 16 March 2016 WIB, By: Teguh



Nugroho Imam Setiawan, ST, MT, PhD., lecturer in the Department of Geological Engineering Faculty of Engineering is selected to join research planet earth's future in the Antarctic held by Japan Antarctic Research Expedition (JARE). According to the plan, the research will be held for two months, from January to February 2017.

Nugroho is the only member of the expedition team that comes from Southeast Asia. He managed to be in the Jare 58 team along with two other researchers from Mongolia and Sri Lanka after going through a selection interview and recommendation.

"There are many researchers who applied in this expedition such as Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and others, but only three countries are selected, namely Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Mongolia," he said on Wednesday (16/3).

Nugroho said that JARE summer and winter team are consisted of 64 people, 61 of whom were Japanese and three others from Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Mongolia. The 58th JARE 58 to invite scientists from Asian countries who do not have a base camp in Antarctica to join as an observer through the Asian Forum for Polar Sciences (AFOPS). On this occasion, observers are joining the

geological team.

"I am in the geological team that will examine the metamorphic rocks in the Antarctic, the basic requirement is a specialization of knowledge in the field of metamorphic rocks," he explained.

Antarctic Expedition Exercise

In the preparation for reasearch expedition in Antarctica, he and the other team members participated on "Winter Camp Training" on March 7 to 11 in Japan. The training was organized by the National Institute of Polar Research (NIPR) which is the official organization of the organizers of the Japan Antarctic Research Expedition.

"The purpose of this training program is to prepare the expedition team members to be able to carry out research activities in Antarctica with extreme weather," he said.

The research team will depart to Antarctica in late November 2016 and returned in March 2017. The team consists of researchers from various disciplines such as geography, geology, biological oceanography, geophysics, sedimentology, astronomy, glaciology, and others. Each research team has different training curriculum.

Nugroho explained that during the training he had with the other members of the team, in addition of getting an explanation related to the JARE activities they are also given the material on how to survive. They also practiced an attempt to find a route if they get lost in the expedition.

"We were also trained to walk in the snow with climbing iron, gorge evacuation, sleep training in bivax and others," he explained.

Nugroho feel proud and grateful that he can go in this Antarctic expedition in the name of UGM and Indonesia. Nevertheless, he is also feeling anxious about the extreme temperatures he will face in the Antarctic.

"There is a sense of nervous because I am just coming from equatorial country with a stable

temperature without ever experiencing minus 10 degrees Celsius, especially camping on that condition," said by the graduate of Kyushu University, Japan.

By joining research expedition in the Antarctic, Nugroho is hoping to obtain good data for publication paper in revealing the evolution of metamorphic rocks. It can also encourage the next generation to do a similar study from basic sciences.

"It would be better if the Indonesian government want to create a research base camp in Antarctica," he hoped.

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