

Millions of Indonesians Live in Disaster Prone Areas

Wednesday, 22 February 2017 WIB, By: Marwati



Indonesia is prone to disasters. The National Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB) noted as many as 148.4 million people live in earthquake prone areas, 5 million in tsunami, 1.2 million in volcanic eruption, 63.7 in floods, 40.9 in landslide prone areas.

“Each year the nation suffers from a loss as huge as Rp30 trillions due to disasters,” Head of the Agency, Willem Rampangilei, said on Tuesday (20/2) in the Multimedia Room of UGM Main Office. Willem gave a public lecture titled Disaster Mitigation and Challenges in Indonesia.

In Indonesia there are 386 regencies/municipalities located at earthquake zone, 233 in tsunami zone, 75 in volcanic zone, 315 in flood zone, and 274 in landslide zone.

“Central Java, East Java, West Java, East Kalimantan, and Aceh are five provinces that are exposed to disasters throughout year 2016,” he said.

Willem said disaster trend increased from year to year. As high as 92 percent of disasters in Indonesia were hydrometeorology related disasters. The increase is caused by natural factors, such as climate change and anthropogenic factor such as environment degradation, settlement in disaster prone zone, critical watershed, urbanisation, etc.

“In 2016 there were 2,384 disasters happening and this was an increase from 1,732 in year 2015,”

he said. Floods were the ones most often happening in 2016 until 775 times, even the areas had extended to those that never experienced flooding before, such as Pangkal Pinang, Bandung, and Bima.

Seeing the condition of Indonesia that is very prone to disaster, Willem emphasised the need for disaster management to minimise casualties and losses due to disasters. Three main points are important for disaster management, namely bringing society away from disaster, bringing disaster away from the society, and live harmoniously with disasters. This requires partnership among government, society, and private sector. Willem added universities also have significant role in disaster management, which are through research and socialisation of disaster mitigation to people, and capacity enhancement through student community service.

“The BNPB has worked with the universities for disaster mitigation, one of those is UGM,” he said. In 2016 BNPB and UGM collaborated in the landslide early warning system installation for 17 areas: Kerinci, Cianjur, Purworejo, Magelang, Lombok Timur, Lombok Tengah, Lombok Barat, Bantaeng, Kota Manado, Maluku Tengah, Buru, Kota Ambon, Sikka, Kota Jayapura, Nabire, Teluk Wondama, and Manokwari.

“UGM has been active in the development of concept and findings of disaster mitigation that comes in the form of Early Warning System,” he said.

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