

Josaphat, Radar Maker in Japan from Indonesia


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Having the right to live for good in Japan does not make Prof. Josaphat Tetuko Sri Sumantyo (46) change nationalities. He prefers to be an Indonesian national. It does not bother him to renew his passport and visa every so often in order that he may go abroad every week to accept invitations for presentations of his research. "I'm still an Indonesian at heart, hopefully when I'm 55, I can return home and do services in Indonesia," said Josaphat in a public lecture at Faculty of Geography UGM on Monday (15/5).

Now, Josaphat is teaching at Chiba University in Japan. He has been appointed civil servant at the Education and Technology Ministry in Japan. In his opinion, he did not only want to become a lecturer but also one that develops science.

The owner of hundreds of patent in radar and satellite is acknowledged well in Japan. Even his works have been adopted by the majority of countries in the world. His findings in radar and satellite technology that is more advanced have attracted large corporations. His finding in synthetic aperture radar, ground penetrating radar, mobile satellite communication, and microsatellite have been used by corporations that benefit many people. Still, Josaphat admits what he has gained so far was an appreciation of his persistence in developing the technology that at one time was seen as impossible.



Because his works had benefitted many people, government agencies and companies came to him asking for cooperation. Many offered him funding to realise his research ideas.

Josaphat said he has a research centre at Chiba University where he employs up to 50 researchers.

As an illustration, his satellite is much cheaper than those in the market. "Just imagine, a satellite may cost as high as 4-5 trillions but I would sell one for just 25 billions and it also functions better," he said.

Despite these high achievements, Josaphat remains low profile. He said there is no such advance technology. What makes it a difference is sheer lack of knowledge. "The technology that is seen as rocket science is basically very simple, depending on whether you know it or not," he said.

Finally, Josaphat shares with us his tips for success. In his view, every one has the opportunity to get new ideas and thoughts. "Give the brain a chance to ponder on new and good things so that our brains get trained well," he said.

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