

# Role of Geologists Important for Infrastructure Development Risk Reduction


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Indonesia lies in the volcanic ring which is vulnerable to geological disaster. With such condition, the role of geologists is key to infrastructure development, which became the priority of President Joko Widodo .

"Such condition is not a barrier, but a challenge that has to be resolved by geologists or earth science practitioners," said Minister for Public Works and Residential, Basuki Hadimuljono, in a keynote speech during the *10th Earth Science Seminar* hosted by Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) Yogyakarta recently.

According to the Minister, geologists are not only required for exploration and exploitation of natural resources, but also support national development for the infrastructure. Geologists also have strategic position in such infrastructure development because they determine the safety of infrastructure development and can give guidelines. In their job, it is important for them to do identification and analysis of risk, mitigation and management of risk in order that construction failures can be minimised. They need also to communicate on such risk to stakeholders.



"It requires thinking, strategies, methods of work, technology breakthrough, and real action to support and accelerate the infrastructure development," he said.

He mentioned some infrastructure projects in the Ministry that engage geologists, including road construction in Papua borders spanning 1,098.2 km, the construction of Trans Sumatera Palembang-Indralaya roads that are 22 km in length using Vacuum Preloading technology for resolving negative tension and accelerates ground consolidation. Geologists also have a role in determining the topography, hydrology, and complex geology in building the Pekanbaru-Padang toll roads, Sabo Dam for mitigation of Mt. Merapi, and construction of tunnels at Cisumdawu toll roads.

After the speech, the Minister met with 70 staff from the Ministry that are currently taking graduate degrees at Faculty of Engineering UGM, accompanied by Rector of UGM, Prof. Ir Panut Mulyono, M.Eng, D.Eng., and former Rector, Prof. Dr. Dwikorita Karnawati MSc.

Meanwhile, member of Regional Consultative Board (DPD), Afnan Hadikusumo, said infrastructure procurement in Indonesia has gone slowly due to barriers found in the project, starting from preparation to implementation. Afnan said in the selecting process there were problems in terms of weak quality of project preparation and limitations in funding, also land procurement.

"In terms of funding, problems often emerged related to the unavailability of fiscal support from government due to unsuitabilities or disagreement on risk sharing between government and enterprises," said Afnan.

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