

UGM Develops Pagilaran Tea as Agro-tourism Destination


Friday, 14 February 2020 WIB, By: Natasa Adelayanti



Gadjah Mada University began the development of Pagilaran agro-tourism development in Batang Regency, Central Java, which involved PT Pagilaran as one of the business units under the auspices of UGM and local communities living around the tea plantations. The inauguration of the agro-tourism development was marked by the laying of the first stone carried out by the UGM Director of Business Development and Incubation, Dr. Hargo Utomo, Director of Pagilaran, Rahmat Gunadi, and Batang Regent, Wihaji.

Based on the development plan of tea agro-tourism will be in the form of physical development such as the manufacture of an amphitheater that can accommodate 1,000 people at once. After that, continued with the construction of 15 standard 4-star hotel cottages, 15 glamor camping spots, premium cafes on the top of Kupel Hill, tea houses. In addition to that matter, the construction of culinary centers, parking lots and amphitheater will be built soon. The physical construction project itself is targeted to be completed until mid-2021.

Hargo Utomo said the development of agrotourism as one form of innovation carried out by Pagilaran in maximizing the potential of tea plantations not only grew as a technology-based industry but also as a location for future tourist destinations. Nevertheless, Pagilaran remains committed to increase exports of national tea production. "The development of agro-tourism is a manifestation of UGM's commitment in implementing Tridarma tertiary institutions, we want this



industry to grow and develop with the community," Hargo said on Friday (7/1) at the Pagilaran Tea Plantation, Batang, Central Java.

Hargo said that Pagilaran is one of the national tea plantation industries in which very potential for being able to grow efficiently, increasing productivity and implementing technology-based innovations. However, the consequences to increase productivity and innovation will inevitably reduce the use of human resources so that innovations are needed in the hope of human labor is not replaced by technological machines. "We are forming a new institutional innovation, a community-owned enterprise together with Pagilaran to facilitate the use of human resources in other fields supporting the plantation industry, especially in the field of tourism, with nuances of education, entertainment and environmental sustainability," he said.

PT Pagilaran's Director, Rahmad Gunadi, said that PT Pagilaran together with the community will manage the tea plantation agro-tourism to support the existence of local communities and human resources who have been working under the auspices of the tea plantation industry which has 1,113 hectares of land. "With the addition of technology to increase productivity, labor absorption will certainly be reduced. What's so great about Pagilaran if you can't recruit many people. Therefore, it will manage Pagilaran agro-tourism with the community, " he said.

According to him, to support the development of agro-tourism besides involving the community through cooperatives and tourism managers, PT Pagilaran also expects support from the government in the field of infrastructure, especially in improving road and bridge access from the Batang regency.

The Regent of Batang said that his party appreciated the innovation carried out by PT Pagilaran which would develop tea plantations as a new tourist destination in the Batang area. "If this is serious, we will build bridges and roads but tourism promotion must be extraordinary. The most important thing is there are direct benefits from the community," he said.

Wihaji added that PT Pagilaran, which has more than 1,000 hectares of land, asked for a minimum of 10 hectares of land to be used for agro-tourism development. "This is an extraordinary strength when it is managed for agro-tourism," he said.

He hopes that the business in the agro-tourism development project will grow PT Pagilaran as a plantation industry that continues to advance and develop with the community. "If it grows, the people will increase their economy," he said.

The launching of the development of a new agro-tourism in Pagilaran is in addition to laying the first

stone also marked by planting tea and protective trees in the area around the tea plantations as a commitment of PT Pagilaran in rehabilitating tea plantations.

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