

UGM Sends Team to Merapi

Thursday, 28 October 2010 WIB, By: Marwati

The increased status of Mount Merapi to red alert brought consequences for the people living in the restricted areas. The restricted zone is currently inhabited by 40 thousand people. They can be evacuated at any times of eruptions. Evacuation process has been done by the Sleman local government since the red alert was put on. At present, about 23 camps are available for over 10 thousand displaced persons.

These conditions made the Center for Natural Disaster Studies (PSBA) UGM take the initiative to send a team to handle the people. "The team that is deployed is in charge of mapping the distributions of displaced persons, identifying vulnerable groups according to age, sex, and condition, as well as assessing the level of vulnerability of disaster-prone areas in terms of physical, social, economic, and environmental aspects," Prof. Dr. Sudibyakto, Team Coordinator, explained on Tuesday (26/10).

Sudibyakto added that the team will also assess the minimum standards of service for the people, resources in the disaster-prone areas as well as possible fundraising potential sources. Subsequently, the mapping and identification of the coordination chain of the disaster management on preparedness and emergency response will also be conducted. "Those are done to assist on how to handle the Merapi disaster prone areas in terms of spatial aspects, also the steps to manage the displaced persons and infrastructure development that considers Merapi disaster risks," he explained.

Sudibyakto conveyed that PSBA send 25 students who have competence in risk management and expertise in the field of geoinformation for disaster management. Five members of expert team, who have expertise in disaster management, information systems, social, and population, volcano, and area development, were also sent. "IDPs handling is very important in order that the minimum basic needs can be met in accordance with the rules," he said.

Regarding the location to be surveyed, Sudibyakto said, most of them is the location of the barracks in the regencies of Magelang, Sleman, Klaten, and Boyolali. It is expected that the results of this survey can provide information about the real needs of displaced persons. This will be uploaded on the website of the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB). This will also show the disaster management at Merapi as a practice lesson in Indonesia.

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