

Gajah Mada King Society Planted 1000 Trees at Merapi

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KLATEN - Gajah Mada King Society (Gamkis) along with 6 communities of RX-King motorcycle enthusiasts in Yogyakarta on Sunday (29/5) planted 1,000 trees in Sambungrejo Hamlet, Balerante Village, Kemalang Sub District, Klaten Regency, Central Java. Types of trees planted are 700 sengon sea trees, 300 jabon and 6 banyan trees. The event was marked by banyan tree planting around the slopes of Merapi, which carried out by a representative member of Gamkis, Nugroho Hadi, and Chairman of Merapi Slope Community, Heri Timbul Guritno, witnessed by hundreds of members of King club of Yogyakarta.

Nugroho Hadi said that the planting of trees on Merapi slope is one of activities of King Motorcycle enthusiasts' community in Yogyakarta. In addition to help the process of forestation in the slopes affected by eruption, the activity also aimed to increase concern for members of King's club to the environment. "This is a form of our concern. Motorcycle community is not only for fun and gathering, but it does real action like this," the UGM employee said.

Nugroho said that Gamkis members in UGM are at least 60 people. Its membership also varied, ranging from employees to lecturers. This tree planting is one of a series of celebration events of the 1st anniversary of Gamkis which falls in May. The tree planting was attended by six King community clubs of Yogyakarta, among others, Btrac, Trackc, Handayani King Club, Yinyang King Club, Kayen King Club, and Jogja King Club.

Merapi Slope Community Chairman, Heri Timbul Guritno, said that King club community activities not only completed the planting of trees, but continued with other programs to assist communities living around the slopes. "We hope King Club could visit this place frequently," he said.

The tree planting around Merapi slopes is beneficial for local residents in order to reforesting the area. The condition of Merapi slope is very barren and arid due to hot clouds of eruption in 2010, whereas the area around Merapi slopes is the water catchment area. "By planting banyan trees is very helpful. We know the tree is capable of storing water," he said.

Not only helping water conservation efforts for Klaten people, but also in Yogyakarta. Benefits of better environmental condition will also be felt by the people living around the slope. "What we have done will give great benefits, not only for Sambungrejo, but also for Yogyakarta and Klaten.

Hopefully, these trees give people a better life later on," he said.

UGM Psychologist, Helly P. Soetjipto, who attended the event, said that planting trees around the slopes of Merapi increases the spirit for the people who are now beginning to return to live in the region. Although in dangerous area, the majority of community refused to relocate. "They are here not to seek death, but look for a better life. They return to survive. For them, wherever they are, they are going to die. This community has shown courage to stay in the dangerous area for decades," he said.

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