

Historian: Corrupt Bureacrats are Results of Feudalism

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YOGYAKARTA - Historian from Universitas Gadjah Mada, Prof Dr Suhartono, said the behaviour to commit corruption is due to the feudalistic bureaucracy existing in the kingdom era up to the colonial era. The feudalistic habit in the pattern of thinking and mentality for personal gains have infiltrated into the mind of officials and those with power. The colonial culture which prioritises status and position is reflected in the behaviour and action in the social structure. "This phenomenon became inherent in the personality of authorities, so their lifestyle places the materialistic matter as tools of symbol and power," said Suhartono after a discussion to mark the struggle of Prince Diponegoro at the Koesnadi Hardjasoemantri (PKKH) Cultural Centre of UGM, Monday (8/1/2013).

The feudalistic social system existing in society formerly encouraged by kingdoms, especially feudalistic agrarian kingdoms, has served as basis of kingdom government operating across the Archipelago. The chronology of corruption that occurs at present is related to the social structure and the socio-cultural continuity almost does not experience change significantly so corruption continues.

The professor of the the Cultural Sciences Faculty of UGM said since the colonial era until near the end of the period, real corruptors were the government through bureaucrats that manipulated taxes that were charged to society. The extent of the taxes and the rampant corruption made the people fight back.

Prince Diponegoro during the colonial era, according to Suhartono, is not only someone wanting for freedom but also fighting back against corrupt colonial Government that exploited people through taxes to be manipulated by bureaucrats.

Considered as the symbol of sincere and honest knight, mastering the art of war and good leadership, Diponegoro was able to inspire people to fight back against the Dutch government. His struggle was followed not only by people in Yogyakarta but also Central and East Java. "The war extended to East Java. I called this a religious Javanese war," he said.



Suhartono viewed that Diponegoro should become a role model for leaders in terms of honesty and nationalism.

Meanwhile, assistant in the Center for Pancasila Studies of UGM, Cahyo Gumilang, said the Selarong cave in Bantul regency formerly used as Prince Diponegoro's hideout during the guerilla war is now abandoned. Despite becoming a tourist destination, the cave is not maintained well. "There's not even public transport to that place," he said. He urged the government to pay attention to the historic site.

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