

Environmentalist Marandus Sirait Earns UGM Award


Monday, 23 December 2013 WIB, By: Marwati



YOGYAKARTA - Ten years of becoming a liturgical musician has not made Marandus Sirait, 46, forget his hometown of Lunban Rang in Lake Toba, North Sumatera. After returning there in 2009, he used music as the media to draw attention to raise awareness to Lake Toba, which he considered environmentally damaged. "I just wanted the local people to care for the environment," Sirait said after earning the UGM Award for his role in environment on Thursday (19/12).

Sirait said he had planted thousands of trees to conserve the environment on an area spanning 40 hectares, which he named The Eden Park (Taman Eden). He said this is a project to be made the example for conservation efforts around the lake.

It was not easy though for Sirait to implement his intention. He was even threatened by his own friends for having always protested against timber logging that damaged the ecosystem.



Initially, not many people followed his example. Sirait did not give up hope. He made many efforts to make them interested. He asked artists to do campaigns. Sirait considered that art was the most effective way to educate people on environment awareness. “I learned the torch music and dance as a campaign tool to plant trees. Even a group of blind men was asked to join,” he said.

His role in opening the Eden Park was awarded by Governor, Forestry Minister and President. But he returned two awards from the Governor and one from the Minister as he considered them not serious in the reforestation effort in the lake. “For me, a trophy is meaningless if Lake Toba’s forests are not conserved,” the high school graduate said.

The UGM Award given to him showed the UGM taking side with those who work actively in isolated areas. “It appears that UGM pays attention to us who live on the corner of the world,” he said.

The UGM Award is also granted to other influential figures, such as dr. Nafsiah Mboi, Sp.A., MPH, in health category, Prof. Dr. Daoed Joesoef in education, and Nobertus Riantiarno in culture. The Award is presented during the 64th UGM’s anniversary by Rector of UGM, Prof. Dr. Pratikno, M.Soc.Sc.

Related News

- [UGM Lecturer Earns 'Adhikarya Pangan Nusantara 2014' Award](#)
- [Rector of UGM Earns Academic Leader Award 2019 from Higher Education Ministry](#)
- [UGM Earns Social Media Award 2015](#)
- [UGM Lecturer Earns Award from Curtin University](#)
- [Geography Lecturer from UGM Earns Young Geomorphologist Award](#)