

Four Million People Living on Volcanoes

Tuesday, 09 September 2014 WIB, By: Marwati




YOGYAKARTA - Head of Geology Agency, Surono, said some 4 millions of people are living in volcanic areas across Indonesia. It is not easy, however, to relocate them, which requires good communication and knowledge sharing in disaster mitigation. "Living in harmony with the nature is a way to bridge human beings and volcanoes," said Surono after opening the 8th Cities on Volcanoes international conference at Universitas Gadjah Mada, Tuesday (9/9).

The conference is attended by as many as 485 scientists, observers, and volunteers from 39 countries, who discuss research and technology on volcano and disaster mitigation.

Surono added volcanology is much required by researchers and policy makers to know the characteristics of a volcano. But, in fact, some countries with volcanoes are lacking in terms of technologies. This conference is, therefore, needed to increase cooperation between countries for the sake of volcanology and disaster mitigation.

Surono expected the new government would pay more attention to disaster mitigation. He also hoped UGM to soon become the Research Centre of Excellence in volcanology and open volcanology study programme.

Vice Rector for Cooperation and Alumni of UGM, Prof. Ir. Dwikorita Karnawati, M.Soc., Sc., said disasters might destroy one's economy. Higher learning institutes have to have a role in education, research, and technology in terms of disaster mitigation.



Meanwhile, Chairman of International Association for Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior (IAVCEI), Raymond Cas, said one model of volcano disaster mitigation is done through science and technology, observation, early warning system, and communication between government and society that is supported by the mass media and researchers.

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