

The Aceh Tsunami from an historical viewpoint, the impact of damage and efforts to face future disasters

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The tsunami disaster in Aceh was not a new phenomenon. History shows that a tsunami occurred more than 1,000 years ago. There is some evidence that tsunamis have been occurring in Aceh for a long time. There is historical evidence, folklore and documents. The tsunami that occurred on December 26, 2004 was the biggest event in the history of Indonesia, and claimed the lives of more than 160,000 people. The Acehnese, who are Muslim, believe that disasters are a kind of warning from God, so the people of Aceh accept this disaster as a warning to do better in the future. For the people of Aceh, the tsunami was a destiny that must be accepted. If we look back on the damages caused by the 2004 tsunami, it was very difficult to restore everything to the original situation. Damages and the loss of property can certainly be repaired, but the loss of loved ones is painful and all of the Aceh people feel sadness. Many rehabilitation and reconstruction programs have been established by the Aceh local government and the Indonesian government with the help of the international community. Now Aceh has recovered in physical and economic terms but is not yet safe from future disasters. Aceh has lost the momentum to prevent its residents from staying in the same place near the coast. Some people believe that a tsunami will not happen again in the same place. A joint task force made up of multi stakeholders making various efforts is needed to make to this people safe from tsunami disasters in the future. Several good cooperative works have been carried out by the Acehnese people with the international community as an effort to recover from the impact of the disaster and to prepare for future tsunami. As an example, tsunami victims from Japan collaborated with those from Aceh to share their experiences and lessons to arouse enthusiasm to deal with disasters that can occur again. Still lot of work has to be done by the government to save the population from future tsunami hazards. Promoting disaster education to the younger generation and how to deal with it is one of the keys to survive in the future.