

PRESS RELEASE

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Innovative Conservation Efforts Kicks-off with Jagalan Tlilih Heritage Walk in the historic city of Kotagede



YOGYAKARTA, 29 March 2015 – A pilot collaboration between Community Architects' Group ArkomJogja and youth group Karang Taruna Desa Jagalan supported by AirAsia Foundation celebrates a milestone today with the launch of the Jagalan Tlilih Heritage Walks in the historic city of Kotagede. Governor of Yogyakarta, Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X and AirAsia Indonesia Commissioner Dharmadi are present at the launch event.

The heritage walks highlight the unique architectural, cultural and historical characteristics of Jagalan village. This program is launched as a result of a year-long documentation and mapping process. Desa Jagalan is one of the five villages that make up the core zone of the Kotagede Heritage Site. Today's launch will see participants embark on three separate tours with local guides who will explain the historical and cultural significance of the points of interest on their trail.

The project first began in July 2013 as part of a 'Conservation Through Enterprise' Initiative undertaken by ArkomJogja with a social enterprise grant from AirAsia Foundation. The group started by training local youth volunteers in interview and surveying techniques before leading a village-wide exercise to gather accurate geographical and demographic information about the area and its inhabitants.

"Many of the historical features of Jagalan have begun disappearing, such as traditional houses, local culinary specialities and cultural heritage such as traditional arts and trades. Through this mapping exercise with local community members, Karang Taruna and ArkomJogja helped rediscover the potential for Jagalan to attract visitors interested in its distinctive heritage," said ArkomJogja Coordinator Yuli Kusworo.

Yuli said the 'Conservation Through Enterprise' Initiative conceived by ArkomJogja aimed at applying innovative approaches to conservation of historical villages in Indonesia. "We believe that conservation can only be effective if local community members are engaged and have a stake in the process. Through our youth engagement with Karang Taruna, it creates a strong basis for the younger generation to understand and protect their own heritage," he added.

During the first six months of the project, over 70 youth volunteers of Karang Taruna representing four Jagalan village sub-districts were trained and the findings from their surveys were then compiled by the ArkomJogja team to create architectural and demographic maps of the historical zones. These maps formed the basis of the Jagalan Tlilih Heritage Walks.

Meanwhile, results of the mapping exercise also led ArkomJogja to begin a separate process to revive the traditional silversmithing trade in Jagalan.

"We realised from our mapping that there are less than 30 active traditional silversmiths in Jagalan. This is a major decline from just 20 years ago when almost every household was involved in the trade in some way. The roots of the silversmithing trade dates back more than 500 years to the Mataram Sultanate period. It would be a major loss to Indonesia's cultural heritage if it disappears from Jagalan," Yuli explained.

In February 2014, ArkomJogja and Karang Taruna organised a week-long design innovation workshop with the participation of 22 traditional silversmiths with funding and technical expertise from AirAsia Foundation and the British Council Indonesia. The results of the workshop led to the creation of the Selaka Mataram Silversmiths' Collective comprising 17 Jagalan silversmiths who will begin using design techniques gained from the workshop to create new silver designs.

"AirAsia Foundation supports the 'Conservation Through Enterprise' Initiative of ArkomJogja because we believe in empowering local communities to participate in tourism growth in Indonesia. At the same time, we have to ensure that this is done in a responsible and managed way so that Indonesia does not lose its beautiful heritage. This is especially important for Old Cities like Kotagede which carry so much historical significance to Indonesian culture," said Dharmadi, AirAsia Indonesia Commissioner.

Dharmadi said other than financial support, AirAsia Foundation's role is to tap on the AirAsia Group strengths to help boost the success of the initiatives that it supports. This includes engaging suitable partners such as the British Council Indonesia to provide technical expertise and in helping boost conservation enterprise initiatives through channels available to the group.

"Other than introducing the Jagalan Tlilih Heritage Walks to our guests through our inflight magazine, Travel360, we are also enabling the Kotagede silversmiths to sell their silver items



on board our flights. This will provide them with access to a new market altogether. Our guests will be able to bring home a special souvenir of Indonesian culture while playing a role in ensuring the survival of this traditional trade," he added.

Between April and June 2015, Jagalan Tlilih Heritage Walks will take place every Sunday from 10am to 12pm at a special promotional fee of Rp55,000. This fee includes a guided tour, an illustrated map, a tote bag and refreshments. Interested participants may reserve their place by emailing jogja@arkom.or.id. After this period, new tours will be added to explore new aspects of Kotagede. Kotagede Silver pieces created by the Selaka Mataram Silversmiths' Collective will be available in Jagalan and on board AirAsia flights from June 2015.

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About ArkomJogja

Arkomjogja is an open platform for architects and other professionals working with grassroots communities to discuss and share experiences in community-organising initiatives. Established in 2012, ArkomJogja is part of the Community Architect Network covering members from 19 countries in Asia. Arkomjogja's core activities involve working with communities in disaster-prone areas for post-disaster reconstruction. The organisation also works with urban poor communities and in conservation of heritage and cultural sites in Indonesia.

About AirAsia Foundation

AirAsia Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the AirAsia Group of airlines, is mandated to support the growth of social enterprises in ASEAN. Established in 2012, the Foundation aims to fulfill the group's objective of giving back to the communities of ASEAN by sharing its values of entrepreneurship, equal opportunity and innovation through its activities. AirAsia Foundation currently funds nine social enterprises in six countries in ASEAN.

About the AirAsia Group

AirAsia, the leading and largest low-cost carrier in Asia, services the most extensive network with over 90 destinations. Within 12 years of operations, AirAsia has carried over 250 million guests and grown its fleet from just two aircraft to over 180. The airline is proud to be a truly Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) airline with established operations based in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines and India, servicing a network stretching across all Asean countries and beyond. AirAsia was named the World's Best Low Cost Airline in the annual World Airline Survey by Skytrax for six consecutive years from 2009 – 2014. AirAsia is the first airline globally to collaborate with INTERPOL to implement the I-Checkit system to screen the passports of all its prospective passengers against information contained in the world police body's Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) database.

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For media enquiries, please contact:

Audrey Prokastama Petriny
Head of Corporate Secretary and Communications
AirAsia Indonesia
+62-812-1291084
audreypetriny@airasia.com

Amalia Nur Indah Sari
ArkomJogja
+62-856-48021717
jogja@arkom.or.id