

NEWSLETTER VIAVIA | 2 - 2009

MARCH - APRIL

Finally the second newsletter is ready. Most of the writers for this edition are freelance guides of ViaVia. But also Hani and some students of Gajah Mada University are sharing their experiences.

Jogja as a student city is very dynamic. Students from other provinces come and go every year. Corry looks at student life from an economical, social and political perspective. It is a part that tourists hardly ever get to see, but at the same time probably very universal.

When someone wants to live in Jogja, he/she needs to know about simple greetings in Javanese. For the ones who don't know yet, here is a short lesson on greeting someone. Hani, one of the students from UPN University teaches you.

Galih is one of our freelance guides. He married last year and got a son last January. To know about his experience as a young father just read in two hours contractions.

Two other freelance guides, Uuth and Ucup have a story about living in different provinces than Jogja. Uuth is a 2005-recruited freelance guide. She's now teaching English in Balikpapan, East Borneo. She always has funny stories about weird friends. This time about a colleague acting possessed by a spirit.



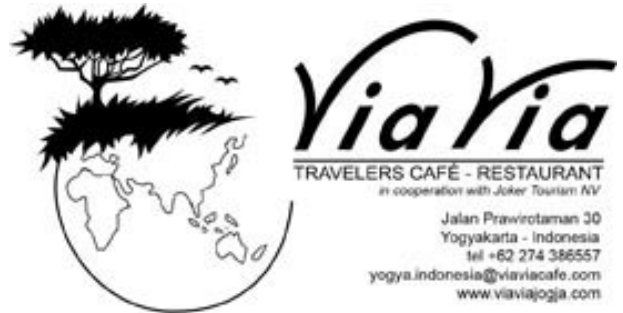
JOGJA, I AM COMING **Ucup Effendi**

It has been 5 months I lived in the capital of Indonesia, yup, Jakarta. Life in Jakarta is heavy and I lived in a tough neighborhood. Everything is expensive, from food, housing until

entertainment. Jakarta is totally different from Jogja, the nice, calm and cheap city.

I went to Jakarta to follow an Indonesian foreign ministry officer selection. I did not pass at the secondary stage selection / final stage. Hiks.....hiks... hiks....oh dear, so sad !!! My failure to become a future Indonesian diplomat does not make me lose hope though. I will try again next year.

While I stayed in Jakarta I decided to get a side job. I worked in a company as a personal relations officer. Because I could not enjoy working in that company, I



Ucup just came back from Jakarta. He experienced how difficult life is in Jakarta.

A group of Gajah Mada University students joined a bicycle trip for their research on tourism and the concept of ViaVia.

Bongky will be the next artist exhibiting his work in ViaVia. He explores his relation to God in his paintings.

We want to say many thanks to everyone who contributed stories. We will never stop saying that we are very grateful to anyone who wants to contribute a story, a thought, an experience, to our next edition. Enjoy reading!
Uji

decided to resign and find another job.

One night when the rains were coming, I listened to the radio while I was lying down on my bed. On the radio I heard a Yogyakarta song by the KLa Project band. Suddenly I missed Jogja, especially the food. In Jakarta I was thin because the food is expensive and I tried to save my money. I thought if I go back and live in Jogja I could become a fatty. Besides I could pick up my studies and take a masters.

That very instant I woke up and I decided to return to Jogja asap. If I keep hanging around in Jakarta I will get nothing, just being tired and skinny.

Thus on the 1st of February I came back and I promised myself to fatten up my body. And it's done. Just 3 weeks here and my weight went up 2 kilos. Everyday in Jogja I go to delicious food places to satisfy my appetite for food, which was lost in Jakarta.

Nyam.....nyam.....enjoy!!!

THE OTHER SIDE OF JOGJA'S LIFE

Corry Elyda



Huntington said that people are not defined by its ideology or economic background any longer but by their culture. I do believe it so. Just like in Jogja, people are not defined by their origin or social status, but they are defined by whether they are college students or not.

It is a story of

another side of Jogja that tourists barely know. In the eyes of tourism, Jogja is depicted as cultural city with its magnificent tradition and people. It is true. Nevertheless, there are pictures of Jogja which are reluctantly shown to the tourists that I want to reveal. It is about the life of college students. I do not know when Jogja became a student city. Schools and universities with all the infrastructures are like mushrooms in the rainy season. You never realize when and how it happens; they are eventually just there, around you. Just like a new social phenomenon, students' life, especially the ones who are from another city creates their own hues and patterns.

I will start from an economical point of view. Obviously, most students are jobless or part timers, just like me. If we are lucky enough, we will find a good job with a good salary but if we are not, we have to be satisfied with the jobless status. Living as a student, economically, is more about spending, not earning. Outside the daily needs, there are some 'necessities' that need to be fulfilled. The biggest amount of money will flow to credit for mobile phones for solving communication issues, dvd rental as the cheapest entertainment, and laundry in the rainy season to facilitate their laziness. How about books? Nope. Instead of buying books, photocopy shops are still a cheap and great choice (Indonesia is still backward on plagiarism issues). Because the money they have is limited, all kinds of daily needs in Jogja are designed to be cheap and affordable. Hence, do not be surprised if Jogja is the cheapest city in Indonesia although it also sometimes means bad quality, consequently. The flow of money also has a unique pattern. Because students wait for transfers from their parents, we can say that students only feel rich in the beginning of the month, feel extra careful in the middle, and

feel down at the end of the month. That is a certain and stagnant cycle. Therefore, it is no wonder that *angkringan* (traditional food stall with very cheap and less nutritious food) are crowded on *old date* (literary translated for 'the last days of the month')

The second perspective is from a social point of view. College students are very exclusive. They usually only socialize with schoolmates which means that they do not really know their neighbors unless the ones next to their rooms. Campus activities and other leisure time do not give much chance for them to know the native people unless they are connected with them directly, such as with the owner of the house where they live every time they pay the rent, and of course with food sellers. Being isolated does not only give a bad impact but also a good effect. College students who live in lodging houses are usually independent. They have to solve all their problems by themselves. The help that they can rely on is from friends. Therefore, roommates or boarding house mates are so important. Usually, they are like a big family because they will be the first people who will help if something wrong happens. They do not feel attached to the neighborhood where they live. For example, they never get involved in *kampong* activities, such as *siskamling*, abbreviation of *system keamanan lingkungan* (security system) or cleaning the neighborhood. Their relationship with neighbors is practically only "Hi friends" (friends you only say hi, not more).

Politically, generally, because they are from another city, college students are usually neutral (if I can not say apathetic) or have their own political manifestations, such as demonstrations or following discussions on new ideologies. I can say that they are second-class citizens who do not have any rights as a citizen. In Jogja's administration, they are not recorded as citizens. Their ID is always from their hometown where they only visit twice a year or every vacation. In short, college students create their own community. Living far away from parents, having no trouble with money or any other social duty, makes students feel very comfortable in Jogja. Nevertheless, it doesn't mean that there are some students who live outside this circle. This community occupies the northern part of Jogja. After graduation, these people usually go back to their normal life and will be replaced by new students. The cycle simply begins again.

NB: This article is based on one's opinion. For more accurate information, further research needed.

NUWUNSEWU = EXCUSE ME

Hani

Maybe some of you are a little confused with Javanese etiquette.

As a first greeting, you can say *Nuwunsewu*. This is a polite word for Javanese people. When you say *Nuwunsewu* your body must bow a little with your right hand hanging, or make a little nod and a simple smile. When you say this word it means you respect, care and honor people, especially the old one.

As same as you would use 'excuse me' in English, you can use this word if you pass somebody on the road, in some place or when you meet old people. You can also say *Nuwunsewu* when you cut your friend or other

people while talking.

Nuwunsewu is a simple greeting in Java, especially in Yogyakarta and Central Java. It's better to say *Nuwunsewu* than not to talk at all. When you say *Nuwunsewu* in Java, your greeting will be replied with *Monggo*. This reply comes with a complete, full and beautiful smile.

Some Javanese, especially young people make a joke from the word *Nuwunsewu*. It can be split in 2 words, *nuwun* and *sewu*. *Nuwun* means 'ask' and *sewu* means 'thousand'. So youngsters use it as give me thousand rupiah. Hihhi ...

JUST TWO HOURS CONTRACTION

Galih



His skin is white and smooth. His hair is black and thick. His face, of course, is very handsome like his father. The baby is extraordinarily funny. His name is Dominic Fellicito Dofa Jati. He was born on January 18th, 2009. My family calls him Migi. That name is taken from the name of a Javanese day, Mi is taken from Minggu (Sunday) and Gi is taken from the word Legi (one of the Javanese days). On the other hand, my wife is angry when I call him Migi because she thinks the name is very old fashioned, only for old Javanese people in the past time. But for me, Migi is an out of the ordinary name. January 18th is also a special day for my family because that day is the birthday of my father. Therefore, next year my baby will celebrate his birthday together with his grandfather.

Actually, the doctor has predicted my son's birthday in the beginning of February. However, God has His own plan. It begun at 04.00 in the early morning as my wife felt her first contraction. She woke me up but I felt very lazy to open my eyes. Then suddenly, she shouted

"Wake up! Hurry up! The baby wants to come out now!!"

It was the first time in my life. Because of that, I had no idea what to do next. For a few seconds, I tried to calm myself. I rose up then grasped my mobile phone. I tried to call a taxi and my neighbor to find a car, but no one answered my call. It was too long to wait and my wife couldn't wait any more minutes. Finally, she asked me to take my motorbike out. By my old motorbike, I took my wife to the nearest hospital. We arrived in the hospital around 5.15 am. The Nurse said that the baby was ready, so she took my wife to the birth room. Finally, after one hour struggling, the baby came out from his mother womb and came in to his new world. Many women said it was very difficult and painful to give birth, but for my wife it was different. My wife only needed about two hours to give birth to my baby. The mother next to my wife's room had waited for about 12 hours to give birth to the baby and every minute she cried because of the pain. My neighbors and friends are questioning about that, how come? Then I thought, maybe because during the pregnancy I always took her for a walk for at least 3 kilometers a day and visited many tourism objects in Jogjakarta. Therefore, I suggest for pregnant women to do what my wife did, don't stay at home everyday.

The day before, the brother of my grandmother passed away. My wife and I helped to prepare the funeral ceremony for the next day. We stayed there until 10pm. However, my wife felt nothing, no indication that the baby was ready to be born. In my big family, two of my aunties also gave birth on that January 18. So, 18 is really a special day for my family. God really gave his bless for my big family. One man passed away but God gave us three healthy and funny babies. Thanks to the Almighty

MY TRIP WITH VIAVIA

Ratih, Dian, Muti dan Ira

It was a sunny day. Early in the morning, we (Ratih, Dian, Muti, and Ira) arrived in ViaVia Jogja. We booked a village trip by bike one day before. We woke up early in the morning and without having breakfast headed to ViaVia. It was a holiday for us as a student. Normally we spent the day by being idle on our bed. But, all spirits were up that morning and we were eager to join the trip. We prepared our favorite snack, and also a rain coat just in case it would rain during the day. Fortunately, it was a sunny day. We joined the village trip as research for our subject at school. The purpose seems like academic and formal, but all we got is far more than that.

We never thought that our journey would be full of joy. We enjoyed every single span in that day. We get a new experience that we never had before. All we know is living in a busy city in modern society. Our guide was Endang. We started our trip at 8 a.m from ViaVia. We cycled to a traditional village in Jalan Imogiri by Onthel (a javanese bike). This village is about 2 km from the city. Along the way we passed the city area, until we arrived at the original village of Indonesia. We saw large green vivid rice fields, herdsmen and the hospitality of

Our second stop is a harvest place, which is also quite impressive. We met some farmers who were harvesting rice. They were working with a simple technology to separate the seed from its stalk. We tried to work with that, it felt awkward in the beginning but it went well in the end. We even replaced them so they could take a rest for a while.

Our third stop is planting rice. Once again, we got a chance to plant the baby-rice with the farmer. It seems very easy to do, but in fact it is difficult. We needed a special technique and good skills to plant the rice so that it can grow well. We planted un-orderly, and the farmer re-arranged it patiently. They laughed watching our work.

Our new experiences are getting more the moment we arrived in a tempe home industry. In that place, we learned how to make tempe. We bought some tempe as a handgift.

The last destination is a brick industry. We needed big efforts to reach this industry. We passed a small narrow path via rice fields and a muddy road. Unfortunately, there were no people making bricks because of the rain. We decided to take a rest and enjoy the landscape while eating our snacks.

Actually, there were two more destinations, a cow farm and a krupuk industry. But one of our friends, Ira, suddenly fainted because of the heat and because she was tired. Many villagers came to help us. It was a unique experience when an old man helped Ira with his inner power to become conscious. We were amazed by his appearance (with white beard) and just few minutes he can make Ira conscious wow ... thanks ... mbah After all this happened we decided to finish our trip. We went back to ViaVia with all our new experiences and a different view. Thanks to ViaVia, we'll never forget this journey. This trip reminded us to love traditional culture in Indonesia.



the people. As a student who lives in the city, we are impressed with all of the things in front of us. We found a fantastic place where traditions are still alive.

We stopped at several places during the trip. At the first stop, we got a chance to go into the mud. We walked through the dyke and joined the farmer planting the rice. On the other hand, we also helped them plowing the rice field using two buffaloes. Wow.....it really is an amazing experience. We were not afraid to be in the mud, even with all the dirty things on our body. It took long, but we did enjoy it.



CRAZY? POSSESSED BY A SPIRIT? GREAT ACTOR?

Uuth

Faisol, that's his name. He is from Kendal (1/2 hour driving from Semarang, Central Java). Nothing was weird when we met, even the first time. As the other Javanese, he was a bit shy with the girls. He came to Balikpapan (East Borneo) for working in the same office with me. He has got a bodyguard body, so he worked as both security guard and office boy.

We talked about lots of things. Religion and Javanese life (including Javanese wisdom) were our favorite topics. Since he came from a religious city, his Islam knowledge was much better than mine. We weren't close, we just chatted at office.

Almost two months here, he started acting weird. He didn't wanna take a bath (for your information, it's very hot here, much hotter than Jogja, even when it rains). So you can imagine the smell! He always wore a sarong without t-shirt. He became desperately lazy.

It started when Lisa, my manager, slept at the office.

There were three people sleeping. Faisol, Lisa, and Fauzi (a marketing staff). Lisa was chatting with him the whole night. At four, Lisa went to bed and Faisol did the night praying. Lisa then heard someone cry loudly. She woke Fauzi up and looked where the sound came from. IT WAS FAISOL!

Morning came, but the weird thing didn't stop. All the staff had a meeting, including Faisol. Suddenly he walked out and went to bed. HE CRIED! OUT LOUD! We were frightened. For he was a big guy and we were afraid that he was sick. How could we carry a big guy like him? It was a whole afternoon mare!

We were thinking of bringing him to hospital. But some people said that he was possessed by a spirit. These were his symptoms (they were the reasons why people said he was possessed):

- 1.He didn't want to take a bath.
- 2.He slept in the day and woke at night.
- 3.He prayed like an Arabic expert. Well, he is from religious city, but he wasn't religious!

Well, some of my friends said that he wasn't good enough to pray the prayer. So instead of making him better, it made him crazy.

At four in the morning, someone knocked the door. I live with a couple (they are the owners of my office) and Lisa. My room is on the second floor. I heard Novi (the only man in the house) opening the door and talking to someone. I was thinking of a robber. Then I heard Lisa screaming. I almost jumped to the backyard. Five minutes later on, Novi and Lisa were talking downstairs. The guy was Faisol.

FAISOL FELL IN LOVE WITH LISA!!!!

That night, Faisol expressed his feelings. But Lisa said



that everybody is her friend. Faisol imagined that Lisa loved him. He asked Lisa to marry him. He couldn't differentiate imagination and dream!

The next two days, the office was closed. Everyone was too afraid to go there. Holding a meeting, the owner decided to send Faisol back to Java. He was accompanied by Novi.

Borneo is full of mystic. Charm and voodoo are normal. But this time is different. Both Lisa and Faisol are Javanese. In Java, Faisol was brought to an Ustadz (a Moslem imam). The Ustadz said he was okay. Then he was brought to a mental hospital. The doctor said he was fine. The Ustadz and the psychiatrist said nothing was wrong with him.

So the question is still here.

Is Faisol crazy? Is he possessed by spirit? Or is he a great actor who deserves to get Oscar for his act?

One thing that we can do is pray, old-fashioned way huh? But the important thing is Faisol isn't here anymore. Finally....

I'm a 2005-recruited freelance guide. I'm now teaching English in Balikpapan, East Borneo. I'll "re-destroy" ViaVia next September 2009.

NEXT EXHIBITION
Irrenius Bongky
25 March-April 2009

Irrenius Bongky picked up drawing when he tried to survive six months of his precious life in jail. To fill his days and to kill the time he made drawings on the walls, on the floor and on pieces of card box left behind by visitors. Bit by bit he started to appreciate the texture of the carton and unintentionally he explored the soul of this material until he mastered it. Now, Bongky is released from jail, but drawing he never stopped doing!
No surprise he uses old carton boxes to make his artwork!



**Check out our new website www.viaviajogja.com
and please provide us with comments, input, critiques, ...**