



Third Floating Hospital to Help Indonesians on Remote Islands

BY: SYLVIANA HAMDANI

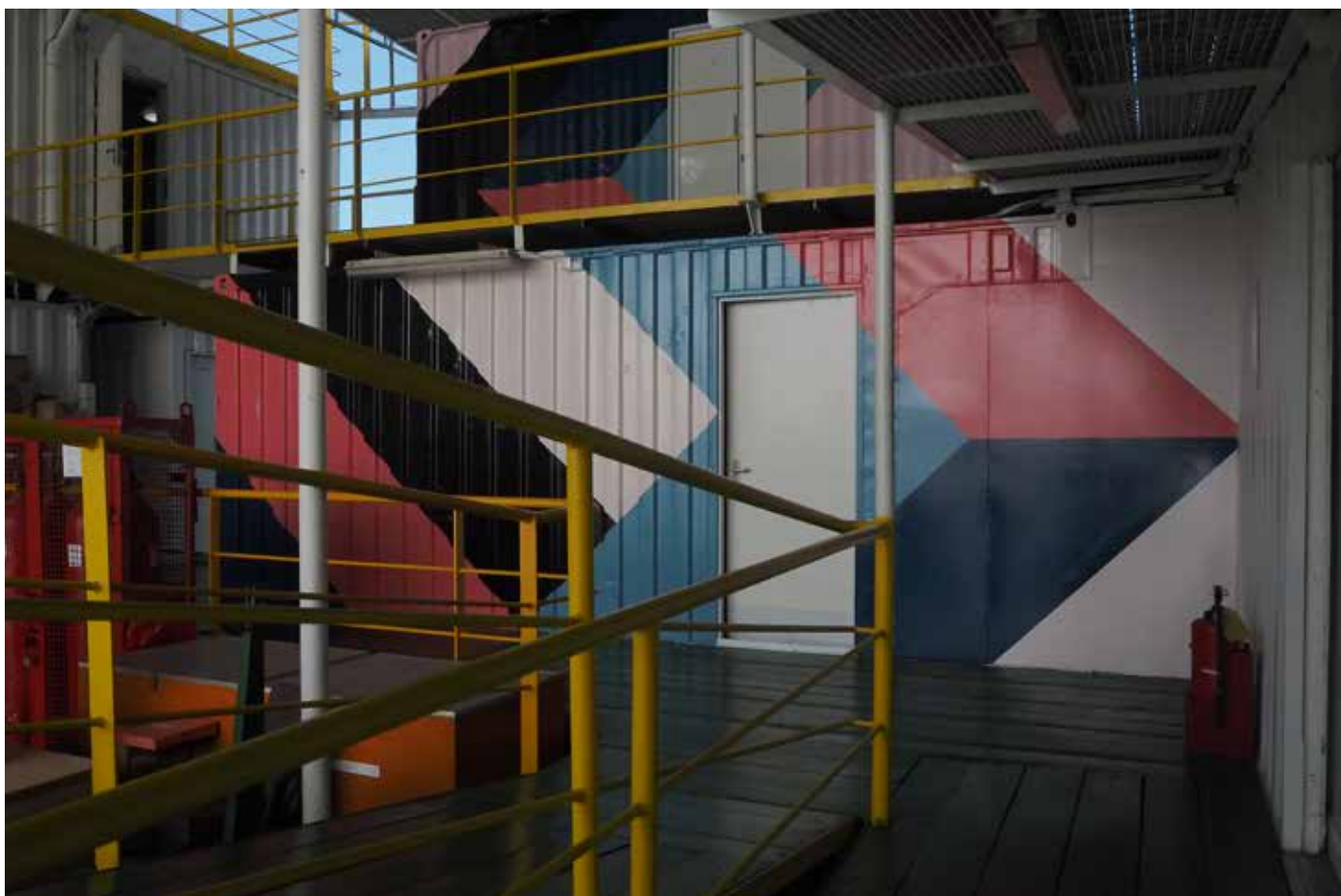
February 24th, 2020.

Jakarta. Indonesia, with more than 17,000 islands, is the biggest archipelago country in the world. It is also rich in biodiversity and cultures, which give pride to all citizens.

Many of the islands, however, are very difficult to access. They often lack in modern infrastructure and health care facilities. This has prompted a surgeon, Dr. Lie Dharmawan, to set up Doctor-Share, a non-profit foundation aiming to help Indonesians on remote islands.

Soon after he established DoctorShare, Lie realized that a floating hospital would be the best solution. In 2012, he sold his own house and bought the foundation's first ship. Each year, the ship visits about 10 islands to help the sick and train health practitioners on the spot. Lie's tireless dedication earned him the "Kick Andy Heroes" award in 2014.

"My father was so touched when he saw Dr. Lie's story on TV [on 'Kick Andy' program] that he asked me to find him," Julia Windasari Tan, business review and development manager of shipping company Multi Agung Sarana Ananda (MASA) told the Jakarta Globe on Thursday (06/04).



Julia's father, who owns the company, decided to give one of his barges to Dr. Lie to have it transformed into another floating hospital. "When Dr. Lie saw me coming with the blueprint of the barge, he immediately got up and pointed to one spot on the map of Indonesia. He said 'here, Julia, is where I want to put the barge,'" Julia recalled.

Dr. Lie was pointing to Maluku Islands. Maluku, dubbed a "thousand isles" province, consists of 1,450 islands — many of which do not even have basic medical facilities. The province has a high maternal mortality rate, with 199 deaths per 100,000 live births, and high neonatal mortality rate — nine deaths per 1,000 live births.

"You would see many severely malnourished toddlers there, skeleton-thin with distended abdomens," said Dr. Marselina Mieke, secretary general of DoctorShare. It will take a lot of effort and resources to convert the barge into a hospital. "We need around Rp 10 billion (\$750,000) to transform the barge into a floating hospital and to buy the necessary medical equipment," Julia said.

The barge is going to become DoctorShare's third hospital. Besides its first Rumah Sakit Apung (Floating Hospital, RSA) Dr. Lie Dharmawan, the foundation also operates RSA Nusa Waluya I.

The 45 meter x 20 meter barge, RSA Nusa Waluya II, will become a three-story hospital with clinics, emergency room, operating rooms, maternity wards, laboratories and intensive care units.

More than 250 Indonesian doctors affiliated with the foundation take turns in serving at its hospitals.

"We've been raising funds [for the third hospital] since 2016. We've already collected more than 65 percent of what is needed," Julia said.

To cover the remaining 35 percent, DoctorShare, in collaboration with Lions Club International District 307-A1, will hold a charity dinner and art auction at The Dharmawangsa Hotel in Jakarta, on April 18, during which award-winning pianist Ananda Sukarlan will give a recital on a Blüthner grand piano.

The auction will see five paintings by top artists Andy Dewantoro, Christine Ay Tjoe, Entang Wiharso, Oky Rey Montha and Sintia Tantra.

“We’ve chosen these famous artists, so that people should be more inclined to buy the works,” said Inge Santoso, owner of CAN’s Gallery, which represents the painters.

During the event, guests can also adopt a room in the floating hospital to be named after them.

Tickets for the dinner are sold for Rp 2.5 million and Rp 5 million. About half of them, 100, have already been sold.

“If the concert and auction are successful, they should cover all the remaining costs. We’re already in the renovation process. If all goes well, the floating hospital should be ready within the next four months,” Julia said.

In the first year, the new hospital is going to serve about 150,000 patients in 85 islands of the Western Southeast Maluku, and train more than 400 health practitioners in the area. All health services at the floating hospitals are free of charge.

