

Earning Doctorate for Researching Regional Development of Sumatera

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Regional economy dualism is a condition that often happens in all levels of development. High income areas being adjacent to low income ones are still found, especially in Sumatera.

“Regional gap is still found in Sumatera. As part of Indonesia, Sumatera that consists 10 provinces has its own North-South problems, said Arivina Ratih L Taher, S.E., M.M, when sitting in her doctoral programme exam at Faculty of Economics and Business of Universitas Gadjah Mada on Wednesday(27/1).

The Faculty of Economics’s lecturer of Universitas Lampung said North Sumatera, Riau, and South Sumatera are three provinces that have percentage distribution of highest Regional Gross Domestic Product in Sumatera as compared to other Sumateran provinces. Gap between regions also occurs among regencies/municipalities of each province. Ministry’s of Rural and Underdeveloped Regions’s data and National Statistics Agency of year 2010 recorded as high as 183 underdeveloped regions , with mostly (46 regencies/municipalities) found in Sumatera.

Defending her dissertation entitled *Geography of Regional Development Economy 2001-2012*,



Arivina said her research outcomes produced that the centre of economic growth of Sumatera between 2001-2006 period was East Aceh, Toba Samosir, Padang Pariaman, Kuantan Singingi, and Pekanbaru. In East Aceh and Kuantan Singingi it was due to very high mining sector growth. In Toba Samosir it was affected by industry sector. In Padang Pariaman it was credited to transportation sector influenced by the operation of international airport of Minangkabau. In Pekanbaru it was finance sector affecting high growth supported by growth in all sectors.

Between 2007-2012 period, centres of growth moved to Simeule, Southeast Aceh Tenggara, Aceh Besar, Pidie, Pidie Jaya, Banda Aceh, Sabang, Pekanbaru, Sarolangun, and Bungo. In Simelue, Southeast Aceh Tenggara, Pidie, Pidie Jaya, Banda Aceh, and Sabang the growth was due to the services sector. In Aceh Besar it was finance sector that played the role. Meanwhile in Sarolangun the industry sector contributed to the growth whereas in Bungo construction industry and mining. On the other hand, in Pekanbaru the secondary and tertiary sectors experienced high growth.

“The economic growth in those economies contributes to neighbouring areas, such as Banda Aceh, Pidie, Sarolangun, and Bungo while Aceh Besar and Piddie Jaya received the effect of growth from neighbouring areas,” she said.

Arivina further explained most underdeveloped regions have sectors of excellence in agriculture. But this has decreasing role to the formation of RGDP. The pattern of change of economic structures in regencies/municipalities in Sumatera is dominated by structural change that is relatively slow compared to the low growth of RGDP per capita.


Seeing that provinces and administrative regions are focused as centres of growth, Arivina said that the importance of effort to support the flowing effect of economic growth from centres of growth, such as development of better transportation, communitation, and information networks.

“More attention should be given to islands, such as Nias, Meranti, and Mentawai, as these tend to have lower economic condition and human development quality,” she xplained.

In her opinion, the regional governments need to take a crucial stance to preparing supporting abilities of the region to become a support region of the location of industrial concentration despite being in different regencies. Good planning is required to absorp the outflowing effects of industrial activities, and the development of adjacent regions is adapted to such activities based on the local potential.

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