

Government Boosts Number of Young Entrepreneurs

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Minister of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, Anak Agung Gede Ngurah Puspayoga, said that the government would encourage the growing number of young entrepreneurs so that the number could reach 2 percent of the total population. According to Puspayoga, the number of Indonesian entrepreneurs has reached 1.65% of the total population. This is still very low compared to that of Singapore to reach 7 percent, as well as those of Japan and China, which are already above 10 percent. "The commitment of the government is to increase the number of entrepreneurs which is still low, 1.65 percent," said Puspayoga on the *Wirausaha Muda Mandiri Awards* at Grha Sabha Pramana UGM, Tuesday (8/3).

To increase the number of entrepreneurs, the minister said, the government will encourage state-owned enterprises and the private sector to get involved. The banks will be required to distribute business loans to young entrepreneurs by utilizing the People's Business Credit (KUR) with low interest. "The bank has set aside up to IDR100 trillion for this," he said.

In front of 2500 students participating in the *Wirausaha Muda Mandiri* event, Puspayoga expects the young entrepreneurs not only to pursue business profits alone, but to solve social problems in society as well. "In the future, there must be many social entrepreneurs who are capable of solving social problems by conducting IT-based business," he said.

Mandiri Bank president director, Budi Gunadi Sadikin, said that *Wirausaha Muda Mandiri* project aims to encourage more successful businessmen. If the initial program was attended by 400 people



in 2007, it reached 6,300 participants in 2015. "A total of 19 thousand participants has participated in this programme," he said.

Rector of UGM, Prof. Dwikorita Karnawati, M.Sc., Ph.D., said that UGM is committed to creating plenty of students to be ready to become entrepreneurs after graduation, "Looking ahead, we have prepared them to not only have diploma but have a start-up business as well," she said.

The highlight of the *Wirausaha Muda Mandiri* awards was marked by awarding ceremony to 26 winners. UGM alumnus, Syamsuria Syamsudin, managed to become the second winner in the category of business alumni who successfully pioneered business through cruise ship crew and hospitality schools in Makassar.

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