

Education Day Momentum to Encourage Higher Learning Reforms

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The National Education Day that falls on 2 May is not only to commemorate the birth of national education hero, Ki Hajar Dewantara, and other heroes in education area, but also a momentum for Indonesia, especially higher learning, to encourage the spirit in education reform that had been rolled out by those education figures.

This was said by Research, Technology, and Higher Learning Minister, Prof. Mohamad Nasir, in his remarks read out by Rector of UGM, Prof. Ir. Dwikorita Karnawati, M.Sc., Ph.D., during the celebration of National Education Day on Monday (2/5) at UGM Main Office.

“Ki Hajar Dewantara voiced his ideas on Indonesian education, which is *Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodo, Ing Madya Mangun Karso, and Tut Wuri Handayani*, later implemented in the Taman Siswa school. This initiative marked the start of education reform in Indonesia,” he said.

During the National Education Day this year, Nasir asked universities to jointly work together reforming higher learning administration through deregulation, provision of flexible education that orientates to students and target market, curriculum changes, provision of professional lecturers,

professors, and non-teaching staff. Also education that follows science and technology development, orientation to reliable and competitive skills, development of strategic disciplines, institutional revitalisation and higher learning capacity to produce competitive research and innovation.

In his opinion the reform is important to do as globalisation has increased competition between institutions, nationally, and internationally. Indonesian competitive index was 4.5 in terms of higher education and training in years 2014-2015, ranking Indonesia in the 60th. In 2015-2016 the rank dropped to 65. "We cannot let this happen again. Let's work innovatively and competitively to produce skilfull human resources and make competitive innovation and technology as the main goal of our higher learning," he added.

In response, Rector Dwikorita revealed the steps taken by UGM to combine the significance of character building and intellectual ability and skills. "We're preparing a change in the curriculum that will accomodate not only cognitive aspect, but also character building, for example through student activities or inter-disciplines courses," she said.

In the ceremony that was followed by university ledership, lecturers, staff and students, she asked everyone to participate and contribute to the higher learning reforms, remembering that UGM had been established by independence fighters to build a new civilisation in Indonesia that is humane through education and culture. "Let's abandon personal interests. Our homework is to increase the competitive power of graduates and the nation," she concluded.

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