

Public Information Openness Has Not Made Budget Use Efficient

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Every citizen has the right of access to information from public offices and state administrators in executive, legislative, and judicial levels. This is not just to find out if there is corruption practice being done, but also to monitor budget use more effectively and efficiently. This emerged in a seminar on openness to public information that run in Grha Sabha Pramana UGM on Thursday (28/9), organised by Ministry of Information, Radio Republik Indonesia, and UGM. The seminar presented speakers such as Director General for Public Information and Communication (IKP), Dra. Rosarita Niken Widyastuti, expert staff to Minister of Information, Prof. Henry Subiakto, communication expert from UGM, Wisnu Martha Adiputra, vice-chairman of Regional Information Commission (KID) of Yogyakarta, Dewi Amanatun Suryani, and blogger, Erix Soekamti.

Rosarita Niken Widyastuti said Law No 14 Year 2008 on Openess to Public Information states that the society has the right of access to information from state administrators. Such information, however, is not to be misused. The right of access to information from state administrators is part of human rights.

In her views, the society has to have the courage to ask for access to information towards the government and public agencies because this is mandated in the laws. Despite the right of access, but citizens have yet to receive protection of their personal data.

“In Southeast Asia, only two countries which are Indonesia and Laos, are yet to give personal data protection,” she added.

Protection of privacy and personal data, according to Niken, is required so that the personal data of all citizens will not be misused by external parties, let alone for forgery and economic purposes. Niken mentioned up to now leakage in personal data in Indonesia is unfortunately very urgent to resolve, because there have been practices of sale and purchase of personal data. One personal data can be sold at Rp20 thousand on the internet. There is also practice of sale and purchase of personal data of financial accounts that have balance above IDR500 million. “If a law is already available for personal data protection, people can file a lawsuit (if there is a breach),” she said.

The government, said Niken, was proposing that personal data protection draft law be included in the national legislation programme this year. “Personal data protection draft law is targeted to be included in the national legislation programme this year, but there are still 60 articles that are being deliberated,” she explained.

Meanwhile, Henry Subiakto said digital technology development has opened public information. During its ten years of existence, Law on Openness of Public Information has yet to utilise state administration budget more efficiently. “Meanwhile, Japan can make 40 percent of their budget more efficient while here after ten years of the Law, such efficiency has not yet taken place,” she added.

According to Henry, the society has to be pro-active in assessing and observing budget use. “The public has the right to enquire, because this Law changes the culture from being closed to being open,” he said.

Furthermore, Dewi Amanatun Suryani said the students need to also monitor the budget use by executive, legislative, judicial agencies, and public agencies. “This is because openness of information may prevent corruption practices,” she said.

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