

Minister Yohana: Joint Effort to End Child Marriage Needed

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Child marriage is still prevalent in Indonesia at an alarming rate.

According to the 2016 National Socio-Economic Survey, as many as 1.1% of children were married before the age of 15. Meanwhile, as high as 22.4% of women between 20-24 years old were first married before they were 18.

Minister of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, Prof. Yohana Susana Yembise, affirmed the government continued to support the reduction of child marriage. It is because child marriage not only is a human rights abuse but also brings a grave threat to child health.

"There are large consequences of child marriage, ranging from dropping out of school, poverty, domestic violence, to the risk of maternal and child mortality due to adolescent pregnancy," stated Yohana in her presentation as keynote speaker delivered by Assistant to Deputy Head for Professional Institution Participation and Business of the Ministry, Sri Prihantini Lestari, on Saturday (10/20) at UGM Faculty of Cultural Sciences.



In this national seminar on *Women and Culture*, Yohana stated the prevalence of child marriage in Indonesia was caused by several factors, including culture. Matchmaking culture by parents leads to early marriage.

“This is a contradictory to the Child Protection Law which bans marriage of children before the age of 18,” she said.

The prevention of child marriage can be done by joint efforts and synergy between the government, the community, academics, etc. One of the efforts is by rejecting early marriage in children.

“Breaking the chain of child marriage is a joint effort of all components of the nation,” she explained.

The national seminar held by UGM Graduate Student Association presented the Vice Chairwoman of National Commission on Violence Against Women, Dr. Budi Wahyuni, and Head of Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency, Prof. Dwikorita Karnawati as the speakers. It was attended by more than 200 participants including students and academics from across Indonesia.

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