

Reflection on 90th Youth Pledge

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“Has Indonesian youth violated the youth pledge?”, asked Prof. Ir. Djagal Wiseso Marseno, M.Agr., Vice Rector for Education, Learning, and Student Affairs UGM to participants of the *90th Youth Pledge Commemoration Conference* at UGM Senate Hall.

The question was raised in his remarks at the event held by UGM Board of Professors on Saturday (10/27). Djagal brought the question after seeing the current condition of Indonesian youth. He argued that based on data from several research institutions, some Indonesian youth have indeed violated the Youth Pledge.

Furthermore, he presented data from the National Resilience Institute that Indonesia’s national resilience was in the yellow category, which indicated vulnerability. This is because several aspects in it, including ideological, socio-cultural, political, and natural resources resilience were also in the yellow category.

“There is a common thread here. If a nation did not have an ideology, its political and socio-cultural ideas as well as natural resources are threatened,” he explained.



As a solution, Djagal gives an analogy about fish. “Fish does not taste salty even though they spend their entire lives in the sea. This is because they have a biofilter system in their bodies. Indonesian youth should be like that as well. We need a biofilter so that Indonesian youth can hold their pledge.”

He opined that even in the millennial era, the idealism of Indonesian youth must persist if they are still committed to being an Indonesian citizen. Therefore, Djagal stated that this event could formulate the biofilter needed.

Meanwhile, State Secretary, Prof. Dr. Pratikno, M.Soc.Sc., stated there were things to do aside from repeating the declaration that was made 90 years ago. “Back then, the Youth Pledge was not a mere declaration. It was also the spirit of struggle, consistency, and outstanding collaboration of the Indonesian nation so they could win independence 17 years after,” he said.

Minister Pratikno stated the Youth Pledge and the Indonesian Revolution were bonds of big dreams and big struggles, or smart ideas and smart execution. “Without proper execution, there will be no change being made since the past 90 years.”

He then mentioned equitable development, including developing peripheral regions and alleviating poverty, as a smart idea for the Youth Pledge. There is also sea transportation development as a smart execution, including a sea highway which connects small ports in Indonesia.

“Building such connectivity is also one of the executions of the Youth Pledge. So, it is not enough with proclaiming unity.”

For this reason, Minister Pratikno reminded Indonesian youth to develop smart ideas and smart executions from the Youth Pledge according to the current context. “Take the point, which is to love, be proud, and fight for Indonesian unity,” he concluded.

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