

To Increase Zakat Funds, Baznas is Digitising System

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National Zakat Board (Baznas) is digitising its system to increase the amount of zakat funds. This starts from application system provision to expand coverage, funds collecting services as well as distribution of zakat funds to receivers. "We hope the amount of zakat funds would increase significantly," said Baznas Chairman, Prof. Dr. Bambang Sudibyo, MBA, to journalists after an *International Zakat Conference* held at Faculty of Economics and Business UGM on Thursday (15/11).

Bambang Sudibyo said Baznas is a sharia financial institution that is managed by central and regional governments. The current trends happening around the world is regular financial institutions are digitising their systems. "If we - Baznas and Laz - don't do this, we would be left behind," he said.

He explained in the past few years Baznas had made internal changes to encourage the digitisation. There were challenges, however, due to limited resources. But digitising would actually support transparency and accountability. "Many Baznas units in the regions are in fact limited in terms of human resource, so we will build a regional reporting system to be done through a system," he said.

In response to the question on the amount of Baznas funds presently, Bambang said the amount



collected in 2017 reached Rp6,244 trillion. He saw this was actually not a great deal of amount considering there are funds potential that can increase by 3% of the GNP. “This amount is still far below the potential intensive value that may reach up to Rp203 trillion,” he said.

According to Bambang, if referring to the tax incentives, the zakat amount to be collected is 203 trillion because the funds disbursed to Baznas during this time can deduct the tax value. But in reality, the implementation is not that easy.

He thought that if the government would emulate the policy of their Malaysian counterpart to obligate the zakat payment like tax payment, the amount of zakat funds will be far greater.

“Zakat should be run like tax, especially in terms of collecting. Paying zakat will reduce tax directly,” he said.

To move to that direction, said Bambang Sudiby, amendments are necessary on Law No 23 Year 2011 on zakat management and Law No 36 Year 2008 on income tax. This will increase by 3 percent of the GNP or around Rp400 trillion.

The *International Zakat Conference* runs from 15-16 November at Learning Center Building of the Faculty. Researchers, practitioners, and authorities were present, including Umar Munshi from *EthisCrowd*, Urip Budiarto from *Kitabisa.com*, Umi Waheeda, co-founder of Al-Ashriyyah Nurul Iman Islamic Boarding School, Prof. Abdul Ghaffar Ismail from Akademisi Zakat Malaysia, and Chairman of Nigerian Zakat Board, Lawal Muhammad Maidoki.

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