

# PUSPAR UGM Is Working in Collaboration with Tual Maluku Government

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The Penukal Regency Government, Abab Lematang Ilir (PALI), South Sumatra, has a collaboration with Universitas Gadjah Mada to improve the economy of rubber farmers. The partnership was poured in the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the two parties in the fields of education, research, and community service on Wednesday (26/2), in the leader's meeting room, UGM Central Building.

The Regent of PALI, Ir. Heri Amalindo, M.M., said that more than 75 percent of the population in his district work as rubber-tapping farmers. "Around 75 percent of the community's income is from rubber plantations," he said.

According to the Regent, the problem is that the farmers in their place sell raw materials in the form of latex to collectors who have previously deposited money to farmers before harvesting. Moreover, collectors sometimes determine the price of rubber. He also hoped that UGM researchers could develop the technology of rubber latex raw materials to be processed into semi-finished goods. "We are very interested in the development of technology so that this raw material can be valued," he said.

According to the Regent, he had previously invited farmers to switch to commodities other than rubber. However, it was not easy because farmers were already dependent on rubber plantations. "Changing to other commodities is rather difficult, through innovations from UGM can later provide solutions," he said.

Besides, he hopes that through this cooperation will encourage more native people from PALI who can study at the UGM campus.

UGM Rector, Prof. Ir. Panut Mulyono, M. Eng., D. Eng., Said that one of the problems in the PALI district is that rubber farmers in the area have not yet received maximum income from the rubber plantation business. "Because the farmers sell the rubbers in bulk to collectors and the price is determined by the collectors. If possible, the technology later can help the farmers to process not only rubber rubbish bulk," he said.

In addition to the field of research innovation, the Chancellor said this collaboration made possible cooperation in the form of regional development planning, spatial development, and providing training for employees within the district government.

"It is possible through the program (partnership), the best native from the Regency can go to school at UGM. Certainly through strict selection and accountability," he said.

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