

UGM Develops Antiviral Drug for Coronavirus

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Universitas Gadjah Mada built a partnership with PT Philippines Antiviral Indonesia (FAI) to develop a Covid-19 antiviral drug. The development is currently being conducted and still awaiting approval from BPOM and the Ethics Committee for clinical trials. Based on the plan, the distribution target for Covid-19 antiviral will be ready in 2022. The Deputy Chancellor for Cooperation and Alumni Affairs, Prof. Dr. Paripurna Sugarda, conveyed this statement online to journalists on the sidelines of the UGM-Industry Research Forum 2020 activity on Wednesday (2/12).

Paripurna revealed that the drug development cooperation collaborated with FAI. This philanthropic company will provide funding for UGM researchers to develop drugs in handling the Covid-19 pandemic. "This collaboration basically aims to develop anti-inflammatory drugs, but it was also developed for the Covid-19 antiviral as well," he said.

Paripurna maintained that this UGM cooperation with industrial partners aimed not only to produce a Covid-19 diagnostic tool based on the RI-GHA antigen and GeNose that can detect Covid-19 from breath, but UGM will also produce antiviral drugs later. "We are not only producing positive detection kits for Covid but also producing vaccines. We can even produce Covid-19 drugs," he said.

Paripurna emphasized that the Covid-19 antiviral drug's development is still waiting for research and clinical trial permits from the BPOM and the Research and Development Ethics Committee. If



the researchers have got the permit, there will be further collaboration with PT Kimia Farma. "For the developers, we are also cooperating with several hospitals in Indonesia," he said.

Mario Pacurso Marcos, as the President Director of PT FAI, said he highly embraced the partnership with UGM in producing medicines to improve public health. He believed that UGM, which is well-known for its research capacity, can produce anti-inflammatory drugs and anti-Covid-19 virus drugs with international standards. "Hopefully, this cooperation will increase the capacity of human resources in Indonesia and the Philippines," he said.

Jarir At Thobari, Ph.D., as a member of the research team from the UGM FKKMK, continued that the development of anti-inflammatory and antiviral drugs was intentionally selected because there are only a few for this development type in Indonesia. "There is still very little research and direct production for antiviral drugs," he said.

There is still a current dependency on the import production for its formula to support this research and develop anti-inflammatory and antiviral drugs. However, Jarir is optimistic that Indonesia can later produce this drug's raw materials after our country has successfully developed and produced the product itself. The clinical trial phase will start the following year. "In the early next year, we can conduct the process (clinical trials)," he explained.

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