

President Jokowi: Four State Problem Have to be Resolved Immediately

Wednesday, 10 December 2014 WIB, By: Marwati



YOGYAKARTA - President of the Republic of Indonesia, Ir. Joko Widodo, or popularly called Jokowi, said there are four crucial issues that need addressing immediately. These are: narcotics and illegal drugs, corruption, state dignity, and fuel subsidy.


Related to narcotics and illegal drugs, Jokowi mentioned there are 4.5 millions of Indonesian population using drugs with 1.2 millions being incurable. "Everyday up to 40-50 young people die of drugs. Can you imagine it?" says Jokowi during the general lecture to commemorate the 65th Anniversary of UGM in the Senate Hall on Tuesday (9/12).

To address the issue, Jokowi said he would not grant clemency to the convicts already receiving death sentence. The president announced there are 64 letters applying for clemency from convicts sentenced to death. "No clemency for convicts already receiving death sentence. No, no, no," he affirmed.

The reason for Jokowi to reject all applications is because drugs have already circulated in almost all state agencies.

"Drugs already circulating in all agencies, the latest being in Makassar (a law professor found consuming drugs in a hotel—ed.). Everyone in this room, be careful, because thousands of tonnes (drugs) have infiltrated our country. For me, this is emergency. No clemency for this," he said.

State Sovereignty



In his speech that last less than one hour, Jokowi mentioned problems other than corruption is for him to maintain state sovereignty. There are indications that people's trust to the state is not strong enough due to the lack of state's firmness in maintaining its sovereignty. One of the forms to do this is to submerge foreign ships that had illegally caught fish in Indonesian waters. "There are 5,400 ships in all of our waters, mostly illegal. Up to Rp300 trillions are lost due to the illegal fishing. Our subsidy for fisheries reaches Rp11 trillions while the income only reaches Rp300 billions. This is illogical," he explained.

The other problem is fuel subsidy that has not been enjoyed by the people but by 72% of middle to upper level of society. "Our regime has been enjoying the fuel subsidy. Those that enjoy it are not ordinary people, 72% of those are people who can afford cars, just like you all here that should not have received the subsidy," said Jokowi to participants of the general lecture that consist of professors and university and faculty leadership.

Based on Jokowi's calculations, the fuel subsidy allocations reach to Rp280 trillions annually. If disbursed for five years, that will amount to as high as Rp1,400 trillions. "Imagine, for the past ten years the subsidy had reached a staggering 1,300 trillions, we burned it every day, useless," he added.

It is time for the fuel subsidy to be shifted to productive not consumptive ones, such as building railways across Indonesia that would cost only Rp360 trillions. In his opinion, the railway construction is more important to overcome logistical problems. In addition, Jokowi plans to build 16 thousands of kilometer of trans-Sumatera and Kalimantan toll roads, 49 dams and irrigation repairs. "As high as 70 percent of our irrigation have been damaged as they are not maintained for the past 30 years," he said.

The shift of fuel subsidy is directed towards the provision of seeds and fertilisers for farmers to be able to attain rice self-supply in the next 3 years. "I have asked the agriculture minister to be able to self-supply rice in three years. Not exceeding three years. If we haven't done so (in three years), I will change the minister," he said.

Rector of UGM, Prof. Ir. Dwikorita Karnawati, M.Sc., Ph.D., pledged to support government programmes in boosting state progress through higher learning's three activities (education, research, community service). One thing that has been done by UGM is the downstreaming of research products and community service. Some of these are health products and multi-purpose forest management technology.

Prof. Rita said UGM also cooperates with the Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Ministry to develop independent islands in terms of economy, food and energy. "We tried to apply technologies for farmers in those islands," she said.

The first general lecture given by President Joko Widodo on UGM campus is attended by professors, university and faculty leadership, regional leaders as well as students. Also attending are Governor Sri Sultan HB X, State Minister Pratikno, Minister for Elementary and Middle Education, Anies Baswedan, Regent of Bantul, Sri Surya Widati, regent of Kulonprogo Hasto Wardoyo, and Mayor of Yogyakarta, Haryadi Suyuti, and Regent of Sleman, Sri Purnomo.

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