

State Oil Company Asked to Develop New and Renewable Energies

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YOGYAKARTA - In the past ten years the government has been seen as not serious in carrying out the new and renewable energies development. Due to the depleting fossil fuel resources, the state oil company, PT Pertamina, has been asked to focus on developing technology-based energy by utilising the potential of new and renewable energy resources.

This issue emerged in the talkshow entitled *Energy Independency for the State* that ran in Grha Sabha Pramana, Universitas Gadjah Mada, on Thursday (16/4). Keynote speaker the Governor of the Province of Yogyakarta Special Region, Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono X, Rector of UGM, Prof. Ir. Dwikorita Karnawati, M.Sc., Ph.D., and Director of Pertamina, Dwi Soeipto, attended the event.

Dwi Soeipto said Pertamina would commit to use technology for the development of new and renewable energies. He saw that the slumping down of world oil prices was due to the success of the U.S. in the development of new and renewable energies in the form of shale gas and shale oil.

Governor Sri Sultan HB X has criticised the government and Pertamina that in the past ten years had not been serious in carrying out the development of new and renewable energy resources. For instance, the policy for people to grow the castor oil plant in early 2010 that had to stop along the way. "Initially, the people were excited as their marginal lands would be grown with castor oil plants. But eventually they were disappointed as the products were not selling due to the reason that the production costs were less economical than the subsidised solar price at that time," he said. The same happened to the molasses that failed to be stopped from getting exported due to producer's

bigger benefits in exporting molasses.

Sri Sultan HB X said Indonesia could take Brasil by example for developing bioethanol as fuel with an efficiency of production cost at 17.5 dollar per barrel with a total production of 16 billions litres per year.

“The mass biofuel obviously needs the support in terms of regulations, financial and agri-business research and technology development,” he said.

Rector Dwikorita Karnawati said Universitas Gadjah Mada’s researchers have developed researches in new and renewable energies, including biomass from palm oil waste to be made fuel as well as fruit waste into biogas and gas storing technology that can convert use of oil to gas.

She said UGM also recently made use of micro-algae in Gunungkidul coasts for biofuel. “We work together with the provincial government and the local people of Baron to develop micro-algae as biofuel that, in turn, can be marketed by Pertamina,” she concluded.

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