Three IPB MoUs on the Same Day: Nias, South Aceh and Sabang
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Head of North Nias Regency, Drs. Edward asks IPB (Bogor Agricultural University) to assist with the development of the region. In the Rector Meeting Room of IPB, Darmaga Campus, Prof. Dr. Herry Suhardiyanto M.Sc and Drs. Edward signed a memorandum of understanding (26/6) at the presence of Vice Rectors, Deans and other invited guests. MoU is focused on improving the quality of human resources through education and development in agriculture, plantation and fisheries.

"North Nias is virtually untouched by development. Honestly, I am very happy with this MoU. We are very backward, poor and one area of 3Ts: terluar, terbelakang dan termiskin (the outermost, least developed and poorest). I do not know where to begin the development in North Nias. The low quality of education can be seen from that of the high schools / vocational schools, all which have not been accredited yet. The constraints such as low human resources make us unable to compete with other regions. Next year we will build laboratories (all high schools / vocational schools in North Nias do not have laboratories) that can be accessed all schools in North Nias to facilitate the accreditation process. In addition, with this MoU we hope we can educate our children through special channels (IPB has Regional Representative Scholarship)," he said.

After the earthquake, all staple foods such as rice, fruits, vegetables, eggs and others are distributed from the island of Sumatra. Every day there are about 5-6 trucks transporting eggs to accommodate the needs of Nias.

"If calculated, about 250,000 eggs are delivered into Nias. I have an idea; if we can raise laying hens by ourselves, people will be more prosperous. But the problem is that chicken feed is not yet available in Nias. So we start with the opening 1000-2000 hectares of corn for feed. Everything is based on the community," he said.

For fisheries, North Nias get the responsibility from its governor as the center for shrimp farming. "Technology and tools required from the upstream to downstream related to the shrimp farming have not been available in North Nias, so we are really waiting for this MoU in order to assist us to build North Nias," he explained.

Apart from the MoU with Nias, on the same day IPB also signed a cooperation agreement with the government of Sabang and the Government of South Aceh Regency. IPB Rector in his speech said that the strategic location of Sabang, in the strait crossed by the international shipping, is significantly potential to promote Sabang in the future. Meanwhile, South Aceh Regency with its agricultural potential requires the touch of technology and strengthening of human resources in the area. As for the strengthening of human resources, IPB has the channel of new undergraduate student admission through the Regional Representative Scholarship (BUD).

"The best prospective students in this channel are selected for the region and get the aid of educational costs from the local governments or private organizations. It is expected that later
they will build their regions or become business players in the area,” said Rector.

Mayor of Sabang, Adam Zulkifli said Sabang is a small unique island with 13 large water springs. There’s even a unique freshwater spring – when the tide is low, the water is fresh, but when the sea level rose, the water subsides.

"Sabang is very potential to be an international shipping center, as it is located directly between Malaka Strait and the Indian Ocean. In addition to the many fresh water springs, there is also a volcano making its soil very fertile. Whatever is planted will grow well. Sabang town is also abundant in marine fish. Often there is illegal fishing by Thai fishermen,” said Zulkifli.

He hopes IPB assists with the management of natural resources in Sabang and improvement of the quality of Fishery Academy for the welfare of the people there. Meanwhile Head of South Aceh Regency, Sama Indra said that nutmeg has a great potential there, but its production is now threatened by diseases.

"We hope IPB to examine what disease attacks the stem of nutmeg and how to treat it," said the man whose dream of studying at IPB has not come true as before leaving for IPB, his parents died. (Mtd)