Do we know what dangers can threat us in the laboratory? Organisms and their toxins, radiation, animals, chemicals and physical stuff can pose risks to the laboratory users. "Working safely is like breathing; if you don't, you die" is the motto that should be adhered to by the laboratory staff, researchers, and other users.

The increasing number of new risks faced by workers in laboratories and public health has encouraged the Directorate of Research and Innovation, Bogor Agricultural University (IPB) to hold a Training on Biosafety Principles and Practices for two days (20/5-21/5) in the Senate Meeting Room of the Andi Hakim Nasoetion Building, Darmaga Campus of IPB. It is expected to provide new insights to IPB’s laboratory staff in serving microbiological and biomedical communities as a relevant and valuable reference.

Biosafety is a discipline in the handling and containment system against infectious microorganisms and hazardous biological materials. The principles of biosafety introduced in this training are a laboratory containment system and risk assessment. Fundamentals of containment systems include proper laboratory practices and techniques, safety equipment, and facilities that protect laboratory workers, environment, and society from exposure of infectious microorganisms handled in the laboratory.

"Today, we live in an era of uncertainty and change. Infectious agents and new diseases have emerged. In addition, there is an increase in the number of people who are working with infectious agents in the studies by the public and private, public health, clinical and diagnostic laboratories, as well as in animal research facilities. Even in the world has emerged a new threat, bioterrorism. For this reason, it is important for IPB and laboratory directors to evaluate and ensure the effectiveness of their biosafety programs, worker skills and capabilities of equipment, facilities and management practices to provide containment and security of microbiological agents," said Prof. Dr. Iskandar Z. Siregar, Director of Research and Innovation, IPB.

Further, individuals who work handling with microorganisms must understand the containment conditions in which infectious agents can be safely manipulated. "The appropriate application of knowledge and techniques and equipment will enable the microbiological and biomedical community to prevent the exposure of individuals, laboratories and environment to potentially infectious agents or biohazards," he added.

This opportunity has very important benefits to the academic communities of IPB. One participant, Dr. DVM. Sri Estuningsih, who has served with IPB for 23 years, said the event is very good and important, so it is expected to be held once every three years.

"It is also necessary to create a discussion forum especially for the sharing of knowledge with those having practiced biosafety and biosecurity or to carry out a comparative study. In addition to adding insight, it can also promote network of discussion," said the lecturer and researcher at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, IPB.
As a resource person was Dr. DVM Diah Iskandriati, M.Sc., Head of Research Facilities, IPB Primate Study Center. Apart from teaching at IPB and Atma Jaya University, Dr. Diah also served as the Program Coordinator of the Indonesian Association of Biorisks. Other speakers were Dr. dr. Budiman Bela, Sp.MK (k), First Secretary of the Indonesian Association of Biorisks and Vice Director for Science of the Institute of Human Virology and Cancer Biology, University of Indonesia, a lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine. (Mtd)