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The House of Representatives has called on the Food and Drug Monitoring Agency (BPOM) to provide stronger protection to local products so they can be more competitive against imported goods in the market. Dede Yusuf, chairman of the House's Commission IX overseeing health affairs, said the supervisory agency needed to ensure that regulations could provide room for local products to grow. "Don't make procedural requirements that are costly and lengthy because they will possibly lead to illicit practices, such as the distribution of illegal and fake products," he said on Tuesday. The lawmaker further said his commission was currently drafting a new law to give the BPOM greater supervising authority. The agency should ensure its service to the domestic industry, he explained. "The domestic industry should be prioritized. Don't let foreign products penetrate our market while at the same time our local herbal traditional medicines, for example, still face obstacles that make them difficult to grow," he said. BPOM head Penny K. Lukito said she was committed to providing easy access for domestic industrial players to register their new products, including by introducing an online-based registration. "Through the online system, the product registration will be more transparent and efficient without necessarily neglecting assessments needed to guarantee the quality of products," she said. (fac/ebf)