

'Give water to Selangor'

Channel supply from elsewhere to solve problem, says association

PETALING JAYA: More water should be channelled to Selangor from elsewhere to solve the looming shortage, said Association of Water and Energy Research Malaysia (Awer).

Its president S. Piarapakaran said the proposed Pahang-Selangor raw water transfer project and the development of the Langat 2 water treatment plant would have provided enough water to relieve pressure on existing treatment plants, which were now straining to keep up with demand.

"The rapid development in the Klang Valley has outgrown forecasts of water demand that were made using outdated statistics.

"With the proposal of Greater KL under the 10th Malaysia Plan, a water crisis is something that should not be in the equation," he added.

However, Piarapakaran said the projects needed to be implemented in conjunction with the water restructuring process in Selangor, which was in a deadlock following disagreements between the state government and water concessionaires.

Water and Energy Consumer Association of Malaysia secretary-general Foon Weng Lian also attributed the problem to a lifestyle of "wasting water" among Malaysians.

"For a country like ours, there is no reason we should be facing a water shortage.

Bringing in more water will only alleviate the problem in the short term but lifestyle change is the long-term solution.

— FOON WENG LIAN

"In a 2008 study we conducted with the Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry, Malaysians were found to be the highest water users in the region.

"We use over 200 litres per person each day and 70% of those surveyed admitted they were not likely to change their lifestyle.

"We have to change our habits of using treated water to wash our cars and water our gardens. Industries have to use water more efficiently," he said.

Foon said in the country's rush to be a developed nation, water had become the least of Malaysians' concerns, adding that there was no holistic plan to balance development with demand.

"Bringing in more water will only alleviate the problem in the short term but lifestyle change is the long-term solution," he added.

Syabas has warned of water disruptions in the coming weeks in four districts in the state — Hulu Langat, Sepang, Kuala Langat and



Petalang — due to an increase in usage for the coming Chinese New Year.

A reader, S.Y. Ng, 50, said she hoped those who remained in

Selangor for the Chinese New Year stretch of holidays would be spared the brunt of the disruptions because most residents would have left for their hometowns.