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2014 water crisis warning

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PETALING JAYA: Selangor may experience a water crisis before 2014 if the state government keeps delaying construction of the Langat 2 water treatment plant, warned the Association of Water and Energy Research Malaysia (Awer).

Its president S. Piarapakaran said a study it conducted concluded that 2014 would be a "suitable candidate" for a water crisis to occur in Selangor if the demand for water increased between 2% and 2.5%.

"If the annual demand increase is higher (than that), the crisis might hit the Klang Valley earlier," he said in a statement yesterday.

He said the average increase of treated water production annually from 2007 to 2010 was 2.14%.

According to the Malaysia Water Industry Guide 2011, Selangor (including Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya), produced 3,889mld, 3,926 and 4,063 million litres of water per day in 2008, 2009 and 2010 respectively.

To prevent such a crisis, Piarapakaran urged the state and Federal governments to set aside their differences and work together to prevent such a crisis, including ensuring water concessionaires were regulated and fully-licensed under the Water Services Industry Act (WSIA) 2006.

Pointing out that the water services industry restructuring process had been "hibernating" since 2008, he stressed that the Pahang-Selangor Raw Water Transfer project and Langat 2 water treatment plant must go forward.

"Delay in building the Langat 2 treatment plant will escalate the cost, which will be passed on through the tariff eventually," he said, adding that water should not be politicised.

Piarapakaran said the Langat 2 treatment plant was much more cost-effective and reliable compared with the Selangor government's suggestion of constructing more groundwater extraction plants.

"Groundwater extractions also come with many other environmental impacts such as hydraulic cracks and instability of ecosystem," he said, adding that it might not successfully work during a water crisis either.