

# Why water should be under Federal control

ALOR STAR, Fri. - Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, today expressed concern that the water problems faced by the country would worsen in the year 2040 when the population reached 70 million.

He said the population was expected to reach the 70 million target faster than the year 2100 originally planned.

The Prime Minister said this was the reason why there was a need to place the water distribution system under the Federal Government.

Speaking to reporters at the Kepala Batas airport today, Dr Mahathir said the existing dams and other large water storage facilities in the various States had been built on loans from the Federal Government.

Much of these loans had not been repaid by the State Governments.

He said that if the Federal Government had not provided the loans the dams and storage facilities would not have been built.

Some States had been collecting revenue from their water resources but if the Federal Government had not provided the loans this could not be done.

Dr Mahathir said some States like Malacca found that they had too little water while other States have abundant water.

This situation could aggravate when the country's population increases.

The Prime Minister also stressed that the move by the Federal Government to control the water resources was not to make

profits from the water but to ensure an adequate supply for all States.