

27 MAY 1996

Nik Aziz-Water

KELANTAN APPRECIATES FEDERAL HELP- NIK AZIZ

KOTA BAHARU, May 27 (Bernama) -- The Kelantan Government today expressed its thanks to the Federal Government for agreeing to help the state resolve the water supply privatisation problem in the state.

Menteri Besar Datuk Haji Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said the positive attitude of the Federal Government would help lighten his burden and that of the Kelantan people.

It was hoped that the discussions between the state and Federal Governments would overcome the problem, he told reporters at his office here.

The state government was ready to consider whatever proposal that would resolve the problem, said Nik Aziz who two weeks ago talked about elements which forced him to sign the water privatisation documents.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who visited Kelantan yesterday, suggested that Kelantan discuss with the Federal Government the privatisation of the state's water supply in the interest of the people in the state.

Anwar said he would report the water situation in Kelantan to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and criticised the state government for not making detailed plans before going ahead with the privatisation which was now causing problems to the people.

Nik Aziz said the state government was earlier made to understand that it need not refer the matter to the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), he said.

The Kelantan Menteri Besar agreed with the suggestion by Anwar that the talks between the state and Federal governments need not be politicised.

Nik Aziz said the increase in water charges was a burden to the people.

The privatisation programme involving hundreds of millions of ringgit was handed over to Kelantan Water Sdn Bhd (KWSB) -- a joint venture between Thames Water of England, which holds 70 per cent equity, and Yayasan Kelantan Darulnaim which holds 30 per cent. -- BERNAMA

AZZ AAM