

11 APR 1998

Samy-Water

SEVERAL CHANGES LIKELY IN MALAYSIA-SINGAPORE WATER PACT

SEGAMAT, April 11 (Bernama) -- Works Minister Datuk Seri S.Samy Vellu said several changes might be made in the Malaysia-Singapore water agreement which is being discussed.

"Among others we will process raw water here and supply them to Singapore. This is a new feature which is being discussed," he told reporters last night.

He said the final decision would be made by the Foreign Ministry although Works Ministry officials were involved in the discussion.

Malaysia signed two agreements in 1961 to supply raw water to Singapore. The agreements end in 2011 and 2061.

Asked whether Singapore would be receptive to the changes proposed, Samy Vellu said he did not think that there would be problems as Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had discussions with his Singapore counterpart, Goh Chok Tong.

Dr Mahathir had in February also assured Goh that Malaysia would supply water to Singapore.

On water shortage in the Klang Valley, Samy Vellu said there were plans to get water from the east coast to meet higher demand in the west.

"The government has approved the plans. We will not be laying pipeline which is expensive but building tunnels to channel water from Sungai Benus in Pahang to the Klang Gate," he said.

He said Sungai Gombak had also been identified as another potential source of water for the Klang Gate dam, as much as five million gallons daily.

"The first option is Sungai Gombak and the second, Sungai Benus. We want this project to be completed in two or three months' time because if the dry spell continues we will have no water by then. The water level in the dam is decreasing daily," he said. --BERNAMA

MKO ABG