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Gate helps to enhance Tasik Chini's ecological system

PEKAN, Wed. - The navigation lock gate built along Sungai Chini will help with efforts at rehabilitating the river and Tasik Chini's ecological system.

State Drainage and Irrigation Department director Tan Jiak Kim said the lock gate would have a flushing effect on water flow from Sungai Chini to Sungai Pahang.

"It will also enable fish migration from Sungai Pahang to Tasik Chini and vice-versa. As a result, fish species in the lake and wetlands in the surrounding areas can be increased," he said.

The components of the lock gate include a 45m water gate, a two-metre chamber measuring 3m downstream and 4.1m upstream, two gates, valves, steering wheel and t-wall.

The RM2.4 million project was completed last May.

"The lock gate will enable operators to manoeuvre their boats directly from Sungai Pahang to Sungai Chini," Tan said.

Boats from Kampung Belimbing from the other side of Sungai Pahang could enter Tasik Chini throughout the year at all levels of water.

Tan added it would only take 15 minutes for boats to pass through the gate.

"As it is the first structure of its kind in the country, it will attract public attention," he said.

Tan said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was attracted to a similar structure while in Bath, United Kingdom in 1997.

"He then proposed to the Cabinet that the concept be adopted at Tasik Chini as it met the criteria for such a structure," he said.

Tasik Chini is a popular tourist destination because it is a beautiful and natural lake.

In 1994, a dam was built along Sungai Chini to raise the water level to enable boatmen to ferry tourists two kilometres upstream along the river.

However, the dam caused water level at the lake to rise by three metres. This resulted in water flooding the surrounding areas and destroying trees.

During his visit to the lake in March 1997, Dr Mahathir expressed dissatisfaction with the situation after having seen the dead trees along the shores of the lake.

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