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Samy-Water

WORK ON TUNNEL TO CHANNEL WATER FROM PAHANG TO KLANG VALLEY STARTS NEXT YEAR

IPOH, Dec 14 (Bernama) -- Construction of a 37km tunnel to channel water from Sungai Telemung in Bentong, Pahang, to Selangor at a cost of about US\$1.5 billion (RM5.7 bilion) will start next year.

Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said today that a huge dam and water filtration plant would also be built to enable treated water to be channelled to the water catchment plants in Gombak, Semenyih and Hulu Langat.

"At first we planned to build two dams but one of them was objected to by several parties," he told reporters after launching the filming of the Tamil movie, "Kathal Kisu-Kisu" (Love Gossip), with Menteri Besar Perak Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali, here.

Samy Vellu said the tunnel, when completed in 2007, was expected to overcome the water woes in the Klang Valley and would be able to meet the demand up to 2020.

He said this when asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement in Tokyo on Thursday that the Japanese government had approved the loan for the project.

The construction of the tunnel was proposed following the water crisis in the Klang Valley in 1998.

Samy Vellu said the soil tests and technical reports by Malaysian and Japanese experts had been completed.

"The cost is high because it involves various expertise and we also need to use foreign experts. The loan we seek from Japan is not pny for water projects but also for other projects," he said.

He said the tunnel was necessary because the current water supply to Selangor and Kuala Lumpur and the Sungai Selangor project in Kuala Kubu Baharu could only meet the demand until 2007.

The first phase of the project is expected to involve the channelling of 1,500 million litres of water a day starting 2007 while phase two, which starts in 2010, is expected to involve 2,260 million litres a day.

Samy Vellu said the actual amount to be channelled would only be decided after the tunnel design was ready and the cost of buying water from Pahang had been fixed.

-- BERNAMA

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