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Mustapa-Water

KELANTAN GOVT'S SNUB ON FEDERAL GOVT "ADAMANT" - MUSTAPA

KOTA BAHARU, Aug 5 (Bernama) -- National Economic Action Council (NEAC) Executive Director Datuk Mustapa Mohamed today described as "adamant" the Kelantan Government's decision to reject the Federal Government's proposal to take over the water management in the state.

He said the Federal Government's plan to take over water management in all the states in Peninsular Malaysia was a wise move to ensure uninterrupted, quality and adequate water supply to the people.

"This is not the first time the dilly-dally has happened, every good thing the Federal Government wants to do is opposed by the state government," he told reporters after presenting excellent service and loyal service awards to staff of the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority in the Eastern Zone, here.

Previously, PAS-run Kelantan and Terengganu governments opposed the Federal Government's plan to take over the powers of state governments in the management of water supply.

Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, in rejecting the plan, said water management in the state had improved after receiving RM600 million loan from the Federal Government last year.

He also said Kelantan had efficient officers to handle water supply.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said on Sunday that he could not see how Kelantan and Terengganu could exempt themselves from accepting the Federal Government's decision to take over the water management.

This is because the two states under the opposition rule do not have enough money and in fact, they faced more problems than other states, he said.

Mustapa said it was public knowledge that the state government faced problems to improve water supply services in the state and as a solution to solve the problem, the Federal Government should be allowed to assist.

The move by the Federal Government to seek the state government's consent to manage the water supply for the benefit of the people was not a political ploy but for public interests which also involved other states, said Mustapa, who is also Kelantan Umno Liaison Chief.

"With the Federal Government's takeover, God Willing, the water woes can be overcome. This is for the people, not for anyone, not for politics," he said.

He said Kelantan Umno would explain to the people the Federal Government's good intention in the ceramahs to be held statewide.

The former Second Finance Minister said the state government actually refused to hand over the water management to the federal Government fearing that the move would be construed as "admitting defeat" for failing to overcome the people's water supply problem which had dragged on for a long time.

"In this matter, we asked the state government to give due consideration for the people's benefit," he added.

-- BERNAMA

MNR RAR TS