

Najib blames rationing on free water policy
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today blamed Pakatan Selangor's populist measures of providing free water and its unwillingness to raise water tariffs for the state's water shortage.

"How many of you suffered from water rationing, how many businessmen cannot get their plans approved due to water rationing?" he asked a strong crowd of 3,000 MCA members and representatives from Chinese NGOs and guilds.

"Why? Because the opposition went on this populist platform, they want to give free water, they don't want to review the tariff with a small increase," he said.

He said giving out free water, an allocation the state government gives to the poor, has led to the state running out of supply and said Pakatan has not been realistic.

"Selangor Menteri Besar (Khalid Ibrahim) has stopped water rationing, but can he guarantee no water rationing in future?" said Najib.

Selangor's dams hit a low over the past months due to unusually dry weather, worsened by pollution in some water sources forcing the state to implement rationing over March and April.

However the dry spell has also hit other states including Perak, Negri Sembilan and Johor, where water rationing was also conducted.

Kedah, Malacca and Penang also considered the option but has so far managed without it.

Selangor's water rationing ended this week after rainfall replenished most of the dams and the state took added measures to increase supply from alternative sources.

BN has constantly attacked the Pakatan Selangor government over its free water policy in the run-up to the 13th general election.

However, it notably also offered its own free water pledge in its election manifesto.

'Khalid more realistic now'

Citing the water deal between the federal and state government as an example, Najib said, "I thank the MB, he is more realistic now. I wish he was realistic back in 2009."

Najib was referring to the repeated calls by Putrajaya to build the Langat 2 water treatment plant, which was until recently rejected by the state government.

"Back then, we suggested to state government to build the Langat 2 water treatment plant as Selangor may face a water crisis in due course. The state government did not believe us," he said.

"I want to make a point - that a very populist opposition is bad for the country," he said.

"You are not facing reality, water is such precious commodity and you want to give free water until you run out of water. It doesn't make sense."

The government have to tell the truth, Najib added, as they have to prepare for the future and "that is what wise men will do".

"We are not talking about (defending) Putrajaya, it's not about the general election, this is about the future of our children and the country."

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