

Groundwater usage is less than 3pct in M'sia - PM

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The use of groundwater in Malaysia is at less than 3 percent despite its capacity of 5,000 billion cubic metres of groundwater resource and regeneration capability of 64 billion cubic metres annually, said Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

The prime minister said this massive capacity meant that groundwater could be an alternative source of water supply for the country but for now, it is only used as a source of drinking water in Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Sabah and Sarawak.

He said countries with high usage of groundwater included Denmark at 100 percent, Austria (98 percent) Thailand (80 percent), China (78 percent) and the US (50 percent).

"The National Water Resources Study (NWRS) for Peninsular Malaysia (2000-2050) found that groundwater can be used as an alternative source of water for

the rural and isolated areas and for various purposes, including industry, agriculture and domestic through several suitable methods and processes,” he said.

Ismail Sabri said this when launching the World Water Day 2022 national-level celebration at Taman Awam Bera, in Bera today. Also present was Environment and Water Minister Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man.

Implementing activities

Ismail Sabri said the Energy and Natural Resources Ministry (KeTSA) through the Minerals and Geoscience Department (JMG) was actively implementing activities such as mapping, development, monitoring and Development of Data Centre and Groundwater Inventory to increase the use of groundwater.

“This measure is to increase the use of groundwater as a conjunctive source of water supply for the use of structures such as underground dams, managed aquifer recharge and riverbank filtration,” he said.

In a related development, Ismail Sabri said the government was reviewing the National Water Resources Policy (DSAN), taking into account the current situation and challenges faced by the country’s water sector, adding that it will be

aligned with the Water Sector Transformation Plan 2040 and development plans under the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP).

DSAN emphasises the need for environmental protection to conserve water resources, and among its main thrusts is the assurance and sustainability of adequate and safe water resources through conservation and effective management.

The prime minister said although Malaysia has sufficient resources to provide safe and treated water, there were still issues and challenges related to water management that needed to be addressed effectively to achieve sustainable and holistic management of the country's water resources.

Water issues

The issues include excessive quantities of water during the rainy season, insufficient amounts during droughts as well as deteriorating water quality and uneven distribution, he said.

The prime minister also hoped that the Federal government, state governments, departments and agencies will work together in the implementation of water resource management in an integrated manner as well as continued conservation

of water resources to ensure availability.

Ismail Sabri, who is Bera assemblyman, said the implementation of the Environmentally-Friendly Drainage Master Plan or PISMA, for Bera town by the Department of Irrigation and Drainage can be used as a guide and reference for systematic and sustainable future development plans.

The project, among others, involves a drainage system to reduce the risk of floods and is expected to benefit about 100,000 residents in the Bera area when completed.

During the celebration, themed 'Sustaining Water Resources: Utilising Groundwater', Ismail Sabri also launched a book titled 'Air dan Pembentungan di Malaysia: Sejarah serta Perspektif' (Water and Sewerage in Malaysia: History and Perspective) which is suitable to be used as reference material by students, researchers and related institutions.

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