

KELANTAN TOLD TO SPEED UP LAND ACQUISITION

PM says phase 2 of PLSB in state can begin early next year when land process is done

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THE Kelantan government has been told to expedite land acquisition to enable Phase 2 of the Sungai Golok Integrated River Basin Development (PLSB) project to start, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said he conveyed this to the Kelantan menteri besar in their meeting yesterday.

"I was informed that phase 2 of the project will take years to complete, and to speed up work, I have urged the state government to expedite the land acquisition process so that the project can start early next year.

"This is important to address the flood woes in Kelantan. For Kelantan, there will be two major flood projects. Apart from the Sungai Golok PLSB, another is the Sungai Kelantan Integrated River Basin Development project," he said.

Speaking after visiting flood victims at SMK (Agama) Lati here yesterday, Anwar said the federal government would also continue to carry out the 18 projects worth RM2.42 billion next year as promised.

Present were Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Mohd Nassuruddin Daud and Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad.

Anwar said that during the visit, he was given a briefing on the latest flood situation in Kelantan.

"In the briefing, we discussed the solution to reduce flood problems faced by victims in Kelantan. We realised that we could not solve all problems immediately, but at least we have tried.

"The federal government is concerned about the massive floods that hit the state and will speed up the flood-related projects as soon as possible," he said. Earlier, he went to the Lubok



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim visiting flood victims in a temporary relief centre at SMK (Agama) Lati in Pasir Mas, Kelantan, yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

Jong Bridge to check on the floods there.

Phase 2 of the Sungai Golok PLSB project is a continuation of PLSB Phase 1, which was scheduled to finish in mid-2021, but was delayed due to land acquisition issues and implementation of the Movement Control Order during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The scope of the project includes flood mitigation components, environment-friendly drainage and the National Water Balance System (Nawabs).

Anwar also announced an aid of RM50 million for flood victims in Kelantan.

He said the allocation from the National Disaster Management Agency (Nadma) would be channelled directly to the victims.

"For flood victims in temporary relief centres, for now, we have approved an initial allocation of RM50 million.

"Each family will receive RM1,000 and any additional aid will be based on losses suffered by the victims."

Anwar said the federal government had approved RM6 million for the construction of three temporary embankments in Rantau Panjang.

He said one of the three would replace the embankment that collapsed at the Sungai Golok

PLSB in Kampung Lanchang.

The other two, he said, would be set up in the same area too.

"I do not know what is the cause of the incident, but there was a suggestion to set up three temporary embankments in the area costing about RM2 million each.

"Therefore, I have approved RM6 million immediately today (yesterday) for the project.

"One of the three temporary embankments will replace the one that collapsed.

"This project is not like the normal project and it can be done faster," he said.

On Tuesday, the Sungai Golok PLSB embankment in Kampung Lanchang, Rantau Panjang, collapsed due to strong currents.

The collapsed embankment left a gap with a width of 20m.

The embankment was about 10m high, but the water level at Sungai Golok had breached 11.03m on Tuesday.

Up to noon yesterday, 26,914 people were taking refuge in 131 temporary flood relief centres in Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Johor and Sabah.

Forecast of continuous rain throughout the day had also been issued in Pahang (Kuantan, Pekan and Rompin) and Johor (Segamat, Kluang, Mersing, Kulai, Kota Tinggi and Johor Baru).