

Poor, thirsty and sick in Pekan
Free Malaysia Today
3 April 2014
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PETALING JAYA: Dry weather and the discontinuation of water supply projects have brought severe suffering to an Orang Asli community in Pahang, according to the Association for the Promotion of Human Rights (Proham).

In a press statement released today, Proham said a lack of rain since January had caused wells to dry up in Kampung OA Tanjong Keruing, Pekan, affecting 30 families.

It said many of the villagers, especially children and old people, had become ill as a result.

“Families would need to wait in turn for water levels to rise up, but it’s often not enough for the next family in line, causing long wait periods,” the statement added.

“The situation is compounded with the fact that they cannot afford to purchase clean water from the shops.”

According to villager Mohamad Sulong, state-appointed contractors had practically abandoned two water supply projects that they began last September and last February.

“The Department of Water Supply had laid underground water pipes in our village and houses around September,” he said. “Water was flowing for a while, but it stopped shortly afterwards due to low pressure.”

Another contractor set up a pump in February, but Mohamad said it did not help.

Proham urged the state to look into the matter urgently and take action against the contractors.

It also urged the Department of Orang Asli Development to review its procedures in awarding such contracts.

Pekan is the parliamentary constituency of the Prime Minister, Najib Tun Razak.

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Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2014/04/03/poor-thirsty-and-sick-in-pekan/>