

No water rationing needed if Langat 2 plant had been built earlier, says PM
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By Lee Shi-Ian

Putrajaya has again said that the recent water rationing exercise in the Klang Valley would not have happened if the Langat 2 water treatment plant had been approved as planned and built.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today if approval for the plant's construction had been given in 2009, there would not have been water supply disruption.

He cited this as an example of populist politics by the opposition, saying Putrajaya had been blamed for the recent water rationing exercise which took a toll on millions of residents and businesses in the Klang Valley.

"There is a clear difference between raw and treated water, the Langat 2 water treatment plant would have provided adequate supply of clean water," Najib said at the monthly gathering of the Prime Minister's Office in Putrajaya.

"Many do not understand this, why Putrajaya wanted to build the Langat 2 water treatment plant. In the end, they blamed Putrajaya for the shortage in water supply," he said.

The Selangor government had announced last week that the water rationing exercise had ended after water levels at the dams improved following a spell of wet weather.

Selangor, which currently supplies water to Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, introduced water rationing over the past two months after water levels at the state's dams reached dangerously low levels due to a prolonged drought.

"If approval for the Langat 2 water treatment plant had been granted, Putrajaya could have proved its point and there would have been no water disruption," Najib said.

"The water disruption could have been avoided, we should not look at the short term only."

Najib said Putrajaya did not practise populist politics. Instead, it considered what was best for the rakyat – short-term difficulties for long-term benefits.

Using an analogy, he said: "If the doctor prescribes antibiotics, the patient must complete the entire course in order to reap the benefits of the medication.

"We must take the medication which has been prescribed to us, and we must have faith that it will benefit us in the end."

The construction of Langat 2 water treatment plant began last week. Upon completion, the plant is expected to supply 1,130 million litres of treated water daily up to 2025.

The appointed contractor was reported to have given assurances that the project could be ready by April 30, 2017.

On February 26, Selangor and Putrajaya signed a memorandum of understanding to enable the former to issue approvals for Putrajaya to plan the Langat 2 water treatment plant in that state.

Meanwhile, Najib said the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 was an event which haunted Malaysia until today.

"As I had previously mentioned, this is an unprecedented aviation mystery in world history," he said, adding Malaysia would continue its efforts to locate the aircraft. – May 5, 2014.

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