

Najib entrusts ministry to resolve water issue with Selangor, says Ongkili – Bernama
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The Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry has received the mandate from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak to do whatever necessary to resolve the water issue with the Selangor government.

Minister Datuk Seri Maximus Ongkili said the ministry would also continue to engage with the state government to resume talks.

"We have already received a mandate from the PM to do whatever necessary and continue to proceed with the matter (deal with Selangor).

"We are scheduled to have a meeting at the officers level within this week... for now, we are still waiting for feedback," he said.

Ongkili was speaking to reporters after launching the 2nd International Water Association (IWA) Malaysia Young Water Professionals Conference 2015 in Kuala Lumpur today.

He was asked to comment on Selangor Menteri Besar Mohamad Azmin Ali seeking the help of the prime minister to resolve the water supply restructuring crisis in the state.

Ongkili said the ministry was confident that Putrajaya and the state government could sit down and iron out all disputes towards realising the Master Agreement.

"We (Putrajaya) still want to deal with some of the misinterpretation in the agreement... we are confident of settling it," he said.

On March 9, Azmin said the state government had decided to cancel the agreement following his claim that the Federal government had violated the terms of the main agreement signed on September 12, last year.

It is feared the decision might affect the construction of phase one of the Langat 2 Water Treatment Plant project, which is expected to be completed in 2017 to meet increasing demand for treated water in Selangor, Klang Valley and Putrajaya.

However, the ministry was later reported as saying that implementation of water restructuring in Selangor had been postponed as the state government refused to settle three out of eight conditions of the main agreement with the Federal government, including the issue on land.

Meanwhile in his opening speech, Ongkili urged the local young professionals and experts to translate the outcome of research in water into practical application that would eventually lead to a sustainability of the water sector, especially in developing and least developed countries.

"As a country, Malaysia has made a remarkable achievement in providing clean and safe drinking water, as well as adequate sanitation for its citizens, both in quantity and quality.

"In addition, the ongoing water restructuring exercise will further enhance management of the water sector on a sustainable footing, a prerequisite to realise our aspiration to become a high income nation by 2020," he said.

Themed Aspring Beyond Water Solutions, the second IWA Malaysia Young Water Professionals Conference organised by Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, together with IWA and Malaysia Water Association is aimed at identifying and resolving the water crisis, especially in Malaysia.

More than 200 local and foreign participants attended the four-day conference, beginning today. – Bernama, March 17, 2015.

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