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KERATAN AKHBAR

Groups call for long term solutions

'Holistic approach needed to address Klang Valley's recurring water disruptions'

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PETALING JAYA: Water consumer groups are calling for long-term solutions to rectify Klang Valley's water woes.

Air Selangor announced unscheduled water cuts for 463 areas in Selangor due to odour pollution, the first since the last major disruption in December.

Water and Energy Consumers Association president Saravanan Thambirajah said although Air Selangor had put in good efforts to minimise disruption, it was still a great inconvenience to the people.

"It was a good effort by Air Selangor to detect the pollution early, and we hope that they can rectify the issue as soon as possible.

"However, it is troublesome for the rakyat at this moment. They were not ready and didn't have early warning or information to store water beforehand," he said.

The issue of water pollution,

added Saravanan, must be overcome in the longer term, with stricter monitoring and enforcement of security around raw water sources.

"We don't know if it's sabotage or accidental pollution but the culprit must be apprehended and charged with heavy punishment meted out.

"Pollution is a major issue now, especially in regards to water sources," he said, adding that Air Selangor needed to make sure that water tanks were deployed with adherence to strict standard operating procedures.

Malaysia Water Forum president Saral James agreed, adding that unscheduled water cuts were an issue that must be addressed for good.

"We were happy that there were no water disruptions affecting a large population in Selangor for quite some time this year.

"However, we need to continuously improve. We need to find the root cause of this once and for all," she said.

A more holistic approach, she added, was needed to protect water sources, adding that all industrial areas must be moved away from water catchment areas.

"There is too much at stake, and water security is an issue that we cannot just wait for something to happen and then, we accept it without doing anything.

"Water security is a national issue, and perpetrators should be made subject to the law with their business licences revoked," she said.

Malaysian Water Association immediate past president Datuk Abdul Kadir Mohd Din said the water cuts in the Klang Valley remained the "same old problem", which required enforcement and mitigation measures.

"It may be fair to compensate the consumers accordingly, and they are to be kept informed of all the plans and progress of any action plan.

"The National Water Services

Commission (SPAN) needs to play its role to find effective long-term solutions and ensure that these are executed within an agreed time frame," he said.

He also urged works to start on creating alternative emergency raw water supply drawn from ground-water, lakes and off-river storage (ORS) facilities, and connected to water treatment plants.

"The water reserve margin must also be at 20% to cushion the impact of water cuts like this," he said.

Yesterday, Air Selangor corporate communication head Elina Baseri said the odour pollution was detected at a water intake point, leading to the temporary shutdown of the Semenyih Water Treatment Plant.

Five regions - Petaling (172 areas), Hulu Langat (54 areas), Sepang (194 areas), Putrajaya (23 areas) and Kuala Langat (20 areas) - were impacted.

Air Selangor, she said, had activated the Emergency Response Plan

to provide supply to the affected consumers.

"Air Selangor understands the consumers' need for clean water, especially with the increase in Covid-19 cases," she said, adding that it was making all efforts to minimise the impact of disruption.

Klang Valley was plagued by a series of water cuts last year, the latest major disruption being on Dec 29, with 58 areas in Klang and Shah Alam and 72 areas in Petaling affected.

In early December, 861 areas in the Klang Valley experienced low supply following a brief shutdown of four water treatment plants at Sungai Selangor.

In November last year, 1,139,008 households found their taps running dry following the contamination of water sources.

Watch the video
TheStarTV.com



Klang Valley folk better prepared for water cut

By SHALINI RAVINDRAN
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PETALING JAYA: Residents in the Klang Valley were not in a festive mood despite it being a public holiday after they were again hit with another water cut due to odour pollution.

Taman Puncak Jalil resident Bryan Tee said his family was trying so hard to stay home during the pandemic.

"Now, I have to go out and purchase drinking water and bins to store water for washing," said Tee, who has two young children and elderly parents.

He said if the source of the pollution was found, those responsible must issue a public apology and perform community service.

"We already know that fines are no longer effective in preventing this from happening. The law should compel the polluters to give back something to society for the damage caused.

"Hopefully, those working to solve the disruption are able to quickly rectify the situation," he added.

Pinggiran USJ 3 resident Kalaiveni



Water woes: Shahrol Azmi, 48 with his 11 year-old son Nasiruddin Naufal filling containers up with water at they home in Taman Puncak Jalil in Kuala Lumpur. — MUHAMAD SHAHRIL ROSLI/The Star

Subramaniam, 38, said the disruption threw a spanner into her plan to move into her new home.

"We had initially scheduled Aug 31 and tomorrow to get a cleaning service in for a thorough clean-up of the house.

"But we may have to delay this if

there is not going to be water supply. We may also have to push back our plan to move in as we would not be able to stay here," said Kalaiveni.

Her mother, who lives in the same neighbourhood, is also scrambling to store water before the sup-

ply runs out.

"She is trying to store drinking water at the very least. We are not sure how long the water tank supply will last," said Kalaiveni.

USJ 19 resident T. Arvin is not only upset by the water cut but because it is yet another case of water pollution in Selangor.

"It is time to re-look at the way our factories are discharging their waste so cases like these are a thing of the past instead of a once-in-a-while incident.

"We had a good few months without disruption after numerous cases last year but now, we are reliving it again," he said.

However, Arvin is better prepared this time with enough water to last his family for at least five days.

Seri Kembangan resident Mandy Teh said she was lucky that she had made it a habit to store water.

"There have been numerous times when we were caught unaware and had to buy bottled water or rely on water tankers.

"For the past few years, I've always tried to keep at least a 120-litre bin of water in the back garden, which would last us a few days at least," she said.