



## KERATAN AKHBAR

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# 'Show us your alternative solution'

## States against water tariff increase told to submit workable plans

**KLANG:** Several states which have no plans to increase the water tariff have been asked to submit their respective mechanisms for clean water supply to the Water, Land and Natural Resources Ministry.

Its minister Datuk Dr Xavier Jayakumar said this was because the cost of preparing and managing treated water was high and remedial action had to be taken to address the water crisis in the states.

"Everybody needs to understand the water industry requires a huge budget so we can make sure the people can receive supply of clean water 24 hours a day and 365 days a year."

"Once we have the budget then we can provide the infrastructure to manage water operations besides addressing the shortage of water supply, so the states with no plans to increase their water tariff need to show that they have workable mechanisms and present them to the ministry," he told reporters after launching the Restoration, Reclamation and Rehabilitation through tree planting programme at the Botanical Garden here yesterday.

He said this when asked to comment on the Negri Sembilan government's stance that it would not increase its water tariff.

Menri Besar Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun, when announcing the decision, said it was in line with the Pakatan Harapan government's manifesto in the 14th General Election stating there would be no increase in water tariff for five years.

Dr Xavier said several states had agreed with the ministry's proposal to increase the tariff and the matter would be brought to the Cabinet for approval.

"If we don't start now, we will face water problems in the next five years," he said, referring to the water tariff hike.

Meanwhile, commenting on the tree planting programme, he said the ministry had targeted 100 million trees to be planted nationwide in five years to show Malaysia's commitment to conserving natural resources and the environment.

"This programme was created in conjunction with the International Day of Forests and we have identified an area of 4,750ha to be rehabilitated.

"Through the tree planting exercise, we will concentrate on the planting of iconic jungle trees, including merbau," he said. — Bernama