

## KERATAN AKHBAR



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# Reactivate off-river storage plan, suggests SPAN

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**CYBERJAYA:** The Federal Government will be asked to consider reactivating the off-river storage plan so that the public will not have to suffer from dry taps should there be incidents affecting water supply, says the National Water Services Commission (SPAN).

The water regulatory body's chairman Charles Santiago said: "If the plan is implemented, the stored water could be channelled to treatment plants and be supplied to consumers when there are issues with the main source."

**“**We need to push hard for this so that we don't have to be held hostage to situations like this incident.  
**”**

Charles Santiago

"We need to push hard for this so that we don't have to be held hostage to situations like this incident," he told a press conference yesterday, referring to the closure of the Sungai Semenyih water treatment plant.

Santiago said a trial project on off-river storage was done in Selangor sometime back, but it was found to be a costly affair.

"It is costly, but it is time that we look into this possibility because of the inconvenience if taps are dry," he said.

On whether water sources should be declared as national security, Santiago said there were some dis-



**Every drop helps:** A child carrying a container to be filled with water while queuing up with his parents at a water filling station in Jalan USJ 4/5 in Subang Jaya earlier yesterday.

cussions on the matter but he declined to elaborate.

He also said that while those who commit extreme and severe pollution face the death penalty under Act 127, the law however did not spell out compensation.

"Perhaps those who are affected by water disruption such as this incident can look into taking up the case," he said in response to a question on whether those affected by water disruption should be compensated.

The dumping of scheduled waste into manholes in the lowly populated Bandar Bukit Mahkota area had

forced the closure of the Sungai Semenyih water treatment plant twice in three months, affecting more than 1.5 million residents in several districts.

Just last week, oily residue was found in a Bukit Mahkota manhole, which Lembaga Urus Air Selangor (LUAS) confirmed to be the source of odour pollution that forced the shutdown of the Sungai Semenyih and Bukit Tampoi water treatment plants, as well as the Bandar Bukit Mahkota sewage treatment plant on Saturday.

Santiago said SPAN will ask local authorities in Selangor to check cat-

erries to ensure these outlets use grease or oil traps, adding that premises which have not installed the traps must be compelled to do so.

He said this was because waste found to have been dumped was fats from kitchens.

"We will also ask local authorities to look into activities of illegal industries as well as car workshops as waste from these activities was also dumped into the manhole," he said.

Santiago also said that SPAN had lodged a police report to see whether there were elements of sabotage.