



## KERATAN AKHBAR

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## Xavier: Govt will not collect water revenue from states

**KOTA TINGGI:** The federal government has given the assurance that it will not collect water revenue from the states once the National Water Resources Bill is approved by the Dewan Rakyat, says Water, Land and Natural Resources Minister Dr Xavier Jayakumar.

He said the main objective of the Bill was to standardise the country's water resources management.

Once the Bill is approved, all the state governments would follow the guidelines in managing water-related matters in the respective states, he said.

"The government is giving a year from now for reforms of the Bill as it involves many parties," he said during the unveiling of the RM96mil Sungai Johor barrage project at Taman Kota Intan here.

It was also attended by Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Osman Sapian.

Dr Xavier said if the government did not have the standardised guidelines on water resources management in the country, it could lead to problems.

"The states will benefit once the Bill is approved as the federal government is the one that is going to invest in the development of water-related infrastructure," he said.

Dr Xavier said the government would only utilise land which the respective state governments would have to approve for the development of the water-related infrastructure.

He said that once passed, the National Water Resources Law would ensure all water resources in the country are well managed, including the intra-water transfer between states.

"We don't want to see a fight between states when it comes to intra-water transfers as the law should benefit all parties," he added.

On negotiations between Malaysia and Singapore on water pricing, he said both countries were always open to further discussions on the matter.

Dr Xavier declined to comment whether Malaysia would request Singapore to pay more for water it draws from Johor.

Currently, Singapore is entitled to draw up to 250 million gallon per day (mgd) of raw water from Sungai Johor.

In return, Johor is entitled to a daily supply of treated water up to 2% at five mgd of water supplies to Singapore.

Singapore pays three sen per thousand gallons of raw water and sells treated water back to Johor at 50 sen per thousand gallons.