

Penang urges raw water transfer scheme to be fast-tracked

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GEORGE TOWN: The Penang government has urged the Federal government and the Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources (WLNR) to commission by 2025, Phase 1 of the Sungai Perak Raw Water Transfer Scheme (SPRWTS).

SPRWTS is a proposed project initiated by Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) to tap Penang's second raw water resources in Sungai Perak to meet future water demand for the state and Northern Perak until 2050.

Chief minister Chow Kon Yeow (pix) today stressed that Sungai Muda, Penang's only major raw water resources, may only meet Kedah and Penang's combined raw water needs until 2025.

Chow said that the state government and PBAPP had been asking for the implementation of SPRWTS to the previous federal government since 2011, but to no avail in the period between 2012 and 2018.

"Now that Pakatan Harapan (PH) is heading the Federal government, we are hoping for fast-tracked approval and implementation of the SPRWTS by 2025," he said in his speech here in conjunction of World Water Day and PBAPP's 20th-anniversary celebration.

However, in a press conference on Friday (April 26) in Perak, Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ahmad Faizal Azumu stood firm in their decision to only sell treated water to Penang.

PBAPP chief executive officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said that WLNR has agreed to undertake technical studies to determine the best option for mutual benefits.

"Earlier, the WLNR Ministry had only two technical studies: One for Penang's raw water proposal and Perak's treated water proposal. Then they came up with a third 'hybrid' proposal, which is incorporating transfers of both raw water and treated water to Penang and Perak water supply infrastructure," Jaseni told newsmen.

He hoped that the studies for the three proposals would take WLNR a couple of months.

Aside from SPRTWS, he added that the other future key projects include the upgrade of Penang's nine existing water treatment plants, as well as the third Butterworth to Penang twin submarine pipeline project, which consists of 1,200mm diameter twin submarine pipeline to supply 315 million litres per day (MLD) of water from Sungai Dua Water Treatment in Seberang Perai to Penang Island. — Bernama