

PM wants report on ongoing water woe at UMS

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PUTRAJAYA: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has instructed the relevant party to submit a report regarding the ongoing water supply problem at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), despite the government having approved RM3 million last year to overcome the problem.

At an assembly with staff of the Finance Ministry here yesterday, Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said he found out from social media about UMS students still facing water problems and raised the matter to Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Zamry Abdul Kadir.

"I don't understand (water problem still not solved). Maybe, the project takes time. I don't want to judge. I want a report on what has happened since the (RM3 million allocation) was approved by the Minister of Finance.

"Perhaps, KSP (Treasury Secretary-General Datuk Johan Mahmood Merican) can ask the

secretary-general of the ministry concerned. What happened since I approved (the RM3 million allocation) and the actions taken by the ministry and the university," he added.

On May 31 last year, the federal approved an allocation of RM3 million to UMS to resolve its water supply problem and yesterday, Zamry announced an additional allocation of RM2 million to UMS for the same purpose.

Meanwhile, Anwar said every government machinery, both at the federal and state levels, needs to have uniformity and a better understanding of the government's capabilities and the country's financial strength.

The prime minister said at a meeting with the leaders of the Pahang government and the State Public Works Department yesterday, he took the opportunity to explain the country's financial position to them.

During the meeting, he said, there were requests for allocations of between RM7 billion and RM8 billion for infrastructure-related projects in the state.

"I see that sometimes there are states that are 'disconnected'. That's why I used that time to explain our debt, about the deficit. But (if) there is an urgent need, we approve allocations, for example for management and 'maintenance'.

"This means that the government machinery should ensure not only uniformity but also understanding, for example, we want every officer, not only in the Ministry of Finance, but in every ministry, in the state and district, to understand at least what the government's capabilities are, what the constraints are," he said.

The meeting was also attended by Second Finance Minister Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan, Deputy Finance Minister Lim Hui Ying and Johan. — Bernama