

Take proactive measures to address UMS water woes — Bung

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KOTA KINABALU: Barisan Nasional (BN) Sabah Chairman, Datuk Seri Panglima Bung Moktar Radin called on the state government to be more attentive and take proactive measures to address the longstanding issue of clean water supply at Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), which has been affecting the lives of students at the university.

He said there should not be any question of whether the emergency allocation of RM3 million approved by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to address the water

problem at UMS should be channelled directly to UMS or the State Government.

Immediate and decisive action needs to be taken to resolve the water crisis at UMS, said the former Deputy Chief Minister.

According to him, since the allocation is an emergency allocation approved by Anwar, who is also the Finance Minister, swift action needs to be taken so that the water supply issue can be addressed promptly.

“If this involves financial management to implement this project, avoid too much

bureaucracy, and if it involves technical matters, the state Water Department must assist to expedite the project for the sake of thousands of students at UMS,” he said in a statement on Saturday.

Bung Moktar, who is also Umno Sabah liaison chairman, stressed that both the federal and the state governments, along with UMS, need to collaborate to resolve this issue without blaming anyone, especially regarding the allocation distribution.

“All parties involved should come together to discuss and find

a solution to the water supply issue at UMS. Even though UMS falls under the jurisdiction of the federal government, the state government should not be passive but should be attentive and assist in resolving this problem,” he said.

“The responsibility to nurture quality human capital is everyone’s duty. We do not want to burden the daily lives of UMS students with issues like clean water supply as it could affect their focus on learning,” Bung Moktar pointed out.

According to Bung Moktar,

UMS students no longer expect promises that the water supply issue at the university will be resolved with the completion of the Telibong 2 Water Treatment Plant (LRA) in Tuaran, which may or may not be completed as it involves too much technical work and contractor commitments.

“UMS students can no longer tolerate rhetorical announcements because this is not a new issue; it has been ongoing for quite some time. Surely, with proper planning, this would not have become such a critical issue,” he said.

Bung Moktar added that as a short term solution, the state government could assist by also allocating funds other than expecting funds from the federal government to resolve the issue, such as providing temporary water tanks for storage and mobilizing periodic water aid trucks to deliver water to UMS.

“Do not just send two to four water aid trucks once a week when thousands of students need clean water supply, and I understand some students still have to buy bottled water for their daily use,” Bung Moktar said.