

UMS water shortage caused by squatter colonies – Masiung

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KOTA KINABALU: Strict action must be taken by the relevant authorities on squatter colonies around Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) which contribute to the water shortage at the higher learning institution.

Chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Board (LPPB) Datuk Masiung Banah in a statement on Friday, said that water shortage in UMS will not end as long as there is large-scale illegal connection in the squatter settlements.

In addition, he said residents of low-cost housing flats owned by LPPB in Taman Jaya Diri, Bukit Setia in Sepanggar and Taman Sri Warisan in Inanam Laut complained of frequent water supply interruptions in addition to extremely low water pressure.

“Although the Sabah Ministry of Public Works (JKR) has assured that the water problem in UMS will be solved after the Telibong Water Treatment Plant

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2 is completed at the end of January, but UMS will receive lower water pressure due to too many illegal connections to squatter colonies.

“The MyJans initiative introduced by the government has not changed the situation much because they, especially foreigners, are used to enjoy free water supply and also electricity through illegal connections,” he said.

For the record, the Sabah State Water Department (JANS) recently launched the MyJans application, where users can access water supply related information online such as water outage notices, announcements and news.

Masiung said that the MyJans

application launched by JANS last week is a good initiative, but illegal connections will still happen.

The Kuamut assemblyman urged related agencies, especially JANS, to carry out large-scale enforcement operations on a scheduled basis in squatter areas and factories.

Recently, the chairman of the UMS Board of Directors, Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan, said the existence of a squatter colony with around 12,000 houses is believed to be a contributor to the water supply problem at the largest university in Sabah.

The state government suffered a loss of 18 million liters of water per day (MLD) due to illegal connections.

He hoped that the enforcement operations of related agencies would not only involve water supply but also carry out illegal electricity connection operations in squatter areas.