

'Sabah should have full control over its own water needs and resources'

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Instead, he said that Sabah should have full control over its own water needs and resources and state utilities, generate revenue and tax from its own natural resources, possess its own educational development funds, and empower state agencies without needing approval from Putrajaya.

"If the State Government is serious about upholding rights under the MA63 framework, prove it through action – not just endless meetings and negotiations that lead nowhere. If Sarawak can have its own Energy and Water Resources Agency – why is Sabah still overly dependent?" he said.

Greg Marthius, who is a Sarawak son, added that Sabah should have control over her water and land resources (Article 95E of the Federal Constitution); power over state public services, including utility departments like water (Article 20 of MA63); and the right to greater development allocations based on its 'equal partner' status.

He also opined that Sabah's

dependence on the Federal Government in almost all aspects, from development budgets to resolving basic issues, is a modern colonial structure that remains unbroken.

"This is not merely a political issue; it's a matter of dignity." How long must we continue to ask, instead of building? How long must we keep waiting, instead of acting?" he said.

As for UMS, Greg Marthius said that UMS is not just a campus; it is a symbol of Sabah's intellect and future.

"But in reality, UMS seems neglected. No water, poorly maintained facilities, and basic needs are overlooked. In fact, industrialisation is prioritised for development" he said.

He repeated that if the State fails to care for an institution as significant as UMS, how can she talk about progress and quality education for all of Sabah?

At the same time, he also urged the Higher Education Ministry to speak up. The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) cannot remain silent, he said.

"Student welfare issues,

including basic needs like water supply, are the direct responsibility of MOHE. What is the use of sophisticated universities and grand academic buildings if students still bathe using stored water in buckets and with bottled mineral water during crises?" he added.

He said that they seldom hear a strong voice from MOHE on this issue – as if the water problem at UMS is no longer a priority.

"If the government truly wants to produce excellent generations, then create a dignified and humane environment first. MOHE must be more proactive, not just visiting and issuing 'PR' statements. We want an action plan," he said.

Greg Marthius also criticised the Member of Parliament for Sepanggar which UMS is part of.

"UMS is located in the Sepanggar parliamentary constituency. So where is the voice of the Sepanggar MP on this issue? How many times have students here struggled with water crises year after year, yet we still await a firm defence from the elected representative. We respect the mandate given

to the MP by the people, but that mandate comes with responsibility. The MP should be the first to demand solutions from the state and federal governments," he said.

"We do not want representatives who only appear on social media during inaugurations but are silent when students lack water for bathing or worship. This is not a personal attack – this is a demand for the responsibility of elected representatives to defend the people," he reminded.

Greg Marthius said that one of the main problems often used as an excuse is the delay in implementing the Telibong II Water Treatment Plant, which is supposedly going to solve the water crisis around Kota Kinabalu, including UMS.

"However, until now, the implementation of this plant continues in 'phases' while the problem has persisted for years.

"The question is: why isn't this plant completed all at once and prioritised as a critical state project? Are we waiting until the entire system collapses before taking firm action?" he asked.

He said that the Sabah State

Government should make the construction and full operation of the Telibong II Plant an immediate agenda and state priority, no longer just an ordinary project treated casually.

"We urge that this project be driven like a national strategic project because it affects hundreds of thousands of people and students who suffer its consequences daily. There is no more time for technical excuses, slow tenders, or 'phased planning'.

People's problems need to be resolved with firm and high-priority leadership," he urged.

Nevertheless, he stated that he is not opposing the State Government but urges improvements.

"I am not writing this statement to oppose the state government but to urge improvement. Good leadership is leadership that is open to criticism, not quick to take offence when the people speak out. We want to see the Sabah state government emerge as a progressive, courageous, and people-first government. If the slogan 'Sabah Maju Jaya' is to be believed, it must be proven, not

just printed on banners," he said.

"I hope the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, will pay serious attention to this issue. If the Unity Government truly wants to uphold the spirit of MA63 and the principle of regional justice, then now is the time to prove that students from Sabah are not taken lightly, and that universities are not places to be sidelined in the national development plan. Sabah is not a periphery. Students are not just numbers. And this voice is not just a post; it's a call for change. I invite the Prime Minister to witness the reality at UMS during the crisis and to hear firsthand the voices that have long been sidelined in silence," he stated.

In closing his personal statement, he said: "I also do not deny and appreciate all the efforts of the UMS management who have tirelessly sought temporary solutions, managed water distribution to students, requested water tankers, and in many situations, shouldered the burden that should be resolved by external agencies like the state and federal governments."