

23rd April 2017

PRESS STATEMENT

YAB TUAN LIM GUAN ENG,
Chief Minister of Penang.

STOP “GAMBLING” WITH WATER SUPPLY FOR THE 3 NORTHERN STATES

- **By allowing logging in Ulu Muda, Kedah is “gambling” with water supply for Perlis, Kedah and Penang.**
- **The Penang State Government calls on the Federal Government to step in and stop logging in Ulu Muda now.**

PENANG, Sunday, 23/4/2017: The Federal Government must stop logging in Ulu Muda now before irreparable damage is done to the most important water catchment in North Malaysia.

Penang’s stand on logging in Ulu Muda area has been consistent and clear:

- Ban all logging in Ulu Muda.
- Gazette Ulu Muda as a water catchment area.
- Kedah should Seek Federal compensation in lieu of the ‘forest premiums’ that Kedah has been receiving from logging companies.
- Allocate a portion of the Federal funds to monitor and conserve Ulu Muda.

However, instead of seeking funding from the Federal Government to conserve Ulu Muda, Kedah continues to license logging in an area that it calls a “forest reserve.”

As such, Kedah is basically ‘gambling’ with water supply, not only for Kedah, but for Perlis and Penang as well.

What is at stake in this ‘gamble’?

- The lives and livelihoods of 4.05 million Malaysians in our 3 northern states.

- The business operations of thousands of companies that provide jobs and business opportunities in Perlis, Kedah and Penang.
- The combined national GDP contributions of Perlis, Kedah and Penang, which was estimated to be about RM105 billion in 2014.

It is imperative to stop Kedah from continuing to 'gamble' with the water supply of three northern states. If we run out of raw water, there will be a catastrophic water crisis in North Malaysia.

According to The Star on 14/4/2017, a new trail for timber lorries was found in the Ulu Muda Forest Reserve near Sik, and it is more than 15km long.

The report also states that a signboard at the base site showed that a permit had been issued by the Kedah Tengah district forestry officer. Another signboard stated that the licence holder is *Perbadanan Menteri Besar Kedah*.

According to the latest statement by MADA Chairman Datuk Othman Aziz, as published in Sinar Harian on 20/4/2017, logging in Ulu Muda Forest Reserve has reached a critical stage and water capacity level at the moment is left at only 50%. He also mentioned that because of the logging, water could not flow through the ground as it is supposed to due to the lack of trees.

Dato' Othman further said that logging trails had been identified in Ulu Muda, the nearest trail is only 200m from the dam, meanwhile the furthest distance from the dam had been detected at 2.5km. He also mentioned that uncontrolled illegal logging activities could bring massive damages to the dam as well as water catchment area.

According to MADA web postings, the level of the Muda Dam was 60.3% on 1st January 2017 and has dropped to 34.5% on 17th April 2017.

The Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water, or KeTTHA, is in-charge of national affairs regarding water supply. The National Water Services Commission, or SPAN, was created to regulate water supply services in Malaysia.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, or NRE, is empowered to regulate raw water resources, forest management and environmental conservation.

The Penang State Government calls on the Federal Government to step in and stop logging in Ulu Muda now.

Thank You.

*YAB TUAN LIM GUAN ENG,
Chief Minister of Penang.*

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