

Interstate water tunnel by 2010 ✓

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WORK on a tunnel to channel water from Pahang to Selangor is expected to start next year and will be completed in 2012.

Energy, Water and Communications Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik said the project, once completed, would supply 1,890 million litres of raw water daily to Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya.

"However, I do not believe Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya will have such a high demand for water as the water shortage in 2007 and 2008 is only a prediction," he said while winding up the debate on the Ninth Malaysia Plan.

A sum of RM2 billion has been allocated for the project under the Plan.

Dr Lim suggested several measures to overcome the wa-



■ Reports by M.K. Megan, Azura Abas and Ranjeetha Pakiam

ter shortage in Selangor. These included reducing consumption, cracking down on theft of water, and looking for supplies from other States such as Perak.

On the high cost of the short message service (SMS), Dr Lim said there was little his ministry could do as this was set by the market.

Datuk Mohamed Aziz (BN-Seri Gading) had asked that the ministry do something about the steep SMS rates that were charged when voters SMSed to shows such as *Akademi Fantasia*.

"The telecommunication companies made RM2 billion in profits last year and there were 25 million SMSes for *Akademi Fantasia* alone.

"The SMS charge for *Akademi Fantasia*, at 50 sen per SMS, is too high."

Dr Lim agreed but said he could not do anything about it except to advise the young not to spend money voting in such events.

"I tell my children and grandchildren not to watch this type of show. I hope parents will also advise their children not to take part in such SMS voting programmes."