

MNS : Privatisation will create monopoly

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — The Malaysian Nature Society has cautioned against the full privatisation of water management and is also calling for regulated price to prevent overcharging of treated water.

MNS president Datuk Dr Salleh Mohd Nor said that privatisation would create a monopoly which may result in price increases.

“There will be a temptation for water suppliers to overcharge.

“Domestic consumers may be more affected than commercial ones,” he said in a statement.

He suggested that the price of

treated water be controlled by agencies like Water Supply Boards and non-governmental organisations like the Federation of Malaysian Consumers Association (Fomca).

Independent checks on water quality standards and the volume supplied should also be conducted on the privatised entities by water boards and environmental and health agencies.

Salleh also called for demand management — awareness and education on using water conservatively.

To ensure lasting water supply, he said integrated management was required.

“This included placing supply and treatment under the same management, and the preservation of catchment areas and highlands from logging and development.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the public should not fear the privatisation of water management.

He said no decision had been made yet, but the people should realise the benefits.