

Water tariff under BN will go up, warns S'gor exco man
MalaysiaKini.com
July 17, 2012

Water tariffs are likely to increase dramatically should BN return to power in Selangor, warned state exco member Dr Xavier Jayakumar.

Contrary to Selangor Umno deputy chief Noh Omar's claims, Xavier said available data showed that BN will not be able to continue Pakatan Rakyat's free water scheme.

This was because BN's policy is to pursue the costly Langat 2 water treatment plant and source water from neighbouring state Pahang.

Xavier said the treatment plant will cost RM8.65 billion while the state government would also have to pay RM60 million per annum to Pahang in form of water royalty.

He said that although the plant would be borne by the federal government, Syabas, the sole water distributor for Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, will have to recoup the cost.

"We expect water tariff to be increased by 70 percent after the Langat 2 plant is completed in 2014.

"If the cost of water increases, then what is the point of giving away 20 cubic metres of water free to Selangor households?" asked Xavier in a press release yesterday.

Selangor is currently withholding consent for the Langat 2 treatment plant on grounds that the federal government must agree to its terms over the ongoing water restructuring exercise nationwide.

The federal government is attempting to consolidate all water assets in Peninsular Malaysia - a move which Selangor opposes because this will likely to cause a hike in water tariffs.

Syabas only keen on profits

Furthermore, Selangor is adamant that Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor (Syabas) must sell its assets to the state for a round of restructuring before it is handed to the federal government.

Syabas, whose boss is openly linked to Umno, has refused to accede to Selangor's demands.

Xavier warned that Syabas is a corporate entity and its sole purpose is to reap profits, and thus will not help to keep water tariffs affordable.

Furthermore, Xavier pointed out that Syabas is reportedly in heavy debt.

"Based on these facts, it is clear that Noh is indulging in empty talk, providing political sweeteners to cloud the eyes of the public," he said.

Syabas has on the weekend warned that there could be water rationing in Kuala Lumpur, Hulu Langat and Klang should the impasse continue and the new water treatment plant is further delay.

Xavier has rubbished the purported water crisis in the state by providing data that all seven dams in Selangor are currently almost full to the brim.

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