

**Najib urged to launch independent probe into Seda**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
**July 27, 2012**

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has been urged to form an independent panel to investigate all the issues surrounding the Sustainable Energy Development Authority (Seda).

Seda's admission that its Feed-in Tariff (FiT) online application process had been abused demands that such an investigation be carried out, the Association of Water and Energy Research Malaysia (Awer) said today.

Awer, a research think-tank on water and energy issues formed by professionals, also urged Najib to dismantle Seda and return the renewable energy task to the Energy Commission.

Awer president S Piarapakaran (right) dismissed Seda chairperson Fong Chan Onn's explanation that the online application process could not prevent former chief secretary Mohd Sidek Hassan's daughter Suzi Suliana from obtaining a large chunk of the solar energy quota.

"Does Seda mean that the entire approval process is fully administrated by a 'flawed' eFiT system and Seda did not correct it since last year?" Piarapakaran asked in a statement issued today.

Perhaps, he suggested, the government should appoint a leading online system to be Seda chairperson and board member, besides creating a few smaller computer systems to be appointed as Seda top officials.

"If the government feels this suggestion is nonsense, so do members of the public about Seda hailing its online system as the ultimate decision maker.

"If the government needs some advice on how an online database system works, Awer staff can give the cabinet a free lecture," he said.

Consumers forced to pay for FiT

Piarapakaran reminded the government that the fund to finance FiT was being forcefully collected from people through a one percent increase in the electricity tariffs of consumers using more than 300kWh since last year.

"Why should this money be collected and disbursed to a selected few? Recently, Seda admitted that there is more such monopoly in its system and that Seda was 'created' to be powerless.

"So, people do not need a useless agency that has legal advisers repeatedly saying 'cannot do' this or that," he stressed.

Piarapakaran urged Najib to take responsibility and implement the suggestions Awer has made in its open letter recently, including repealing the Seda Act, dismantling Seda and implementing renewable energy efforts properly under the Energy Commission.

He also called for stern action to be taken against the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water and Seda officers who misled the government and the people.

During a public briefing on Wednesday, Fong admitted to a weakness in the FiT online application process, leading to 12 companies linked to Suzi obtaining 32.4 percent or 45.9MW of the quota set for solar energy under the FiT scheme.

This was achieved through a complex layer of holding companies and joint-venture partnerships.

Each applicant is only allowed to apply for a maximum of 5MW of the quota to ensure fair distribution.

Fong also conceded that Seda has no legal basis to either disqualify Suzi's companies or to redistribute the energy quotas because the application result produced by the online system, which he claimed was completely free of human intervention to prevent bias and preferential treatment, could not be challenged.

'Office politics led to Seda's formation'

Awer in its statement today also claimed that the formation of Seda was the result of office politics in the Energy Ministry.

A power tussle in the ministry has stripped it of all the work related to energy, including renewable energy from the Green Technology Corporation (formerly known as Pusat Tenaga Malaysia) established during the prime minister's launch of the National Green Technology Policy, said Piarapakaran.

"Seda is redundant and unnecessary because Section 14 of the Energy Commission Act 2001 clearly stipulates that developing renewable energy is the jurisdiction of the Energy Commission. Formation of Seda was pushed through with personal agenda.

"This matter was also raised with the highest level in the Energy Ministry many times before the Seda Bill was approved by the Parliament. Unfortunately, it fell on deaf ears.

"We repeat: Seda never existed in any planning during the existence of the FiT legislation under Pusat Tenaga Malaysia until the Green Technology Policy was launched by the prime minister," Piarapakaran added.