

Keng Yaik losing sleep over consumers' water woes

NST - 29/11/2006

■ **By Sharanjit Singh**
sharan@nst.com.my

GEORGE TOWN: Water supplied to houses is of every colour except what it should be, that is colourless.

And Energy, Water and Communications Minister Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik is upset because consumers are pointing the finger at his ministry.

"And because I am heading the ministry, my name is being dragged through the sewers.

"I am not only losing sleep but my weight has gone down be-

cause of all the headaches in our water industry," he said when opening a seminar and business meeting on Malaysian-Danish Water Days 2006.

Taking the water supply companies to task over the delivery system, he said things were not good and the ministry had identified several areas which needed to be improved.

These included water resource management and supply throughout the country.

Lim said shortcomings in such areas had caused people to question the role and effectiveness of

his ministry.

Lim said the government recently gazetted the Water Services Act and National Water Services Commission Act to improve services and help states with water supply infrastructure.

He said the Bills were expected to enable the government to ensure quality and reliability of water supply, and to regulate the industry.

"Hopefully, things would improve when we start enforcing the new rules and regulations by next year," he said.

Speaking to reporters later, he

also warned water supply companies not to replace water pipes just because RM2 billion had been allocated for the purpose.

He said the allocation, under the Ninth Malaysia Plan, should be used prudently and for the right purpose.

Lim said he would ensure that those who abused the allocation would be hauled up for answers.

He added that the relevant authorities had been directed to do proper analysis and planning on what needed to be done to improve water supply before hurrying to replace old pipes.