

Talk to us, Penang water body CEO tells Span

span pbapp jasenimaidinsa

0 comments Published Today 12:47 pm Updated Today 1:04 pm



The verbal war between the National Water Services Commission (Span) chairperson Liang Teck Meng and Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has gone a notch higher with the Penang water authority wading into the matter.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) CEO Jaseni Maidinsa, in a statement, urged Span to conduct business "professionally" and act in accordance with its own provisions, by not publicising private and confidential documents submitted by any party for water tariff reviews.

Liang, who is also Gerakan secretary-general, was appointed Span chairperson effective Nov 1, last year. He had been involved in a verbal spat with CM Lim lately, on the state's Water Conservation Surcharge (WCS) issue.

Jaseni also noted that PBAPP, had been from the onset of the WCS issue, had been corresponding with his counterpart in Span, Mohd Ridhuan Ismail, and therefore, there was no need for Liang to drag the chief minister, or the state government, into the matter.

"PBAPP is not interested in discussing the details of a withdrawn tariff review that is no longer relevant to Penang and its people.

"We are only interested in the timely approval of the WCS review, and we hope that Span can kindly facilitate the approval process as soon as possible," he said.

He noted that although Lim is the PBAPP chairperson, his role was a non-executive position, where he is not involved in any decision making.

'PBAPP is a private company'

Jaseni also pointed out that PBAPP is a fully owned subsidiary of PBA Holdings Bhd (PBAHB), a company listed on the main board of the Bursa Malaysia.

"We are not a government department, government agency or statutory body.

"PBAPP has submitted private and confidential documents, detailing a three-year business plan, revenue estimates and capital expenditure projections, to Span.

"These are P&C documents from a private sector company," Jaseni said.

"Section 41(1) of the Span Act 2006 protects the confidentiality of business documents submitted by all state water operators in Malaysia, and not only PBAPP," Jaseni added.

He pointed out that the national water governing body had not previously disclosed or discussed details of any tariff review for any state in Malaysia in the public domain before the review is approved by the federal government.

He reminded that Section 41(1) was included in the Span Act to prevent public misinformation and disinformation regarding water tariff reviews in Malaysia, and in this case, a WCS review.

He further reminded that any person who contravenes subsection (1) shall be guilty of an offence and shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding RM100,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to both.