



'Water tariff hike was okayed by Najib's cabinet'

Susan Loone

15 Jan 2019, 7:41 pm (Updated 15 Jan 2019, 9:39 pm)

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) CEO Jaseni Maidinsa today chided BN leaders critical of the state's plan to raise water tariffs, saying that these were approved when the coalition held federal power.

"So when they are the government, they say something else? If there are any previous government leaders attacking this mechanism, you should shoot them," he told a press conference in Bayan Baru today.

"What is good is good, do not say what is good is bad just because it is a new government.

"This is economics, facts. So if any former government leaders attack it, better ask them. It was formulated during their time," he added.

Jaseni also shot back at former prime minister Najib Abdul Razak for saying that the water tariff hikes were just the latest in a series of hikes introduced under the Pakatan Harapan administration.

"It was your cabinet which decided to do so, so what are you saying now?" he asked.

Jaseni's comments come two days after Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow justified Penang's plan to increase water rates by up to 20 percent.

State opposition leaders had earlier termed the hikes unconscionable, as it would be burdensome on the people.

The chief minister had explained that the move was to ensure that PBAPP could implement RM501 million worth of water projects to avoid water rationing during the dry seasons.

Chow, who chairs PBAPP, also pointed out that the average water demand for Penang is expected to increase by 128 percent to 1,884 million litres a day by 2050.

He reminded Penangites that the state currently has the lowest average water bill, despite having the highest usage of water in the country, at 277 litres per capita per day in 2017.