

Headline	11th Malaysia Plan and redundancy		
MediaTitle	The Sun		
Date	27 Mar 2017	Color	Black/white
Section	Business	Circulation	306,000
Page No	17	Readership	918,000
Language	English	ArticleSize	296 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 4,827
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 14,481



11th Malaysia Plan and redundancy

THE GREEN EQUILIBRIUM

THE 11th Malaysia Plan has dedicated a chapter to reducing redundancy in government agencies. Let's look at redundancy within the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water and why the federal government must shut down those redundant agencies.

First, Sustainable Energy Development Authority (Seda) was formed in the midst of office politics within the ministry right after the formation of Green Technology Corporation (GTC).

In addition, the duties of Seda can be carried out by a department under the Energy Commission.

Feed-in-tariff (FiT) used by Seda is a failing mechanism as it does not address how to make renewable energy (RE) costs meet grid parity in the long run.

It is noted that Seda also failed to meet the targets set in the 10th Malaysia Plan, to increase RE generation mix. Was there too much promised in the target set just to get Seda formed?

Second, Sewerage Services Department (JPP), a set up that should cease to operate upon formation of Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Air Negara (SPAN) and implementation of Water Services Industry Act 2006 (WSIA), is still allowed to operate.

SPAN is developing a Sewerage Catchment Plan, which is mandated under WSIA.

On what basis is the centralised sewerage treatment plant in Papan, Perak going to be built by JPP? Who approved the catchment plan?

JPP is not authorised to approve any such plan. SPAN has no regulatory power on JPP as well. Where did the data come from? Do we see another white elephant coming up?

Third, Yayasan Hijau (YaHijau), which was suggested by a minister, has been made an entity.

Why do we need such an outfit when GTC can do what YaHijau is doing? In fact, GTC was doing what YaHijau is tasked to do now.

Last but not least, the Water Supply Department (JBA) is another redundant agency under the ministry that should have been closed down after SPAN was formed.

We all remember the burst pipe at Jalan Universiti, Petaling Jaya that flung a car into the air in April 2010 as reported by media. Yes, that was one of the projects under them.

One of the reasons SPAN was formed was due to the failure of JBA and JPP.

Leaving these entities operational will cause more regulatory deadlocks and implementation problems as SPAN does not have the power to control and monitor what these redundant agencies do.

These two entities are also used as stumbling blocks to checkmate SPAN's work.

Now, the federal government must take the right step to close down the two agencies and improve delivery efficiency of existing agencies and entities under the ministry.

By closing down these redundant agencies, the government will be able to save millions of ringgit, prevent a regulatory deadlock, stop white elephant ventures and improve overall delivery to the rakyat and business community.

Furthermore, the government must also ensure that the energy minister and senior officials abide by duties and responsibilities clearly spelled out in the SPAN Act, WSIA, Energy Commission Act and Electricity Supply Act.

Issues like development funds contributed by developers for sewerage in Peninsular Malaysia under SPAN, being used to buy mobile water treatment plants in Sabah (not under SPAN's regulatory jurisdiction), should not have taken place.

All decisions should be based on regulatory powers vested to rightful entities and the least cost pass-through to tariff to ensure fair and competitive pricing on tariffs.

Some of the 9th and 10th Malaysia plans under the ministry are still delayed. To serve is noble and the ministry holds important portfolios but implementation is rather murky.

Do not shatter the future on our beloved nation with redundancy and incompetency.

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