



## Water tariff hike will help sustain demand until 2050, says Penang CM

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*Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow (seated second from right) with state government officials at the press conference at Komtar yesterday. (Buletin Mutiara pic)*

GEORGE TOWN: The Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBA) today justified its plan to increase water tariffs, saying the extra money would help sustain water demand until 2050.

Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow, who is also the PBA chairman, said it was planning to invest RM501 million in water supply projects from now until 2021.

Among the projects to be implemented were a third twin-underwater link from Seberang Perai to the island, a water transfer scheme from Perak, and upgrades to water treatment plants.

This follows Chow's recent announcement that the state was considering a 10% to 20% increase in water rates with the blessings of the federal government.

Penang has the cheapest water prices in the country at an average of RM5.55 a month.

Chow said the additional funds would be used to build new pipelines and replace old ones to reduce water losses or leaks.

This would ensure that Penang would not have to ration water, something it had not done since 1999.



“PBA is applying for a water tariff review in Penang solely to fund important water supply engineering projects for the future.

“If the tariff review is approved by the federal government, all the additional revenue will be reinvested into projects in Penang for the benefit of the people.

“PBA wants to stay ahead of our demands and we want to avoid rationing at all cost,” he said at a press conference at Komtar, also attended by PBA chief executive officer Jaseni Maidinsa.

Latest statistics supplied by PBA today showed the average water demand for Penang was 826 million litres a day, or MLD, in 2017.

By 2050, Penang is expected to have a water demand of 1,884 MLD, or 128% higher than the 2017 figure.

#### **‘No more’ cross on apartment building**

Separately, Chow said the lights at an unoccupied apartment in Jelutong were “no longer showing” a cross.

He said that based on a picture of the building taken last night and sent to him, the cross was no more and only the car park was lit up.

He said he was awaiting a report from the state secretary on the matter.

Previously, Chow had said the residential project had yet to obtain a certificate of completion and compliance (CCC) and that the developer was testing the facilities, including the lighting system.

The image of a lighted cross had caused unease among some residents nearby, and it is understood that they had lodged a police report..

In a statement yesterday, state mufti Wan Salim Wan Mohd Noor urged the local authorities to direct the developer to change the position of the lights so that they did not resemble a cross.