

Food for Thought

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Parliament Must Push to Close Down Sustainable Energy Development Authority (SEDA)

THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2013 | Comments(0)

Letter to Editor-11th July 2013

Parliament Must Push to Close Down Sustainable Energy Development Authority (SEDA)

Association of Water and Energy Research Malaysia (AWER) has numerous times raised various issues related to Renewable Energy (RE) development and methods used in Malaysia. Increasing flaws and whitewashing as well as highlighted Feed-in-Tariff (FiT) alleged mismanagement is creating a lot of uncertainty in the Green Technology agenda that is carried out by the Federal Government and pledged by YAB Prime Minister.

Feed-in-Tariff (FiT) mechanism was adopted and not indigenously developed by Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water (KeTTHA) for implementation of Renewable Energy (RE) projects. Till date the formula to set FiT unit cost is not made known. There is no transparency on how Capital Expenditure (capex), Operational Expenditure (opex), Regulated Profit and Efficiency Perks were derived. The FiT is funded by the people and people must be made known of the mechanism and the details of the calculation.

In addition to that, RE implementation via FiT mechanism is still questionable. The current model does not guarantee a sustainable and continuous growth of RE industry. What happens after the 'lucrative years'? Will the investors continue to invest? The government agencies do not reply to AWER's doubts on FiT professionally but provided some answers copied from Wikipedia. Currently, Germany itself is already facing serious issues with FiT mechanism based on AWER's consultations with some experts from Germany and reports published. Therefore,

Federal Government's usage of Germany as a leading example for RE implementation via FiT mechanism becomes questionable.

Last year (2012), information about how solar PV FiT were monopolised by certain individuals were highlighted by few Members of Parliament. However, SEDA (the Chairman, CEO and staffs) simply pointed the finger to a dead object like a computer system for such a flaw and hail it as 'transparent' mechanism. A computer can only be a control mechanism as human still control its inputs and outputs. This matter must be investigated in detail and independently by Federal Government immediately to ensure integrity and transparency promised by YAB Prime Minister is upheld.

We urge the newly elected Federal Government and Members of Parliament (MPs) to set up Independent Panel to study the implementation of Renewable Energy Act 2011 directly under Energy Commission to prevent redundancy and wastage of operational funds. Section 14 of the Energy Commission Act 2001, clearly stipulate the jurisdiction to develop RE is under Energy Commission. This means also SEDA Act 2011 must be repealed due to its gross redundancy and SEDA must be closed down. It is important to build a growing RE industry but the current model will fail miserably as it is not sustainable and Malaysia is not the technology owner at all. The panel must also investigate those whom have misled the Parliament into implementing a flawed FiT mechanism via SEDA and take stern action against them to prevent such blunders from reoccurring.

Incompetent and corrupt government officers as well as those with vested interest have caused many governments to collapse. History gives good examples of future and ironically, history repeats itself. Smart leaders will learn from mistakes and make changes. We need a brave Cabinet and MPs to shut down SEDA mistake so that RE is back on track.

Piarapakaran S.

President

Association of Water and Energy Research Malaysia (AWER)

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