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PBAPP chief: Electricity costs at Bukit Dumbar Reservoir reduced by solar power system

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PBAPP chief Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said a 1.5 MWp (megawatt peak) solar power system was installed by a Penang-based company, PSB Energy Sdn Bhd, at no cost. — Picture by Sayuti Zainudin

GEORGE TOWN, March 23 — Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) has cut down electricity costs at its Bukit Dumbar Reservoir and Pumping Station Compound by an average of RM22,811 each month over a six-month period by installing a solar power system.

PBAPP and PBA Holdings Bhd Chief Executive Officer Datuk Jaseni Maidinsa said a 1.5 MWp (megawatt peak) solar power system was installed by a Penang-based company, PSB Energy Sdn Bhd, at no cost.

He said PBAPP signed an agreement with PSB to pay a solar tariff of RM0.305/kWh for a tenure of 25 years and the solar tariff is lower than the commercial tariff billed by Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB).

PSB is also responsible for the maintenance of the system during the entire tenure of the agreement and an online monitoring system has been installed on-site to monitor the performance of the system.

“Following the commissioning of the system on July 31 in 2020, PBAPP's electricity costs dropped by RM136,868 for the period August 2020 to January 2021 as compared to February 2020 to July 2020,” he said in a statement today.

He said the projected cost savings for a full year is RM273,732. He said a total of 4,586 photovoltaic solar panels have been installed atop the enclosed Bukit Dumbar R2 and R3 reservoirs and the panels convert the solar energy into electricity that is fed to an on-site 415V/11kV step-up power transformer.

The electricity is then distributed into a power supply system for use by the Bukit Dumbar 1 and Bukit Dumbar 2 Pumping Stations. “In this manner, the electricity generated from harnessing solar energy at the Bukit Dumbar Reservoir and pumping station compound is consumed within the compound for treated water pumping operations 24/7,” he said.

He added that the yield from the solar power system is insufficient to power all the energy-intensive water supply pumping operations. PBAPP was still drawing an average of 864,197 kWh per month directly from TNB's power grid for use in Bukit Dumbar during the period from August 2020 to January 2021.

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