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ECoS to regulate onshore gas supply in Sabah

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Haji said the aim of the Energy Commission of Sabah (Amendment) Enactment 2024 is for ECoS to take over functions and powers from the Malaysian Energy Commission (ST) for electricity supply and the Sustainable Energy Development Authority (SEDA) for renewable energy.

"The enactment basically empowers the ECoS to regulate all activities related to the onshore gas supply sector in Sabah.

"Along with the mutual agreement between the Federal Government and the State Government of Sabah through a Meeting of the Steering Committee for the Acquisition of Electricity Supply Regulatory Powers from the Federal Government to the Sabah State Government which was held on June 12, 2023, the functions and regulatory powers of electricity supply are included in the Commission's Enactment Sabah Energy 2023 through the Sabah Energy Commission (Amendment) Bill 2024.

"Accordingly, an Order under Article 95C of the Federal Constitution which is the suspension of the Electricity Supply Act 1990, the Renewable Energy Act 2011 and the Sustainable Energy Development Authority Act 2011 in Sabah, was approved by the Agong on Dec 22, 2023 and the effective date is Jan 3, 2024," he said.

Therefore, Haji said, the tabling of the Bill here is to include the functions and powers related to electricity supply and renewable energy from ST and SEDA, respectively.

He said the Sabah Energy Commission (Amendment) Bill 2024 contains two amendments.

"The first amendment is made to Clause 2 by inserting a new paragraph after the definition of 'committee' which is the definition of electricity and the definition of electricity supply law. Paragraph 2 (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h) and (i) are also amended accordingly to include regulatory powers for electricity supply and renewable energy.

"The second amendment is made to Clause 3 to amend Section 14 of the Enactment to extend the functions and powers of ECoS to include matters relating to electricity, renewable energy and non-renewable energy, by adding three new paragraphs to empower ECoS to advise the Minister on all matters relating to electricity and the authority to regulate all matters relating to the electricity supply industry.

"In addition, paragraphs (e), (f), (g), (h) and (i) are also amended to empower the ECoS to supervise electricity supply and renewable energy activities," he said.

With the Sabah Energy Commission (Amendment) Bill 2024, it will empower ECoS to regulate the electricity supply and renewable energy industry in the State so that all activities related to both can be carried out continuously without any interruption.

He said the Bill will involve the State government extra financial expenditure the amount of which cannot be ascertained, at present.

Following this, he said the governance structure for electricity supply between the Energy Commission of Sabah (ECoS), the Sabah State Government (Sabah State Energy Unit) and Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd (SESB) have different roles.

"ECoS is a regulatory body for onshore

gas and electricity supply activities and renewable energy from the enforcement aspect of the Gas Supply Enactment 2023, the Electricity Supply Enactment 2024 and the Renewable Energy Enactment 2024.

"This includes compliance from the safety aspect of electricity use, the preparation of standard codes and system operating code, sustainable tariff setting, and development planning for onshore gas supply and electricity supply including renewable energy in the state of Sabah.

"In addition, ECoS also plays a role in ensuring that SESB's operating costs are reasonable and affordable in addition to determining viable and affordable electricity tariffs for consumers in the state of Sabah," Haji said in the special sitting of the State Legislative Assembly here, Wednesday.

As for the Sabah State government, he said through the Sabah State Energy Unit (UTNS) under the Chief Minister's Department (JKM) is responsible for the electricity supply policy and acts as an intermediary between the utility (SESB) and the relevant regulatory body (ECoS) on infrastructure development issues from the aspect of providing project funds from the Federal Government as well as facilitating issues involving Sabah state ministries or agencies.

While SESB, Haji said is as a utility company licensed by ECoS for the operation of generation, transmission, distribution and retailing of electricity supply in the State.

He said it is also responsible for ensuring that performance and governance are implemented based on the Electricity Supply Enactment 2024 and the license conditions that have been set.