

Headline	Shining the light on bribe over power supply		
MediaTitle	Sunday Star		
Date	15 Jul 2018	Language	English
Circulation	201,943	Readership	605,829
Section	Nation	Page No	12
ArticleSize	215 cm ²	Journalist	Muguntan Vanar
PR Value	RM 16,347		



Shining the light on bribe over power supply

SESB official lodges report with MACC stating mall offered payment for reconnection

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KOTA KINABALU: Operators of Sabah's largest mall 1-Borneo Hypermall, which was hit by a power supply cut after they failed to settle some RM8mil in outstanding electricity bills, are now caught in an alleged bribery attempt.

A Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd (SESB) official has lodged a report with the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, alleging that one of the mall's officials had offered a bribe for the reconnection of power to the mall.

In a statement, an SESB spokesman said that the attempt to bribe its officials occurred at Wisma SESB on Friday.

He said SESB had given enough time for the mall to settle its outstanding bills.

An initial power cut last month was restored after the mall paid about RM800,000 with an assurance to make progressive payments of RM3mil.

But the operators apparently failed to honour the pledge and power was cut on Wednesday.

In fact, SESB had also claimed that the operators tried to manipulate and politicise their shortcomings by playing up public sentiments to cover up their own internal problems.

"SESB hopes that there will be swift resolution to the issue so that people can go back to the hypermall," he said.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd

Shafie Apdal said that the state government would not intervene with businesses which failed to settle their utility bills as it would set a bad precedent.

"There will be no end to these kinds of requests.

"SESB will not be able to function if they are not getting paid for their services," Shafie told reporters here yesterday.