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Renewable energy: Long-term, resilient solutions for Malaysia's future

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Renewable energy: Long-term, resilient solutions for Malaysia's future

KUALA LUMPUR: As long as Malaysia continues to rely on non-renewable energy sources, such as coal and natural gas, the rise in electricity costs hikes will continue to be inevitable.

With increasingly expensive supplies and global market volatility, the surge in energy prices is expected to put pressure not only on consumers but also threaten the stability of electricity costs in the future.

Since 2006, the country's electricity tariffs have increased by 12 per cent, followed by a 7.12 per cent rise in 2011, and this trend is expected to continue.

This tariff increase highlights the urgent need to explore more sustainable energy alternatives to alleviate the financial burden on consumers.

Prof Tan Sri Dr Jemilah Mahmood, the executive director of Sunway Centre for Planetary Health Sunway University, was

of the view that the increase in electricity tariffs is not a bad sign for the country's energy market but rather reflects the need for Malaysia to introduce energy policy reforms.

She said the key issue is long-term energy sustainability and how the country can explore more resilient opportunities and initiatives, moving away from reliance on traditional energy sources.

"The era of reliance on traditional energy sources has passed.

"A more progressive view is how the country should find long-term opportunities and initiatives to ensure a more stable and affordable energy supply," she told Bernama recently.

Dr Jemilah has previously served as the Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Public Health and has been a member

of both the Economic Action Council and the Climate Change Action Council of the Malaysian Government.

In 2020, she was appointed as a Senior Fellow at the Adrienne Arsht-Rockefeller Foundation Resilience Center, an institution focused on climate change and human security challenges, to make one billion people more resilient by 2030.

Expanding on her views, Dr Jemilah cited the success of countries such as Denmark and Vietnam, which have demonstrated that early investments in renewable energy sources like wind and solar power can significantly reduce electricity costs.

"Denmark, which made early investments in wind energy since the 1970s, has paid off as the cost of electricity from wind energy has fallen by 65 per cent since 2010. Vietnam has also

recorded success in the solar sector as the country's solar energy capacity has increased from almost zero in 2017 to over 16.5GW in 2020, thus reducing pressure on long-term energy costs," he said.

According to Dr Jemilah, Malaysia, with its strategic location on the Equator, has great potential in solar energy. The average daily solar radiation of between 4 to 6 kWh/m² per day makes the country a very competitive choice to harness solar energy as an alternative source.

In addition, the country can learn from the success of regional countries such as Singapore, which is targeting a solar capacity of 4GW by 2030, and Australia, which has succeeded in reducing electricity costs through the development of renewable energy. — Bernama