

Bandar seri begawan electricity bills

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN (Borneo Bulletin/ANN): Recent public grievances on excessive water and electricity bills on USMS Smart Metering System were brought up during the 20th session of the Legislative Council (LegCo) meeting yesterday.

Based on a study, a number of complaints on the rise of electricity and water bills are due to users making illegal modifications to the electric meter or using a faulty meter without making payment, said Minister at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and Minister of Finance and Economy II Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr Awang Mohd Amin Liew Abdullah.

"When the water meter runs out of credit and is not topped up within 48 hours, it will result in the transfer of credit from electric meter automatically without disruptions to the water supply," said Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr Awang Haji Mohd Amin Liew.

"The increase in the water bill can also be due to water leakages from the consumers' tank or customers with utility dues being paid for by the latest credit purchase," added the minister.

However, the USMS Smart Metering System experienced issues in 2023, resulting in technical discrepancies in the consumption and customers' accounts. The minister continued, "Many meters experienced backdated charging, and only 16 cases of excessive charges, which DSTN has compensated." - Borneo Bulletin/ANN

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN Over 200,000 homes and commercial buildings will be installed with smart electricity and water meters over the next five years, a government move that aims to address the non-payment of utility bills and reduce wastage of resources.

During the launch, General Manager of DST Network Juliana Sim said the smart meters will allow every Bruneian household to monitor and manage their energy and water usage online.

She said the public will be able to reload credit on the Unified Smart Metering System website, or through mobile apps, DST Easi Credit, third-party top-ups and authorised resellers.

Minister at the Prime Minister's Office YB Dato Seri Setia Dr Hj Mohd Amin Liew, who launched the USMS at The Empire Brunei, said the prepaid meters will allow the government to reduce its spending and promote efficient energy and water resource management.

Dato Dr Hj Mohd Amin, who is also the second minister of finance and economy, said smart meters will empower consumers with real-time information, enabling them to better manage their utilities consumption and finances.

He said government agencies will be able to improve collection to manage recovery of bad debts and reduce, if not eliminate, non-technical losses such as theft or meter tampering.

“Most importantly, the unified smart metering platform will act as a catalyst for other smart initiatives. These may and can include smart home, smart transport, e-health, building management and more. The opportunities hereon are endless."

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Web: <https://www.sumthingtasty.co.za/contact-us/>

Email: energystorage2000@gmail.com

WhatsApp: 8613816583346

