

## Efforts to write off water debt started since 2018, says Pahang MB

By [T.N.Alagesh](#) - December 8, 2023 @ 12:43pm



Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail set the record straight on the matter saying talks to write off the Pahang government's debt of RM2.074 billion through the water services industry restructuring agreement began in 2018.- BERNAMA pic

KUANTAN: The Pahang water services industry restructuring exercise with the federal government began in 2018 when the Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition led the government.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail set the record straight on the matter saying talks to write off the Pahang government's debt of RM2.074 billion through the water services industry restructuring agreement began in 2018.

"I would like to emphasise that efforts towards the water supply restructuring exercise had begun before Cheka assemblyman (Datuk Seri Tuan Ibrahim Tuan Man) became the minister (Environment and Water Minister).

"The truth is that the restructuring exercise began on Sept 5, 2018 where I had agreed to resume discussions concerning the offer by the federal government through the Water, Land and Natural Resources Ministry whose minister then was Dr Xavier Jayakumar.

"The Pahang government set up a task force to discuss and manage the restructuring exercise. On Sept 29, 2019, the approval to write off the Rural Water Supply project debts was finalised by the federal government through the Finance ministry," he said in his winding up speech during the Pahang state assembly sitting at Wisma Sri Pahang here today.

Wan Rosdy said that only on Mar 30, 2020 when the Cheka assemblyman was newly-elected as the Environment and Water Minister, all the agreement drafts were updated and finalised based on the terms agreed by the federal government and Pahang government.

"This includes the RM2.074 billion which was agreed to be written off. On Dec 23, 2020, the water services industry restructuring agreement signing ceremony was held in Pahang," he said.

Meanwhile, Tuan Ibrahim clarified that one of the conditions in the agreement is for the respective state to increase their water tariffs.

"The water tariff in Pahang is the lowest in the country. Pahang has increased the water tariff for the industry but yet to do so for domestic users.

"Pahang increased the water tariff for the industry and this saw the water agreement being written off," he said.

Meanwhile, Wan Rosdy replied that although he agreed that Tuan Ibrahim had provided help in ensuring a smoother process in the restructuring exercise, it was not a one man show.

"Cheka cannot say that he was the one who had put in all the efforts to write off the debts as the process to write-off the debts was initiated by the federal government and Pahang government much earlier.

"This is similar to a football match where several players from the goalkeeper to defender and midfielder assist in the process towards approaching the goalmouth to score. Thank you Cheka for helping me score the goal (write-off debts)," he said in a jest.

In the state assembly sitting on Dec 6, Tuan Ibrahim had mentioned that the water debts were written off during the previous Perikatan Nasional government where he served as minister.

Meanwhile, Wan Rosdy said the Skim Tanah Warisan (STW) initiative to help more people in the low-income group (B40) across the state to own their first home will be expanded to other districts.

"After Kampung Kuala Medang STW, the initiative will be expanded to Pekan. If the state collects more revenues reaching RM2 billion, then maybe STW can be carried out in all the state constituencies .

"We prepare the site for the STW, while the area will be equipped with basic infrastructure such as roads, drainage, water supply and electricity. If we collect more, the STW will be expanded to other areas after Pekan," he said.

Wan Rosdy launched the [first STW initiative](#) in Kuala Medang, Lipis in August last year.