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Rise in power tariffs expected in line with revised SST — Premier

Nur Shazreena Ali

KUCHING: Electricity tariffs in Sarawak are expected to increase in line with the implementation of the revised Sales and Service Tax (SST) from six per cent to eight per cent.

In stating this, Premier Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg says the state has no option but to comply with the expected changes as the imposition of the tax is in force nationwide.

However, he has given assurance that the state government will continue to help domestic consumers through its own initiative.

"We have exemption (initiative), so we can make our own decisions, within the state.

"Nonetheless, we have to look at the tax implications from a legal point of view," he said when met at the Hikmah Exchange here yesterday, after witnessing the swearing-in of 31 councillors assigned to Gedong District Council.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) had, last month, announced that the SST would only be applicable for electricity usage of above 600kWh, which should not affect almost 85 per cent of users nationwide.

Water supply services would also be exempt from the tax, it added.

In response, the key utilities sector corporation for Peninsular Malaysia, Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB), had



Abang Johari fields questions from the reporters when met at Hikmah Exchange in Kuching. — Photo by Roystein Emmor



clarified that the eight per cent services tax would be imposed should the monthly electricity bill amount to more than RM231.80.

The Sarawak government had, last year, extended the electricity bill discount under the Bantuan Khas Sarawakku Sayang (BKSS) programme from July 1 to Dec 31, with rate reductions of up to 25 per cent for domestic consumers, 15 per cent for small commercial traders, and 10 per cent for small industrial traders.

The BKSS package was introduced in March 2020, when the first movement restriction was implemented in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.