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No power bill hike for domestic users . . . until December

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PUTRAJAYA: Domestic users will not need to pay higher electricity tariffs until December following a move to stave off the costs with a RM114mil subsidy from a government fund.

Energy, Green Technology, Science and Climate Change Minister Yeo Bee Yin said the subsidy would ensure domestic users did not have to pay the increased tariffs from July until December.

"The Government has spent RM114mil so that 81.7% of all electricity users do not need

to pay the surcharge," Yeo said after her inaugural town hall session with energy stakeholders yesterday.

"So, if you look at your home's electricity bill, there will be no surcharge. It will be zero because the Government has paid it for you."

Yeo was responding to PKR vice president Rafizi Ramli's comment last week on how an increase in electricity tariffs could "kill" all the measures taken by Pakatan Harapan to lower the cost of living.

She said Rafizi had got it "wrong" in that he did not see the combined impact of the tariff

increase and zero-rated Goods and Services Tax (GST).

"For 1.1 million of low-voltage commercial users, the impact of surcharge minus the GST is less than 70 sen. They face minimal impact.

"If the mamak stores say that their electricity (tariff) has increased and the (price of the) nasi lemak has to go up by 10 sen, don't believe them," said Yeo, urging the public to report such increases to the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry.

The RM114mil subsidy, she added, was from the Government's Electricity Supply Industry Fund.

"We have a RM760mil fund and the ministry has spent RM114mil.

"We are left with a choice on whether to use the balance to subsidise the commercial (users) or for the next round, we can use the fund again to subsidise the domestic (users)," she said.

It was important, said Yeo, for the Government to protect domestic users and cushion them in case of price increase.

"I want to save the fund for domestic users. If there's an increase in fossil fuel prices, we can use the fund to subsidise the domestic users," she said.