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GOVT TO EXAMINE RISING ENERGY BILLS



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EXTREME WEATHER

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Immediate easing measures on the agenda following public concern, says PM

HAKIM MAHARI  
 KUALA LUMPUR  
 hakimmahari@nst.com.my

THE government will hold a special meeting today to examine immediate measures to ease the impact of rising electricity bills on affected households.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the meeting would involve the Energy Transition and Water Transformation Ministry, Energy Commission, Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) and the Finance Ministry.

He said the government had taken note of public concerns over higher electricity bills in recent weeks and the matter needed to be addressed promptly.

“Upon returning from India and the Maldives, my attention immediately turned to concerns raised by the people on the recent increase in electricity bills,” he said yesterday.

Anwar said the government remained committed to targeted subsidies to protect most domestic consumers.

He said about 80 per cent of domestic users consuming no more than 600kWh a month re-



The current haze and hot weather has caused some households to increase their electricity consumption beyond the 600kWh threshold.

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mained protected from rate increases linked to higher fuel costs.

But haze and hotter weather in recent weeks had caused some households to increase their electricity consumption beyond the 600kWh threshold, making them subject to the Automatic Fuel Adjustment (AFA), he said.

Anwar said the government would continue to ensure targeted subsidy measures were implemented fairly and reasonably, with the people’s welfare remaining a priority.

On Tuesday, TNB said AFA did not by itself cause sudden increases in electricity bills, following concerns raised by some consumers.

The national utility said AFA was a two-way mechanism that adjusted electricity charges according to changes in fuel costs and foreign exchange rates.

When fuel costs fall, consumers

receive a rebate, while increases in fuel costs result in a surcharge.

TNB said the surcharge had been imposed since May following the crisis in the Middle East.

The AFA surcharge for this month stood at 3.67 sen per kWh, it said.

Since AFA was introduced, consumers have received RM3.1 billion in rebates, compared with RM800 million in surcharges, TNB said.

Consumers with monthly electricity consumption of 600kWh or less are fully exempt from AFA charges, whether rebates or surcharges apply.

They are also exempt from the eight per cent service tax and retail charges.

Under the new tariff, consumers in this category pay about two to 14 per cent less than under the previous tariff, depending on their level of consumption.