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KUALA LUMPUR: More than eight million domestic customers, or up to 90 per cent of Tenaga Nasional Bhd's (TNB) customer base, will benefit from the government's decision to raise the electricity bill protection threshold from 600 to 800 kilowatt-hours (kWh) a month.

TNB president and chief executive officer Datuk Shamsul Ahmad said the move would bring almost one million additional domestic customers under the protection.

"This is one of the positive steps taken by the government to provide greater protection for almost all domestic users," he told a media briefing yesterday.

On Sept 17, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim announced that the electricity bill protection threshold for domestic customers would be raised to 800kWh a month from 600kWh.

He said the move was an immediate measure to ease the burden on households facing higher electricity bills.

Under the measure, domestic customers consuming up to 800kWh a month will be exempt from the automatic fuel cost adjustment (AFA) charge, eight per cent sales and service and retail charges.

The additional protection applies to electricity consumption from Sept to Dec 31, with savings for September consumption to be credited directly to consumers' October electricity bills.

Shamsul said the increase in the protection threshold was aimed at reducing the impact of electricity consumption on consumers' cost of living.

He said the measure ensures consumers remain protected from changes in AFA rates, which are influenced by volatility in global fuel costs amid the crisis in the Middle East.

"It also takes into account the increase in electricity consumption due to the hot weather and haze affecting the country.

"As the national utility company, TNB's priority is to ensure that the people continue to enjoy a safe and reliable electricity supply," he said.

Meanwhile, Shamsul said TNB would discuss with the government the approach to be taken after December, including how the protection mechanism could be continued.