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KUALA LUMPUR: The government still bears a total of RM10.8bil in electricity subsidies, compared with the original amount of RM14.9bil, says Deputy Finance Minister II Steven Sim Chee Keong.

He said that there was a saving of RM4bil for the period from January to June this year involving an electricity subsidy.

From January 2023, the government will no longer provide full electricity tariff subsidies to large companies with high electricity consumption.

"More targeted and sustainable

subsidy management is a priority in ensuring that government expenditure can be channelled to development needs, which can provide higher added value to the national economy.

"The government is also studying the implementation of targeted subsidies based on appropriate and feasible models by identifying methods that are not only effective but also save time and have minimal financial implications for the government," he said at Dewan Negara's special session on the 12th Malaysia Plan mid-term review (12MP MTR) yesterday, reported Bernama.

Meanwhile, Sim said in the context of determining eligible recipients, it is also necessary to diversify because the types of subsidies and user groups are different.

"Determining the eligibility criteria is still under evaluation because it is important that this be carefully studied so that the distribution of resources is made more efficiently while also reducing exclusion and inclusion errors.

"Accordingly, a special task force, which has been formed under the Finance Ministry, is

studying the mechanism for implementing appropriate targeted subsidies that involve all community groups, whether B40, M40 or T20, both in cities and rural areas," he said.

Separately, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Religious Affairs) Datuk Dr Mohd Na'im Mokhtar said there is no necessity to enact a new law on halal certification now.

He said the Trade Descriptions Act 2011 and subsidiary laws such as Trade Descriptions (Certification and Marking of 'Halal') Order 2011 and Trade Descriptions

(Definition of Halal) Order 2011, as well as enactments in states, are still relevant to meet the current needs and requirements of the country.

In order to pass a specific halal law, it is necessary to study the various laws that are currently in force, whether they are federal or state laws.

"At the moment, the government is of the view that the existing laws and enactments in the states are still relevant and meet the current needs and requirements," he said when winding up debate on the motion.