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KUALA LUMPUR: Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) has suffered losses totalling RM5.14 billion due to electricity theft, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof.

Fadillah, who is also Energy Transition and Water Transformation minister, said between 2020 and this year, TNB conducted 91 special operations, inspecting 14,489 premises and opening 77 investigation papers.

Of these, 85 cases involved premises that were victims of electricity theft, with investigations confirming that owners were not involved, so they were neither prosecuted nor required to pay charges.

"The measure we want to take is to enhance awareness, particularly among property owners, whether for residential or business premises.

"If they rent out their properties, they must ensure their names are not used to apply for the electricity connection. Ensure the applications are made under the tenants' names so that they do not end up as victims of irresponsible electricity use," he said during Minister's Question Time in the Dewan Rakyat.

Fadillah said TNB has implemented an identity verification system using fingerprints and MyKad to curb electricity theft and prevent identity fraud.

The data is verified directly through TNB's biometric devices, a secure system that complies with industry standards and is widely used in banking, telecommunications and the public sector.

"Under the digital identity verification process (eKYC), users must scan their identification document, such as MyKad or passport, and match it with a selfie for facial verification. eKYC will gradually cover all individual applications submitted via the myTNB portal.

"This would help reduce identity fraud, strengthen user confidence and ensure adherence to the Personal Data Protection Act 2010."

According to Fadillah, the system has led to a sharp decline in cases involving forged identity documents.

Complaints fell from 92 in 2021 to 49 in 2022, then dropped further to 26 in 2023 after the biometric system's introduction, and only three cases were reported in 2024, all related to online applications.

He added that the government plans to expand the system for broader online transactions.

The initiative is being piloted in Kuala Lumpur before nationwide rollout.
- Bernama