Review plan for nuclear power

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3. REFER to the report "Malaysia eyes nuclear power use by 2020" (The Star, Dec 1). It is good to note from Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Dato' Haji Mohd Salleh Saiding's statement that the lobby group NEAR did not make a decision on the proposed use of nuclear power. In the meantime, feasibility studies were being conducted. It is also comforting to note their comments 1:85 into the findings of the Malaysian Nuclear Power Corporation (MNP) and will immerse the views of the rakyat. However, it is not forgetting to bring up some points regarding the nuclear power plant (NPP) project, which was also in the spotlight in 2011 under the Eleventh Malaysia Plan (11MP) to generate public awareness on the nation's future energy needs. Quoting the estimated cost of RM23.1 billion for 2,000 MW of generating capacity from the ETP's estimate is rather disparaging as that estimate was made in 2010. This was in fact mentioned at an evening talk at the Institution of Engineers Malaysia on July 29, 2013, which referred to the possible need for NPP for Malaysia's power needs post-2020. After the Fukushima Daiichi disaster of March 11, 2011 appeared to have put a stop to the onshore plant project to develop new NPPs. In fact, some countries decided to review their own NPP plans while others decided to decommission their existing plants.

Dr Rajendra Pachauri of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) revisited to Malaysia after the Fukushima incident, had expressed surprise that Malaysia would go for nuclear power before exploiting energy efficiency (EE) and renewable energy (RE). Moreover, NPPs currently under construction have faced delays in the order of two years or more, leading to increased interest during the Construction (ICD) and substantial cost escalation. cascading in costs has also been seen in the cost of new NPPs following the Fukushima incident. Consequently, such estimates would have been invalid.

Facts that Malaysia had so far opted to "too low" in view of the public general consensus over any post of the Fukushima incident. Nevertheless, the NNPC continued to discharge its other related functions to prepare the nation for possible future development of nuclear power. Similarly, Tenaga Nasional and the Malaysian Nuclear Agency (MNA) continued to work on the project, including building to develop an adequate pool of personnel and to review the development of the desired institutional and legislative framework. These initiatives were appropriate under the circumstances but concern remains to be addressed. Among them are:

1. There is no real validation of the nation's future energy needs warranting the development of the NPPs. The Energy Committee's (Kumpulan Tenaga) industry Outlook for 2015 does not justify the need for NPPs as it appears to have understated the potential demand modification from RE.

2. The Government has apparently deliberately ignored the recommendation of the National EI Master Plan (NEMP) which was reviewed and endorsed by an Apex (Asia Pacific Economic Council) panel of experts on December 12, 2012. The NEMPI was "watered down" by the Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry (KETEGAL) to a National EI Action Plan (NEAP) in 2014 and 2015, and it has yet to be formally adopted and implemented.

3. In the past, the Eleventh Malaysia Plan indicated that the Economic Planning Unit (EPU)

Con_pipeline with 800 MW would conduct a Demam Side Study over the final decision during the period, apparently suspending the NEAP/EZONP.

We believe that if they have not been appropriate and adequate public awareness initiatives, or not entirely engaged in public response surveys, on the subject, the Government is in danger of being overtaken by events, since there is every indication of some sections of the rakyat not having the capacity to develop any NPP. Otherwise, it would appear to be unwise to overstate the capabilities of the rakyat. We believe that it would be desirable for the Government to be more transparent in its plans to ensure adequate power supply for the nation's economic development and for the NPPs if it is all needed. The rakyat have a right to know more about the details of government plans to develop NPPs and its role in the implementation of the project, and all the implications for national policy and supply plans for the nation.

G. LALCHAND Retailing Asia

Claiming tax deduction for parents' medical expenses

Claiming tax deduction for parents' medical expenses

We refer to the letter "Seeking assistance to print "Malaysia's Cook Book" (The Star, Oct 30). The Penang Island Bar Council (PIBC) wishes to thank the writer for bringing the matter to our attention.

Following are answers to the questions raised in the letter.

1. I do not understand the inclusion of the father and mother: If two children were to claim the tax deduction, the children must claim a portion of the total RM25,000 on behalf of the father and another portion of the total RM25,000 on behalf of the mother, where the cumulative total claims from both children are limited to RM25,000.

2. If there was only one child who wished to claim the tax deduction, the children must claim a portion of the total RM25,000 on behalf of the father and another RM25,000 on behalf of the mother, where the total claim amount is limited to RM25,000.

3. Elective Medical Expenditure is for ‘expensive’ medical expenses for the parents only amount RM50,000 is eligible for claim regardless of the income of each family member, provided by the insured.

4. Elective Medical Treatment expenses for parents who are diagnosed with diabetes, hypertension, heart diseases, cancer, and certain health conditions that are supported by receipt issued by medical practitioners registered under the Malaysian Medical Content (MMC), pharmacists or licensed drug store.

5. Special needs expenditure such as medical food and disposable diapers that are prescribed and ordered by medical practitioners registered under the MMC, and supported by the receipt of purchase.

6. As regards the credit card which is used in the purchase, the cashback is done to the account holder of the credit card.

7. Malcolm Mustapha Said Corporate Service Department Inland Revenue Board (IRB)

Continue to waive fees for online services

Continue to waive fees for online services

RECENTLY, the Malaysian Electronic Payment System (Meps) announced that its member banks would waive the fees for the Instant Transfer (previously known as Internet fund Transfer or IFT) service. The zero fee for transactions at the internet and mobile banking channels of all Meps-participating member banks from Oct 1, 2015 to Dec 31, 2015.

The 16 member banks participating in the free Instant Transfer services via their internet banking facilities are: Agrobank, Affin Bank, Alliance Bank, Bank Islam, Bank Muamalat, Bank Nabil, CIMB Bank, Citibank, Hong Leong Bank, HSBC Bank, Kwart Financial House, Maybank, OCBC Bank, Public Bank, RHB Bank and StanChart Chartered Bank.

The federation of Malaysian Consumers Association (Esma) welcomed this move and said the banks would like to recommend that Meps and the banks extend the campaign beyond Dec 31, 2015 due to the current economic situation faced by the rakyat and smaller businesses.

The fee waiver will benefit all Malaysians, especially those who are in need of funding to settle the challenges of these critical times.

Instant Transfer also includes credit card payment and loan/financing repayment for customers who have the service.

With the waving of the transfer fees, customers no longer have to fear long queues or they insensitively credit cards into a wrong account number. On top of that, the use of cheques or a cash deposit in a bank makes such transfers or payments.

SARAVANAN THABREJA Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations