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COVID-19: Government to absorb electricity bills for the poor, others to enjoy 50% slash



by Ellen Dapaah — April 9, 2020 3 min read





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President Nana Akufo-Addo says that the government will fully cover the bills of low-income consumers of electricity in the country for April, May and June 2020.

The remaining consumers who fall outside of this category will enjoy a 50 percent reduction in the cost of electricity for the same period.

The President disclosed this in his sixth national address to the nation on the novel coronavirus today, Thursday, April 9, 2020.

“We have decided further measure of mitigation for Ghanaians for the next three months... Government will fully absorb electricity bills for the poorest of the poor, i.e: lifeline consumers. This will cover persons who consume 0 to 50-kilowatt hours per month for this period. This forms part of relief interventions by the state amid the novel coronavirus pandemic. Other

categories of consumers will enjoy a 50 percent discount within the same period. For all other consumers, residential and commercial, the government will absorb 50 percent of your electricity bill for this period using your March 2020 bill as the benchmark,” he noted.

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Previous calls

President Nana Akufo-Addo in his previous national address on Sunday, April 5, 2020, announced that the government will take care of the water bills for all Ghanaians for April, May and June 2020 following an increase in the country's coronavirus cases amidst a partial lockdown of the epicentres of the disease.

Following this decision, many individuals and groups pressured the President to do same with electricity tariffs.

Apart from the Minority in Parliament, Former President John Dramani Mahama also asked for **subsidization** of electricity tariffs amid the Coronavirus outbreak in Ghana.

Mr. Mahama in a statement suggested that “a subsidy payment from the Stabilization Fund to the ECG and other generating companies can provide some temporary relief, however small, to consumers in this difficult period.”

The Progressive People's Party (PPP) had also asked the President to consider a waiver on electricity bills as part of social interventions put in place to cushion Ghanaians against the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Responses

But the Majority Leader, Osei Kyeyi Mensah Bonsu, in response to these calls had said that electricity tariffs could only be reduced or scrapped **if the country has enough funds** to cater for that request.

Speaking in an interview on **Eyewitness News**, he noted that these calls can only be possible if the country's wallet has enough money.

“It depends on the size of the wallet of the country and what could be practically achieved by government within this span of time. Water charges are going to be born for three months. We want to know what government is going to do in respect of this. Don't forget that for now, we are talking about Accra, Tema and Kumasi. If this thing should happen in Tamale and Wa, given the statistics that are coming out, government will necessarily have to extend the assistance to the

citizens of Tamale and Wa. That thought should perish. But if it should happen, what is being done for Accra and Kumasi will have to be extended to them as well and we should look at the purse of the country in all this,” he stated.

The Institute of Energy Security (IES) was also of the same view.

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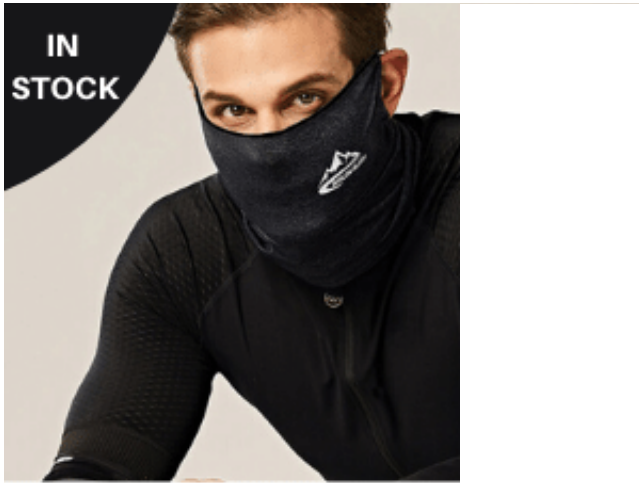
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