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Nature's impact on electricity

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As Malaysia experiences an earlier onset of the hot and dry season this year, attributed to the persistent El Nino weather pattern, concerns arise regarding its impact on electricity consumption.

It's a little-known fact that El Nino can significantly influence electricity usage. With temperatures soaring, us consumers tend to rely heavily on air conditioning units and fans to combat the intense heat, particularly during the scorching midday hours until sunset, leading to a surge in power demand across factories, offices, commercial spaces, and households.

Presently, the nation is already grappling with the effects of heightened temperatures and diminished rainfall.

As atmospheric temperatures continue to rise, the demand for electricity is expected to escalate further.

In Sabah, specifically, recent temperature spikes have already foreshadowed an uptick in power consumption, underscoring the urgency for proactive measures to manage electricity usage amidst the prevailing weather conditions.

Amidst these conditions, the stability of our grid system emerges as a pressing concern.

Presently, peak-time demands have surged to 1,090.73MW, while the average power supply stands at 1,300MW, leaving a minimal reserve margin to accommodate increased consumption.

Meanwhile, the challenge of maintaining stability in our electricity infrastructure has intensified with the discovery of damage to two transmission towers in Ranau.

Specifically, the tower along the 275kV Kolopis – Segaliud transmission line, located in the vicinity of Kg. Nabutan and Kg. Randagong in the Ranau district.

Any structural compromise to this tower could jeopardize the entire electricity supply to the East Coast of Sabah.

At SESB, meticulous planning and extensive soil investigations were conducted to ascertain the condition of these towers. However, despite our proactive measures, we are confronted with the unpredictable forces of nature, which remain beyond our control. In light of this emergency situation, it is evident that the soil beneath the affected towers has eroded, necessitating immediate action.

For us Sabahans, the implications are significant. With our power grid already under strain due to heightened demand spurred by the scorching weather, any disruption to the Emergency Restoration System (ERS) towers could lead to power outages.

The critical condition of these towers is particularly alarming for the 275kV Kolopis - Segaliud Grid transmission line, as it plays a pivotal role in channelling approximately 200MW of energy from the West Coast to the East Coast of Sabah daily.



Rest assured, SESB is actively engaging in collaborative efforts to address this critical issue. Alongside Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB), our concerted actions involve partnerships with two other key entities.

Firstly, the Department of Minerals & Geosciences Malaysia (JMG) has played a pivotal role.

Through a comprehensive soil structure study conducted in collaboration with JMG, a new site for transmission line towers has been identified, ensuring a more stable foundation for future infrastructure.

Additionally, the Royal Malaysian Air Force (TUDM) has provided invaluable support. Transport aircraft services from TUDM facilitated the swift transportation of five Emergency Restoration System (ERS) tower containers from Selangor to Sabah, expediting the restoration process.

Furthermore, TNB's workforce has been instrumental in our joint efforts.

Thirty skilled TNB workers will be dispatched to assist with the installation of the Emergency Restoration System (ERS) and temporary line removal works.

A total of eight ERS towers will be strategically installed across these two locations, safeguarding the uninterrupted energy supply to the East Coast of Sabah.

This collaborative endeavour underscores our unwavering commitment to swiftly address the challenges posed by the damaged transmission towers and ensure the reliability of Sabah's electricity supply.

Commencing on 7th February 2024, relocation works are already underway and are slated for completion within a five-week timeframe.

The conversion and relocation of the 275kV Kolopis – Segaliud transmission line tower are projected to conclude by early April 2024, aligning with the stringent timeline set forth.

While meticulous planning can mitigate certain risks, it's crucial to acknowledge the inevitability of unforeseen circumstances, such as the current weather conditions and soil movements. Despite our best efforts, some factors remain beyond our control.

However, this does not excuse complacency. On the contrary, the proactive response demonstrated by the SESB team in tackling these challenges serves as a testament to our unwavering commitment to ensuring the reliability of Sabah's power supply, even amidst formidable limitations.