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Madius

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KOTA KINABALU: Sabah remains at risk of a power crisis despite reforms being carried out by Sabah Electricity (SE), warns its former chairman Datuk Seri Wilfred Madius Tangau.

He cautioned that the state's power generation reserve margin is below 12%, when it should be at least 30%.

"The state could face rationing or blackouts if urgent measures are not taken," he wrote in a Facebook post on Monday.

Madius ended his tenure as SE chairman on June 16 after his contract was not renewed.

"To all friends, June 16, 2025, was my last day as chairman of Sabah Electricity. This means today is the eighth day I am no longer chairman," he said in his post.

Madius served as SE chairman since 2023 and expressed gratitude for the opportunity, thanking the federal and state governments for their trust during his tenure.

The Tuaran member of parliament said he accepted the chairman post despite warnings to stay away from (then) Sabah Electricity Sdn Bhd.

"Many told me to stay away from SESB, saying it could destroy my political career. But I accepted the post, not for prestige, but as a responsibility to the people of Sabah and Labuan who have long suffered from electricity issues."

He explained his decision to take on the challenge, acknowledging that SE, rebranded under his leadership from SESB, had long been viewed as problematic.

During his two-year tenure, he implemented reforms to enhance integrity, transparency, and service delivery, including initiatives that led SE to receive the MS ISO 37001:2016 Anti-Bribery Management System certification, making it one of only three GLCs in Sabah to



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achieve this standard.

He also highlighted technological advancements such as the implementation of smart meters, the introduction of self-meter reading (SMR) in rural areas like Kiulu, and other digitisation efforts aimed at reducing billing complaints.

Another significant achievement under his leadership was the reduction of the System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI) from 1,000 minutes in 2012 to 220 minutes in 2024, with some areas reaching single-digit figures.

Madius recently launched the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) project in Lahad Datu, touted as the largest in Southeast Asia, with a 100MW capacity designed to stabilise electricity supply on the east coast.

"We also successfully signed a Gas Sales Agreement (GSA) with Petronas on June 30, 2024. The development of another new gas power plant with a capacity of 120MW under a tripartite cooperation involving Sabah Electricity, Petronas and Sabah Energy Corporation (SEC). Also, the restoration of the Tenom Pangi Hydro Power Station's operation in May 2025 after nearly three years of non-operation," he pointed out.

Madius noted that the company's rebranding was necessary to meet the government's goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

"This is also a sign of the company's commitment to greener, more sustainable and environmentally friendly energy sources," he said.

He apologised to SE staff for his frequent calls and surprise visits, sometimes on weekends and late at night.

"I appreciate all your dedication. That is why I fought for workers' rights in the last Board Meeting I chaired. I hope this is not the end of all our efforts. Continue to work hard; this is a continuous struggle with no end."

"However, I would like to invite all parties to place their trust in our staff and the company. They have the capability. What they lack is simply trust," he wrote.

He also advised the public not to repeat the cycle of objections that had previously stalled key infrastructure projects, including the Kaiduan and Liwagu dams, as well as the proposed 300MW coal power plant.

"These objections have ultimately led to the electricity shortages we are experiencing today. Let us not repeat past mistakes," he advised.

Quoting a familiar proverb, he added, "It takes a village to raise a child."

In the same spirit, he said, "Sabah Electricity needs the support and involvement of all stakeholders, from leaders to users, to work together in securing long-term solutions and stability for Sabah and the Federal Territory of Labuan."

He ended his post thanking Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and the Finance Minister for entrusting him to lead SE, as well as Tenaga Nasional Berhad chairman Tan Sri Abdul Razak Majid, his deputy chairman, Board of Directors members, chief executive officer, senior management officers, SE staff, and stakeholders.

"I'm signing off," he wrote.