

Written by Shumaila Ahmed

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<p></p> <p>ISLAMABAD

- AHMAD AHMADANI - The miseries of common man with regard to power outage are still on its place rather increasing with each passing day as power shortfall till today (Thursday) has exceeded to 4,000mw.</p> <p>

[loadposition content_adsense300}The repeated mantra of concerned authorities to soon control the prolong power shortfall has so far not bore any fruit as life of countrymen is still in a fix owing to absence of proper power load management plan by caretaker government while deteriorating cash flow situation coupled with continuous gas supply to the inefficient captive power plants instead of efficient IPPs might not provide any solace to masses facing trouble for long times.</p> <p>

</p> <p>Energy experts have painted a bleak picture by saying, "alarming bells rings in as looming power crisis has witnessed a new height of 4,200mw shortfall, disturbing the routine life across the country very much." They said reduced power generation despite persistent provision of gas to inefficient new captive power plants (NCPPs) instead of gas run efficient IPPs has added miseries to the masses. Announced and unannounced hours long power outages ranging between 16-18 hours has plunged the whole country into darkness while routine life and business activities remained suspended to some extent in rural areas and urban centres as well. They were of the view that spiralling up power outages with each passing day ostensibly due to acute cash flow situation has touched the lowest ebb as at present the overall payables by the govt stood at Rs480b out of which it needs to pay Rs300b to the IPPs, Rs100b to Wapda hydel company and Rs80b to Gencos (power generation companies).</p> <p>"There seems no respite at hand as the interim government besides giving media statements has so far not issued any concrete policy to deal with power crisis which has ballooned out of control, an expert deplored, adding, "officials at water & power ministry are paying no heed to the instruction of NAB chief who had raised fingers against continuous supply of gas to the inefficient NCPPs on subsidised rates. Even, the irritated innocent citizens most often took to the streets against the scheduled and unscheduled power outage and had also demanded the govt to chalk out a proper plan to control the loadshedding."</p> <p>It is also learnt that loadshedding in the rural areas of the country has reached up to 18 hours while the urban areas experience 16 hours long power breakdown. The prolong power outages not only has affected the daily routines of citizens but has also contributed towards suspending the business activities in the country that is not only badly affecting the economy of the country but has also caused internal chaos and turmoil as well. Reportedly, the Punjab govt in order to cope with looming power crisis has given orders to close down all hotels, shops and wedding halls at 11pm.</p> <p>When contacted with the spokesman of water & power ministry to know the power situation across the country, he said, the total power generation is 9100mw against the demand of 1300mw while shortfall remained at 3900mw.</p> <p>"Since the caretaker water and power minister and petroleum minister despite making tall claims have been succumbed to the persistent pressure of influential industrialists, which are owners of inefficient NCPPs so no sigh of relief for over burdened masses already facing high tariff for a long time is in sight", said an official of petroleum ministry, adding, that state owned oil giant Pakistan State Oil (PSO) is on the verge of default owing to heavy outstanding dues which have caused soaring circular debt of power sector.</p>

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It is to note here that the gas-based IPPs include Pakistan-Orient Power Company Limited, Saif Power Limited, Sapphire Electric Company Limited, and Halmore Power Generation are currently non-operational because of unavailability of gas; however, Rouch power house is only producing 50 percent electricity because of less supply of gas. Similarly, two more IPPs including Pak Gen and Lalpir have virtually pulled out 700 MWs of power from the system on account of cash flow issues. Again, the government had not been paying anything since long due to which the IPPs having the capacity to generate 10,000 MWs of electricity were just producing 4,500 MWs. While, Wapda Hydroelectric (WAPDA Residual Power Wing) has installed capacity of 18 hydel power stations, however, out of these 15 hydel power stations having installed capacity of 6612MW are currently in operation and the remaining three power stations with total installed capacity of 268MW shall start operation by June 2013. In addition, rehabilitation of 22MW Jabban Hydropower is scheduled to be completed during FY 2012-13.

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