

POWER SHORTAGES LOOM

Power Minister says that CEB would not impose power cuts despite the country experiencing the driest periods in 10 years.



SANDUN A JAYASEKERA

An energy expert of the Power and Renewable Energy Ministry yesterday sounded alarm that the country was heading to an imminent energy crisis as a result of the delay in implementing the Least Cost Long Term Generation Expansion Plan (LCLTGP) 2015-2034 by the CEB (Ceylon Electricity Board). He, on condition of anonymity added that a major power crisis was inevitable early next year due to the country's sole power monopoly, the CEB had failed to implement the LCLTGP and power crisis could come even before 2018, which was predicted earlier.

"The CEB has checkmated its own long term power generation plan which was reviewed and approved by the regulator Public Utilities Commission of Sri Lanka (PUCSL). Therefore, a major power crisis is imminent in 2017 despite the fact that earlier forecasts ruled out a power crisis in 2018," the expert told the Daily Mirror yesterday.

He said according to the LCLTGP - 2005, the CEB had received approval to build eight power plants between 2009 to 2017 with the installed capacity of 2,330 MWs, which is sufficient up to 2040 with 8% increase in demand for power annually.

The proposed power plants are a 245 MW Gas Turbine in 2009,

"Our concern will be to upgrade political and economic diplomacy whereas Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera will be fully committed for the success of political diplomacy, while I will take care of economic diplomacy aimed at improving political, economical and trade links ..."

285 MW Gas Turbine in 2010, 300 MW Coal Steam (Southern Coast) in 2013, 300 MW Coal Steam (Southern Coast) in 2014, 300 MW Coal Steam (Southern Coast) in 2015, 300 MW Coal Steam (Southern Coast) in 2016, 300 MW Coal Steam (East Coast) in 2017, 300 MW Coal Steam (East Coast) in 2018.

At least, no preliminary planning or fund allocations had been made up to now for any of these power plants, he added.

If these plants are added to the grid, perhaps Sri Lanka will not face an energy crisis in coming years. Accordingly, a total of 2,330 MWs of power would have been added to the grid by the year 2018 if the above plants were implemented.

So, it was a questionable situation of a State owned agency where about 1,200 engineers were working and make plans for the entire nation and not adhering to its own plans, he charged.

Proposed power plant

- * 245 MW Gas Turbine in 2009
- * 285 MW Gas Turbine in 2010
- * 300 MW Coal Steam (Southern Coast) in 2013
- * 300 MW Coal Steam (Southern Coast) in 2014
- * 300 MW Coal Steam (Southern Coast) in 2015
- * 300 MW Coal Steam (Southern Coast) in 2016
- * 300 MW Coal Steam (East Coast) in 2017
- * 300 MW Coal Steam (East Coast) in 2018

