

SA nearing end of daily power cuts, says Ramokgopa

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Electricity Minister Kgosientsho Ramokgopa said on Sunday, 2 July, the country was closer to ending daily power cuts as warmer weather returns towards the end of the year, but declined to give a specific date.



Electricity minister Kgosientsho Ramokgopa at the China-South Africa New Energy Investment and Cooperation Conference in Sandton, 2023.
Source: Reuters/Siphiwe Sibeko

Load shedding has eased in the past few weeks but there is a fear that as winter takes deeper hold in July and August, higher heating demand could trip many power plants. By September, the temperature starts to climb once more.

"I know when we get into summer conditions, then at the current rate, generation will far exceed demand," Ramokgopa said in a news conference.

Due to interventions on system maintenance and availability and efforts from businesses and households, the worst-case scenario of peak winter demand of 34,000 megawatts (MW) has not materialised, he said.

The capacity available is plateauing around 29,000MW, giving enough room to bring the power cuts down to Stage 3, where 3,000MW are taken off the grid, leading to between two and four hours of daily power cuts, the minister added.



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Generation keeping up with demand

Ramokgopa said the country was reaching a stage where power generation was beginning to keep up with demand, with load shedding coming down from Stage 6 to Stage 3 in the space of six weeks.

South Africa could soon have no blackouts for 24 hours, he said.

"I want to say to the South African people we are much, much closer to that date," he said.

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