

Tumiran: Power Crisis is Caused by Old Power Station and Minimal Maintenance

Monday, 16 November 2009 WIB, By: Marwati

Universitas Gadjah Mada's electricity expert, Dr. Tumiran, has urged the Government to review the national electricity system. This is required in connection with the establishment of a power station, transmission and distribution lines and the policy for electricity supply. "The crisis in Java is actually not caused by the inadequate supply but by the old equipment and lack of maintenance," Tumiran told journalists at the Fortakgama Room, Thursday (12/11), responding to the recent blackouts.

According to Tumiran, the Government should add transmission and distribution lines besides new power stations. In addition, Tumiran added, these stations' dependency on oil has caused the high running costs. Indonesia's expense is 1,300 rupiah per Kwh on generating national electricity as compared to Malaysia which is 700 rupiah. "If we use gas, the cost will decrease, and the Government will only allocate a subsidy of 200 rupiah per Kwh," he explained.

The member of the National Energy Board said that it is time for the State-Owned Electricity Company (PLN) and the Government to improve the structure of electricity tariffs. In his opinion, the current ones are not 'healthy'. The blackouts have also paralysed national industries.

The man who is also the current Dean of the Faculty of Technical Engineering said that the Government should review the plan to increase the tariffs in 2010. The PLN had better compose mixed fuels to get to know the minimum mixed production costs, therefore they will know whether it is necessary to increase the tariffs. "We should not blame the PLN, but let's see the government's policy on fuel supplies," he said.

Related to the 10 thousand megawatt programme that will be started in Year 2010 for the second phase, he suggested to start it at the areas that are experiencing crisis. He said that over 30% of Indonesian people have no electricity. Therefore, the Government needs to consider the development of power infrastructure by providing an industry that produces power components. "The Government should think about components that are supplied within the country as this will make the economy grow and create job opportunities. All components have been purchased from abroad," he said.

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