

Cuba's power grid in critical condition: Guiteras power plant out again



The Antonio Guiteras power plant in Matanzas, built in 1988 (AI-scaled) (source: [Cubadebate](https://www.cubadebate.com))

The energy crisis in Cuba is once again coming to a head. The power deficit reached 1,916 megawatts on Monday evening and could exceed the critical threshold of 2,000 megawatts following the renewed failure of the Antonio Guiteras power plant, according to the state-owned power supplier UNE.

The situation began to deteriorate on Monday when two power plant units failed simultaneously: Block 4 of the Energás power plant in Varadero and Block 3 of the power plant in Santa Cruz del Norte unexpectedly went offline. This meant that the deficit significantly exceeded the planned 1,710 megawatts.

Guiteras power plant out of service again

The recent failure of the Antonio Guiteras power plant in Matanzas province is particularly serious. The plant, which is considered the country's most important power generator, went offline on Tuesday due to a leak in the boiler. The power supplier UNE estimates that repairs will take [four days](#). The plant must first cool down for 30 to 36 hours before the damage can be precisely located.

This is the second outage at the power plant in just a few weeks. The plant had only returned to the grid last Friday after a repair break of almost a week. It had previously been shut down for four days of maintenance. The Guiteras plant has not undergone a general overhaul for decades, which increases its vulnerability.

The Guiteras outage is making the already precarious energy situation much worse. Even before this failure, UNE was predicting a deficit of over 1,400 megawatts during the daytime

hours. For the evening peak times, a shortfall of 1,992 megawatts had originally been predicted – a figure that is now likely to rise further due to the Guiteras outage.

Six power plant units out of operation

In addition to Guiteras, a total of six power plant units are currently out of operation due to technical problems. In addition to the aforementioned plants, unit 8 of the Mariel power plant was also temporarily affected, with its restart scheduled for Tuesday.

An additional 409 megawatts are out of service due to thermal limitations. Ninety-four decentralized generators are idle due to fuel shortages, as are three engines at the floating power plant in Regla. In total, the outages yesterday amounted to 825 megawatts.

Hours of power outages across the country

The energy crisis is leading to prolonged power outages of more than 20 to 30 hours in various regions of Cuba. The government's plans to reduce power outages have so far proved unrealistic, as the planned maintenance program for the power plants is repeatedly thwarted by constant outages and delayed repairs – even though new solar parks already contribute up to 558 megawatts at midday.

The current situation brings back memories of the nationwide blackouts in [October](#), [December](#), and [March](#), when the entire power grid collapsed. Experts warn that this scenario could repeat itself if more power plants fail or electricity demand exceeds the forecast 3,650 megawatts. ([Cubaheute](#))