

Eskom to suspend load shedding, power system remains volatile

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Eskom will suspend load shedding at 10pm on Friday, 22 April, after a week of severe power outages owing to faults at its coal-fired power stations.



A shop owner waits for customers by candlelight during a power outage in Soweto. Reuters/Siphiwe Sibeko

Eskom said in a statement that it expected to return to service nine generation units during the weekend, but it warned that the power system remained severely constrained and volatile. "During next week we anticipate to continue relying on the use of emergency reserves to meet demand," it said.

Eskom's ageing fleet of coal-fired power plants are highly prone to faults, and government's plans to add additional capacity to the national grid have been sluggish.



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At their peak this week the power cuts reached Stage 4, requiring up to 4,000MW to be shed from the grid, although they were scaled back to Stage 2 from Thursday evening.

This week's power cuts were one factor contributing to a steep decline in the rand, as they highlighted obstacles to growth.

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