

No guarantee against blackouts: Moggie

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KUALA LUMPUR: Tenaga Nasional Berhad (Tenaga) cannot give an assurance that Monday's power blackout will not happen again.

Energy, Communications and Multimedia Minister Datuk Leo Moggie said this yesterday in response to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call for Tenaga to ensure that no power breakdown recur.

"No utility (supplier) can totally prevent and give an assurance that there would be no breakdowns. It is part and parcel of a normal business process," he told reporters after opening "ICT Week

2003" at the Mines Exhibition and Convention Centre in Seri Kembangan here.

"(On compensation,) it depends on whether it was due to any negligence."

Moggie said Tenaga is preparing a detailed report on the power failure.

He said he would not have off-hand information on the estimated losses suffered by consumers.

However, looking at the circumstances, it should be less than that during the 1996 outage which affected the peninsula for 17 hours.

The fact that it happened on a public holiday would also mean relatively smaller losses.

He said that any disruption in power supply is likely to cause some disruption

in services, resulting in inconveniences for users.

"That is unavoidable. But the good thing is, we have learnt a lesson from our 1996 experience," he said.

He said Tenaga should be credited for that.

Moggie said one of the recommendations after the 1996 outage was for Tenaga to do some "islanding" of areas to limit the effect of a potential major breakdown.

"The breakdown on Monday reflected some success under this concept as there was a major risk that could affect the whole peninsula but it affected only the northern parts," he said.

"Compared to 1996, Tenaga was able to restore supply much more quickly."