

# *Venezuelan government working to stabilize electric grid*

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Caracas, July 23 (RHC)-- Venezuelans woke up Tuesday to a partial restoration of the electric grid in Caracas and other parts of the country after a new nationwide blackout hit the country Monday afternoon. Venezuelan states of Merida, Trujillo, Barinas and Aragua saw services restored, while in the capital Caracas the service has been intermittent so far.

On Tuesday morning, the National Electric Corporation (Corpoelec) reported that the electric power service was totally restored in Caracas. A few hours later, however, lights went out again due to continuing damage in the national hydroelectric power system, officials said.

This new national blackout began Monday at 4:45 pm local time as a result of the interruption of activities at the Guayana hydroelectric generation system, which the government has blamed on a new cyber-attack against the facility where most of the electricity Venezuela uses is generated.

Although the blackout initially affected more than half of the nation's 23 states, the electric service began to flow again in several areas of the Venezuelan capital starting at 11:00 pm Monday night.

The Communications, Tourism and Culture Minister Jorge Rodriguez reported that the failure in the electric service on Monday was related to a new electromagnetic attack. "First clues received from the investigation in Lower Caroni point towards the existence of an electromagnetic attack, which sought to

affect the hydroelectric generation system of Guayana, the main provider of this service in the country," Rodriguez said.

Diosdado Cabello, the president of the National Constituent Assembly (ANC), denounced Monday's damages to the national electricity system, saying that they appear to be similar to those that happened in March and April when the Simon Bolivar Hydroelectric Power Plant was sabotaged.

He went on to accuse the Venezuelan opposition of resorting to new sabotages after its failure to destabilize President Nicolas Maduro's administration.

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