

Post-Hurricane Maria Puerto Rico blackout second-largest in the world



San Juan, April 17 (RHC)-- A new report by Rhodium Group has shed light on the devastating effects Hurricane Maria has had on the Caribbean island, as it recorded the second-largest power outage in the world on record, only after Typhoon Haiyan, one of the largest and deadliest tropical storms to have hit the Philippines.

In Puerto Rico, the construction of the power grid has been slow, and last week, when a tree fell on a power line, electricity for some 840,000 people got knocked off.

It's been a little over six months since Hurricane Maria made landfall in the U.S. colony. But even before the latest shutdown, at least 100,000 people haven't had electricity since last September.

According to Vox News, the U.S. Department of Energy, which has been issuing weekly reports on grid reconstruction progress, didn't submit a report after the tree fell. But, Bruce Walker, an assistant secretary at the DOE, told the U.S. Congress this week that the grid repair bill for Puerto Rico could go over \$17.6 billion.

"During the remainder of 2017, utilities in PR (Puerto Rico) made modest progress in restoring electricity service, with support from the federal government and utility crews from around the country. Yet at the start of 2018, 55% of Puerto Rico remained without power," the Rhodium group's report entailed.

The biggest blackouts happen in densely populated regions with vulnerable power lines and generators, according to Rhodium's report.

Extreme weather conditions, such as the hurricanes and typhoons, hit every part of the power grid, and its effects can compound. "Hurricanes and storms really impact, for the long term, large swaths of the population," Peter Marsters, one of the report's authors said, according to Vox News.

Another issue which has gravely impacted the repair conditions in Puerto Rico is the remote location, as is the case with many of the places recording these disasters which makes it even harder for the repair supplies to reach in time.

According to Reuters, the U.S. Congress-created oversight board for Puerto Rico will hold public hearings Thursday and Friday to certify revised fiscal plans for the commonwealth, the board said Sunday. The board will also decide on the island's utility, Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA), and other government-controlled entities at the meetings in San Juan.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/160094-post-hurricane-maria-puerto-rico-blackout-second-largest-in-the-world>



Radio Habana Cuba