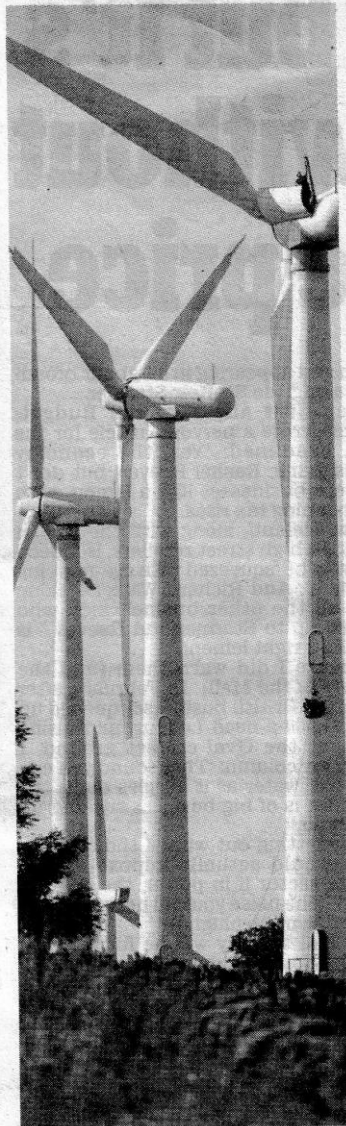


Now UK wind power runs out of puff...thanks to Dunkelflaute



Not for turning: Wind turbines

GLOOMY weather may get spirits down – but it's also putting a damper on the UK's power output.

The amount of wind and solar energy generated has fallen significantly over the past two weeks due to a high-pressure weather system.

And the calm, dark skies are expected to continue, according to the Met Office, as one high-pressure system is replaced by another.

This phenomenon is known as a 'Dunkelflaute', which comes from the German words for 'darkness' and 'weak wind'.

Met Office forecaster Liam Eslick said: 'High pressure means air is sinking and thus winds are normally very light.'

'This is why it has also been cloudy as there has been no wind to mix or shift the cloud, so we have been seeing this blanket of

'Poorest performance'

grey since the start of November.' Data from Elexon, which runs Britain's wholesale electricity market, shows how dire renewable energy production has become.

Three weeks ago, on October 20, wind was producing 60.8 per cent of Britain's power – 19.2 gigawatts (GW) – during the 8am to 9am rush.

That tumbled to just three per cent (1.1GW) during the same time slot on Tuesday last week.

In fact, wind generated just 2.8 per cent of Britain's power (1GW) that day between 10am and 11am – its poorest performance of the year.

Solar power production was also down over the past week, barely managing to supply three per cent of the nation's energy.

On average, wind has supplied nearly a third of the UK's power over the past year, while solar produces around five per cent.

The National Energy System Operator (NESO), formerly known as the National Grid, said the lull

By Chris Pollard

was nothing to panic about, as it has the largest pre-winter surplus of power for five years.

This is due to a growth in battery storage capacity and a better network of zero carbon sources, plus easy access to foreign imports. It will more than offset seasonal

reductions and the recent closure of Ratcliffe-on-Soar in Nottinghamshire, the UK's last coal-fired power station, NESO claims.

A spokesman said: 'While weather patterns can influence wind generation, the impact on energy prices is mitigated by the diverse energy sources and strategic planning NESO has in

place. A new high-pressure front moves south today.

■ SIR Keir Starmer is set to attend the UN climate talks today – while other world leaders, including from the biggest greenhouse gas emitters, China, the US and India, stay away. The COP29 meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan, will have 50,000 attendees – half the total in Dubai last year.