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TAJUK ARTIKEL	SARAWAK SETS PACE IN ENERGY TRANSITION		
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ENERGY

By JACK WONG

Sarawak sets pace in energy transition

Fiscal discipline to strengthen long-term outlook

“Energy availability will not become a constraint of growth.”

Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg

KUCHING: Sarawak will accelerate the clean energy transition by expanding renewable energy and modernising infrastructure energy planning, says Sarawak Premier Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg.

He said energy is a central pillar of Sarawak's competitiveness, as demand from artificial intelligence, data centres and advanced manufacturing has made reliable electricity supply a strategic issue.

“Modernising infrastructure energy planning is treated as economic infrastructure, not a supporting function.

“Continued investment in renewable energy generation and grid reliability is designed to meet rising demand from industry, digital infrastructure, and regional interconnection.

“Energy availability will not become a constraint of growth,” he added in a keynote address at the Asean Sarawak Business & Economic Forum 2026 on theme *From vision to delivery: securing Sarawak and Asean's competitive in a divided world* here last Thursday.

Abang Johari said Sarawak has strengthened coordination through Invest Sarawak and is finalising a Sarawak Investment Policy to provide clearer rules, faster approvals, and more predictable processes.

This, he said, directly addresses the execution risks and credibility gaps identified in the Asean Sarawak Business & Economic Forum 2026 programme.

“Sarawak is also balancing its climate policy and economic competitiveness.

“For example, as Sarawak prepares its implementation framework to introduce a carbon levy mechanism, thorough considerations have been made on social-economic impacts and industry competitiveness to support businesses in their transition.

“Sarawak remains investable because fiscal discipline, energy strategy, and ex-

ecution capacity are aligned with the realities of a fragmented global economy.”

Abang Johari said under Sarawak's 13th Malaysia Plan, Sarawak will develop and attract strategic industries through partnership, a strengthened local supply chain and small and medium enterprise capacity building while driving technology adoptions.

“We will scale downstream and industrial activity where there is a clear fit between energy supply, infrastructure, and policy certainty.

“The focus is on downstream gas, petrochemicals and high-value industries.

“This is where we expect investment to deepen, rather than dispersing effort across low-value activities.”

He said another high-level strategy under Sarawak's 13th Malaysia Plan is to raise investor confidence and attract greater private sector participation by strengthening governance and improving regulatory processes.

“Through InvestSarawak and the forthcoming Sarawak Investment Policy, approv-

al pathways are being standardised, agency roles clarified, and timelines shortened.

“By 2030, investors should face fewer hand-offs, clearer requirements, and greater certainty from entry to operation.”

Sarawak will also engage in climate action, environmental social governance integration, and advancing the circular economy through climate policy, carbon trading, and sustainability-focused investment.

“Throughout our strategies, Sarawak will maintain fiscal credibility while investing for growth.

“Development spending will remain disciplined. Project selection will stay selective. Balance sheet strength will be protected.

“Growth will be pursued in a way that sustains confidence across economic cycles. These are delivery commitments, not long-term aspirations.

“They define how we intend to compete, execute and remain investable through 2030.”

In 2026, Abang Johari said the Sarawak government has allocated RM9.3bil in

development expenditure, with targeted investment in infrastructure, industry capacity, energy systems and digital readiness.

“The period from 2026 to 2030 is critical. “Decisions taken now in energy systems, industrial capacity, fiscal discipline and institutional coordination will sharpen Sarawak's competitiveness well beyond this decade.

“Delays in this phase are costly missteps are difficult to reverse.

“For investors and businesses, the signal is straightforward.

“We offer fiscal credibility, energy reliability, policy clarity, and a government prepared to make decisions under constraint.

“This is the basis on which Sarawak intends to compete in a more divided global economy,” he added.

Meanwhile, Asean Economic Club chairman Tan Sri Michael Yeoh said Sarawak's strategic position places it at the centre of regional economic flows, linking major economies, such as China and Japan with Australia and New Zealand.

He said this position places Sarawak in a vital and strategic role in the economic map of East Asia and Asean.

Yeoh said Sarawak's digital and green transformation would drive the state's future economic growth, adding that there is a wide opportunity to grow the green economy in Sarawak as a leader in hydrogen energy and green transformation.