



03 JUL, 2026

Bid to create new industries

The Star, Malaysia



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Retiring coal power plants to be repurposed as RE hubs

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia plans to repurpose the sites of retiring coal-fired power plants into renewable energy (RE) hubs and battery energy storage facilities, says Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the country's existing coal fleet represented significant national infrastructure, including transmission connections, industrial facilities and strategically located land.

"Rather than allowing these assets to become stranded, we should view them as opportunities to create new economic value."

"Selected sites possess strong potential to be transformed into renewable energy hubs, battery energy storage facilities and other clean energy developments that continue contributing to local economies while supporting our national transition objectives," he said in his address at the closing ceremony of the World Economic Forum's "Malaysia's Energy Future: Power Sector Decarbonisation Deep Dive" yesterday, Bernama reported.

Fadillah, who is also Energy Transition and Water



Exploring better avenues: Fadillah (centre) receiving a book on coal power from Regional Project, Asia-Pacific, World Economic Forum Head Dr Sandy Chong (second left) in Kuala Lumpur. — MUHAMAD SHAHRIL ROSLI/The Star

Transformation Minister, said the plan, under a proposed National Coal Site Repurposing Framework, would provide a foundation for continued engagement among the government, regulators, utilities, investors and local communities.

He said every retiring power station presented an opportunity to create new industries, attract investments and prepare the

workforce for the economy of the future.

Fadillah also said Malaysia remained committed to its target of not building any new coal-fired power plants, transitioning away from coal-fired electricity generation by 2044 and achieving 70% RE installed capacity by 2050.

He stressed that RE deployment must progress ahead of coal retirement to avoid replacing coal

dependence with greater reliance on imported liquefied natural gas (LNG).

"This is a critical consideration. Should renewable deployment fail to keep pace, there is a real risk that coal dependence may simply be replaced by greater reliance on imported LNG, exposing Malaysia to fuel price volatility and external geopolitical uncertainties," he said.

To support the transition, Fadillah said the ministry would prioritise large-scale solar deployment, the Corporate Renewable Energy Supply Scheme, battery energy storage systems and smart grid modernisation.

On regional cooperation, he reaffirmed Malaysia's commitment to advance the Asean Power Grid and expand cross-border electricity trade to strengthen regional energy security and facilitate greater RE integration.

"We would continue to explore long-term low-carbon energy options, including advanced nuclear technologies and small modular reactors while giving top priority to safety, robust governance, regulatory preparedness and public confidence," he added.