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## Malaysia's nuclear decision depends on preparedness across 19 key areas

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malaysia's decision on whether to launch a nuclear power programme will depend on its level of preparedness across 19 key areas, which mostly focus on safety, said Energy Commission (EC) chief executive officer, Siti Safinah Salleh.

These key areas include nuclear safety, radiation protection, radioactive waste management and site and supporting facilities.

She said the country must first ensure readiness in those areas before deciding whether to proceed with nuclear power development, given that nuclear energy is one of the components in the transition to clean energy.

"There are 19 building blocks that we have to be prepared for. Once you are ready, then we can take the next step in the conversation – do we want to do it?" she said during a panel discussion at the Energy Transition Conference 2026 (ETCon26) here today. Siti Safinah was referring to the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Milestones Approach, which outlines 19 infrastructure issues a country must evaluate before deciding whether to launch a nuclear power programme.

The 19 infrastructure issues identified under the IAEA's Milestones Approach include national position, nuclear safety, legislative framework, safeguards, regulatory framework, radiation protection, electrical grid, human resource development, stakeholder involvement, and site and supporting facilities.

The list includes environmental protection, emergency planning, security and physical protection, procurement, radioactive waste management, industrial involvement, funding and financing, the nuclear fuel cycle and radioactive waste management.

According to earlier news reports, Malaysia is exploring the use of nuclear energy as part of its long-term energy mix to meet surging electricity demand and

achieve its 2050 net-zero carbon emission targets.

Siti Safinah said many countries have recognised nuclear energy as an important component of the energy transition, particularly in efforts to lower carbon emissions from the power sector.

"If we want to achieve clean energy transition, if we want to lower carbon emissions in the energy systems, we do need nuclear, and countries that can afford and are ready for nuclear are already ramping up the development of nuclear within their countries," she said.

She noted that China is significantly expanding its nuclear programme, while Europe is revisiting nuclear energy and Japan is considering restarting some reactors that were shut down following the Fukushima Daiichi incident.

Meanwhile, DayOne Data Centres chief executive officer, Jamie Khoo said data centre operators are open to all forms of clean energy, including nuclear power, as demand for computing power continues to grow.

"We welcome all forms of clean energy, whether solar, wind or nuclear, as they are important components of the energy infrastructure," she said.

Khoo said DayOne would be open to working with the government and industry players should take advantage of opportunities to explore nuclear energy development.

"If there are opportunities, initiatives and a need for commercial study, DayOne is committed to working together with the government to try to create new technology in nuclear power," she said.

She said nuclear energy is already part of the energy mix in some of the markets where the company operates, including Europe.

"So, it's not new to us, but it's definitely something we would like to explore further and see how it can be implemented in this part of the world," she added.

— Bernama