



12 AUG, 2025

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Borneo Post (Kuching), Malaysia



National

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JOHOR BAHRU: Malaysia has urged the nuclear-weapon states to sign and ratify the Protocol to the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty without delay, calling it 'a vital pillar of regional peace, mutual trust and long-term security'.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof hailed a strong and enforceable nuclear-weapon-free zone as being crucial to maintaining stability and safeguarding the future of the region.

"Malaysia reaffirms its commitment to the SEANWFZ Treaty. We urge nuclear-weapon states to sign and ratify the protocol without delay," he said when opening the 12th Annual Meeting of the Asean Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (AseanTOM) here yesterday.

On nuclear energy, Fadillah – also Minister of Energy Transition and Water Transformation – said the government was undertaking a structured assessment to examine the role of nuclear power as a potential option for clean, stable and competitive electricity within Malaysia's

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Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof

future energy mix.

The assessment, aligned with the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP), was aimed at diversifying energy sources, strengthening long-term energy security, reducing carbon emissions and cutting dependence on fossil fuels, he added.

The Nuclear Energy Programme Implementing Organisation (NEPIO), under MyPOWER Corporation, has been tasked with coordinating preparatory efforts in line with guidelines by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

In a related development, Fadillah announced that the Department of Atomic Energy Malaysia would launch the Gamma Spectrometry Water Monitoring System (GSWMS) under the 12MP – a technology designed to enhance the nation's capacity of detecting

and responding swiftly to any radiological threats in water sources.

He also emphasised that the deployment of nuclear energy and advanced technologies must be supported by strong regulatory frameworks, rigorous safety protocols and transparent international cooperation.

"Our cooperation under AseanTOM is not merely technical, it is deeply strategic.

"It reflects our shared responsibility to ensure that atomic energy serves sustainable development, strengthens regional stability and secures the well-being of our future generations," he added.

The two-day meeting gathers regulators from Asean member states, the IAEA and dialogue partners to discuss regional nuclear safety, security and safeguards. — Bernama



Fadillah (front, second left) seen at an exhibition booth after launching the 12th AseanTOM. He is flanked by Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Chang Lih Kang dan Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi (left). — Bernama photo