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Malaysia`s first utility-scale battery system launched

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Desiree David

KUCHING: Sarawak has taken a significant step in green energy production with the commissioning of Malaysia's first utility-scale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at the Sejingkat Power Plant here.

Premier Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg highlighted that while the Sejingkat Power Plant has operated as a coal-fired facility since 1998, Sarawak Energy is now exploring alternative power generation methods as part of the state's broader energy transition efforts.

"Today, I visited the BESS facility at Sejingkat, which will generate power and supply it through the state grid. This is the first project in Malaysia utilising batteries for power generation, capable of producing 60MW of electricity.

"Sarawak Energy has invested RM128 million in 22 containerised battery units capable of generating power," he told a press conference after a working visit to the BESS facility.

Commissioned in December last year, the 22-container BESS enhances overall power generation and grid optimisation by providing critical services such as emergency reserves, voltage and frequency regulation, and peak demand management.

Developed in response to the growing demand for a reliable electricity supply, this pioneering initiative marks a milestone in Malaysia's energy transition.

Abang Johari noted that if successful, the project could be replicated in other locations such as the Batang Ai Hydroelectric Dam to support power plants and boost energy availability in rural areas due to the mobility and rechargeability of the containerised system.

Abang Johari (facing camera, third right) and other dignitaries get an up-close look at the BESS facility during a tour of the plant. — Photo by Chimon Upon

"After a review, Sejingkat Power Plant aims to create a hybrid green energy system by combining biomass and battery storage, with the battery storage currently being tested to support electricity distribution to the Sarawak grid," he added.

He pointed out that the BESS aligns with Sarawak's ambition to achieve high-income status by 2030 under the Post Covid-19 Development Strategy 2030, which identifies renewable energy as a key driver of the state's sustainable economic growth.

SARAWAK HAPPENINGS

This transition demonstrates Sarawak Energy's dedication to environmental sustainability and lowering carbon emissions, he said.

Meanwhile, Sarawak Energy Group CEO Datuk Sharbini Suhaili in a statement emphasised that with rising energy demand, initiatives like BESS are crucial for maintaining a stable power supply while enhancing capacity to support industries, businesses, and communities across Sarawak.

Among those present during the Premier's visit were State Secretary Datuk Amar Mohamad Abu Bakar Marzuki, Utility and Telecommunication Minister Dato Sri Julaihi Narawi and his deputy Datuk Dr Abdul Rahman Junaidi, Deputy Minister for Energy and Environmental Sustainability Datuk Dr Hazland Abang Hipni, and Sarawak Energy chairman Datuk Ibrahim Baki.