



17 JUN, 2025

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Borneo Post (Kuching), Malaysia



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KUCHING: The 43rd Asean Senior Officials Meeting on Energy (SOME) and its Associated Meetings began here yesterday, aiming to align regional energy policies and review progress under the Asean Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation (APAEC).

Hosted by Malaysia through the Ministry of Energy Transition and Water Transformation (Petra), the three-day event also serves to prepare key decisions ahead of the Asean Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) scheduled for October.

All 10 Asean member states—Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam are taking part, along with Timor-Leste as an observer.

Nearly 250 delegates are expected to attend, including senior energy officials;

representatives from the Asean Secretariat; Asean Centre for Energy (ACE); dialogue partners such as China, Japan, Korea, Russia, and the United States; as well as international bodies like the International Renewable Energy Agency (Irena), International Energy Agency (IEA), Economic Research Institute for Asean and East Asia (ERIA), Asian Development Bank (ADB), and World Bank.

In his opening remarks, Petra secretary-general Datuk Mad Zaidi Mohd Karli said the theme 'Powering Asean: Bridging Boundaries, Building Prosperity' reflects Malaysia's focus on inclusivity and sustainability in driving the region's energy development.

"This theme is important to emphasise the need for energy and dynamism in driving the region's development to propel

He also led delegates in observing a moment of silence in memory of the late director Dr Irma Caliwagan Exconde of the Philippines, who was recognised for her contributions to Asean's energy cooperation, particularly in the renewal of the Asean Power Grid memorandum of understanding (APG MoU).

The meetings will focus on advancing the APG Enhanced MoU, finalising the draft APAEC policy document, and securing endorsement of the Asean Petroleum Security Agreement (APSA).

Asean forward.

"It also underscores the ultimate goal of Asean integration, which is to improve the lives of its citizens by promoting economic growth, creating jobs, and focuses on inclusivity and sustainability that will benefit all segments of society," he said.



Delegates are pictured during the 43rd Senior Officials Meeting on Energy and its associated meetings. — Bernama photo