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EV localisation policy should boost sector, not restrict competition

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BATU KAWAN: Malaysia's electric vehicle (EV) localisation policy should strengthen the domestic industry without restricting competition, consumer choice or investor confidence.

Penang Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said Malaysia wants more local companies to participate in the EV supply chain, alongside greater technology transfer and the creation of more high-value jobs.

"My position is clear. Localisation should strengthen the industry, not restrict competition. While Malaysia needs investment, technology and competition, consumers also need choices," he said at the Partnership on Renewable Energy Initiatives between McDonald's Malaysia and Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) at McDonald's Batu Kawan Drive-Thru here.

Chow said recent communication concerns over the latest completely built-up EV policy, and the risk of excessive concentration in the sub-RM100,000 EV market, should be taken seriously, adding that Malaysia is competing with other countries in the region for EV investment.

He expressed hope that the Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry will take note of the concerns and continue to improve the way such policies are communicated and delivered. He said clear communication and predictable implementation will generate confidence among investors and the business community.

On Penang's energy transition agenda, Chow said the state has set a target under the Penang Energy Framework to generate 10 per cent of its energy from renewable sources and reduce electricity energy intensity by 25 per cent by 2030.

He said Penang has also set a target of 500 EV chargers by 2030 against the current number of about 460, adding that charging infrastructure must expand in tandem with growing EV adoption.

Chow said the TNB Electron facility, a 200-kilowatt direct current fast charger with two charging points, expandable to four, at McDonald's Batu Kawan is its first in the food and beverage sector. It was energised in May this year.

"I hope this initiative will be expanded to more McDonald's outlets across Penang. Other locations are not confirmed yet, but I hope Batu Kawan can be a model for what can be done elsewhere," he said, noting that the energy transition is a government-industry effort.

Chow had earlier witnessed the signing of the Supply Agreement with Renewable Energy for the next phase of McDonald's solar rooftop programme, the presentation of the Green Electricity Tariff certificate, and the launch of the TNB Electron EV charging facility.

McDonald's Malaysia managing director and local operating partner Datuk Azmir Jaafar and TNB president and chief executive Officer Datuk Shamsul Ahmad were also present. – Bernama