

Solar energy storage bandar seri begawan

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN — Brunei will build three new solar power plants within the next five years as part of its transition from fossil fuels to clean energy, the energy minister said at the Legislative Council (LegCo) on Sunday.

Announcing the energy ministry’s proposed 2021/22 budget of \$199.34 million, YB Dato Seri Setia Dr Hj Mat Suny Hj Md Hussein said three new sites have been identified to develop solar farms — Tutong’s Bukit Panggal, Temburong’s Belingus and Kampung Sungai Akar in Brunei-Muara.

Brunei has set a target of generating 100 MW of solar energy by 2025 as part of the government's initiative to slash greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent over the next 10 years.

The minister said the next fiscal year will be critical in the expansion of Hengyi Industries’ petrochemical plant, which has been the major driver of Brunei’s economic growth last year.

Hengyi is the largest foreign direct investment project in Brunei, exporting 9.46 million metric tonnes of petrochemical products worth US\$4.08 billion since its oil refinery started operations in November 2019.

Hengyi’s Phase 2 project at Pulau Muara Besar will be significantly larger than the first phase, which saw the Chinese firm invest US\$3.45 billion for the construction of an oil refinery and aromatics plant.

YB Dato Dr Hj Mat Suny said another two new projects are being planned in the downstream sector — a sodium methyllate manufacturing project and a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottling plant.

Sodium methyllate is a chemical compound used in the production of pharmaceuticals and food ingredients, while an LPG bottling plant involves the storage of liquified petroleum gas into bottles and is regarded as the safest and cheapest way of transporting the product.

In the 2021/2022 fiscal year, the ministry will strengthen the production of the country’s main export product — liquefied natural gas (LNG) — to meet regional demand.

"The ministry will work closely with key operators including BSP, Total, Petronas and Shell Exploration and Production Brunei to resume projects that were disrupted due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Petroleum Authority of Brunei Darussalam, which was established last year, is responsible for regulating all projects in the upstream, midstream and downstream oil and gas sectors.



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