

Brunei solar energy storage

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.

The Kg Sungai Akar solar farm – located at the former Kg Sungai Akar landfill – is expected to be the largest thus far, generating 30 MW of solar energy.

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.

With the vast majority of the country's electricity generated by gas-powered plants, Brunei has one of the highest annual carbon footprint per person in the region.

"Exploration of cleaner alternative sources is important to support the country in addressing climate change to ensure environmental sustainability," he said.

The minister added that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for energy transition and the energy sector to be resilient after the sharp decline in oil prices.

The energy ministry is expected to increase its spending by 18 percent in the upcoming fiscal year, prioritising local content spending and employment of Bruneians.

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 methyrate manufacturing project and a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) bottling plant.



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