

Energy security, costs and renewables on agenda at SEPA forum in KK

Sunday, 12 Jul 2026 | 10:57 AM

KOTA KINABALU: A public forum to explore one of the most important issues facing the state today - power, economic growth and environmental sustainability - will be organised by the Sabah Environmental Protection Association (SEPA) on July 18.

Themed “Powering Sabah’s Future: Who Will Pay for Sabah’s Energy Transition?”, the forum is timely, as Sabah seeks to balance economic growth, energy security and environmental sustainability, SEPA president Alexander Yee said.

He said Sabah continues to rely heavily on natural gas and diesel for electricity generation, while transportation and many economic activities remain dependent on fossil fuels.

At the same time, rising energy demand, concerns over energy security and global efforts to reduce carbon emissions are accelerating the transition towards cleaner and more sustainable energy sources, he said.

Recognising these challenges, Sabah has set a target of achieving 35% renewable energy (RE) in its electricity generation mix by 2030.

The Energy Commission of Sabah (ECoS) is also expected to launch the Sabah Energy Efficiency Action Plan (SEEAP) and the Solar Rakyat Sabah Programme later this month to promote energy efficiency and encourage greater adoption of solar energy by households.

While renewable energy presents opportunities to strengthen energy security, reduce emissions and create new economic opportunities, the transition will require significant investments in infrastructure and technology, Yee said.

“This raises an important question: Who will ultimately pay for Sabah’s energy transition?” he asked.

He said the forum, set to be held at the Kinabalu Daya Hotel here for free from 9am to noon, will feature speakers from government, industry and academia.

The keynote address will be delivered by ECoS strategic planning director Terrence Kouju, who will share insights into Sabah’s current energy landscape, future energy needs and the challenges of ensuring a secure, reliable and sustainable energy supply.

Eng Weng Hong, a consulting engineer with more than 40 years of professional experience, will discuss the need for Sabah to accelerate its shift towards renewable energy and reduce its dependence on fossil fuels.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) engineering faculty distinguished fellow Dr Tom Ngui, meanwhile, will explore how energy efficiency and smarter infrastructure planning can help lower future energy demand and consumer costs.

Yee, who is also a WWF-Malaysia trustee and founder of the award-winning conservation organisations - Friends Of Sea Turtles Education & Research (FOSTER) and Responsible Elephant Conservation Trust (RESPECT) - will be the moderator of the discussion.

According to SEPA, the forum is intended not only for policymakers and industry professionals, but also for ordinary consumers whose daily lives are directly affected by energy policies.

“Energy transition is not simply a technical issue. It is also an economic and social issue that affects every household and business. Through this forum, we hope to encourage informed public discussion on how Sabah can build a cleaner, more secure and affordable energy future,” it said.

More details on this can be found at the SEPA Facebook page.