



WINDING UP SPEECH

**DATUK PATINGGI TAN SRI (DR) ABANG HAJI ABDUL
RAHMAN ZOHARI TUN DATUK ABANG HAJI OPENG,
THE PREMIER OF SARAWAK**

FOR

**THE FIRST MEETING OF THE SECOND SESSION OF
THE NINETEENTH SARAWAK STATE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

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PREAMBLE

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

Selamat Sejahtera dan Salam Sarawakku Sayang.

Tuan Speaker,

1. Terlebih dahulu saya mengucapkan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan kepada Tuan Yang Terutama Yang di-Pertua Negeri Sarawak di atas Ucapan Pembukaan Persidangan Mesyuarat Pertama Penggal Kedua Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak Yang Ke-19.
2. Saya juga mengucapkan terima kasih kepada Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat yang telah mengambil bahagian dalam perbahasan serta sokongan mereka terhadap Rang Undang-Undang yang telah dibentangkan iaitu:
 - (1) *Supplementary Supply (2022) Bill, 2023;*
 - (2) *Supplementary Supply (2023) Bill, 2023;* dan
 - (3) *Sarawak Craft Council Bill, 2023.*
3. Saya yakin dan percaya bahawa dengan kelulusan terhadap Rang Undang-Undang ini, ianya akan membolehkan Kerajaan Sarawak melaksanakan tanggungjawabnya dengan lebih cekap dan berkesan.

4. Dalam ucapan penggulungan saya pada petang ini, saya akan berkongsi beberapa pencapaian utama Sarawak. Saya juga akan memperincikan strategi Kerajaan untuk memacu pertumbuhan ekonomi bagi mencapai aspirasi ekonomi maju berpendapatan tinggi menjelang 2030.

Tuan Speaker,

SARAWAK ECONOMY

5. This year, 2023 marks the third year of the Post COVID-19 Development Strategy (PCDS) 2030 implementation. During this period, we have witnessed the recovery of our economy despite many challenges. Sarawak economy grew from **2.9%** in **2021** to an estimated **5.5% to 6.5%** in **2022**.
6. As a result, Sarawak revenue performance for financial year 2022 has surpassed its revenue projection by **17%** from **RM10.159 billion** to **RM11.910 billion**, the highest revenue achievement thus far. Compared to revenue collection in 2021 of **RM7.620 billion**, the increase was **RM4.290 billion** or **56.3%**.
7. The Sarawak Government is implementing various measures under PCDS 2030 to stimulate the economy, increase our productivity and to be competitive in the global market.

8. We are intensifying the implementation of infrastructure projects to ensure better connectivity, facilitate trade and investment as well as enhancing the domestic economy.
9. This is very critical for us to advance further on our new economy initiatives to create more businesses and high paying jobs to increase income of our people. More importantly, it will be inclusive and sustainable. In **2023**, our economy is projected to register between **5.0% to 6.0%** growth.

Tuan Speaker,

DIGITAL ECONOMY

10. The main driver of our new economy is data and innovation through digital economy. According to the Oxford Economics report, the average contribution of digital economy to the global economy will be **24.3%** in **2025**. This translates to a worldwide digital economy contribution of **USD23 trillion**, giving every working age person in the world an additional **USD500 per year**.
11. I am proud to inform this august House that the Sarawak Government has already embarked on digital economy initiatives through the implementation of the **Sarawak Digital Economy Strategy 2018-2022**.

12. Our digital economy initiatives have been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic due to lockdowns and social distancing measures. New opportunities have been unlocked with increase in e-commerce, expansion of the gig economy and cashless transactions.
13. Our own e-wallet, S Pay Global, from a humble beginning e-wallet size of **RM200**, has now increased to **RM6,000**. S Pay users increased from **42,000** to more than **685,000**. We have also made our presence globally through collaboration with Union Pay International.
14. We are making great strides in closing the digital divide between urban and rural areas in Sarawak through our Sarawak Rural Broadband Network (MySRBN). MySRBN is our first state-owned 4G ready and 5G Oriented Broadband Telecommunication Network that uses Fixed Wireless Broadband technology, which aims to provide home broadband services for **100,000** rural homes in the next few years.
15. Additionally, for far-reaching areas, **250** sites have been equipped with Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) under the Wi-Fi SALURAN project. This interim solution under the SALURAN project has benefited more than **86,000** users in remote areas.

16. Our success in implementing the digital economy initiatives has gained the confidence of private investors to invest in Sarawak. One of the significant achievements is the Batam Sarawak Internet Cable System (BaSICS). It is a gateway connecting Sarawak to the global internet hub of Singapore, interconnecting with Irix Tier IV Data Centre located in Santubong. This will spur the growth of more digital businesses in Sarawak.

SARAWAK DIGITAL ECONOMY BLUEPRINT 2030

17. Moving forward, we have formulated the Sarawak Digital Economy Blueprint 2030. The blueprint is the road map for Sarawak to transform the whole-of-economy and society from a conventional resource-based economy to an environmentally sustainable technology-driven economy.
18. The blueprint anchors on 5 strategic pillars, namely:
 - (1) Focusing on economic priorities to accelerate digitalisation of economic sectors and data monetisation as well as boosting economic competitiveness through digitalisation;
 - (2) Growing digital businesses to support and expand global competitive and vibrant technology sector, investment, trade, start-ups and spin-ins in Sarawak;

- (3) Transforming public sector and services to deliver efficient, secure and trusted services and improve ease of doing business;
- (4) Adoption of frontier technologies to enable economy wide transformation and economic growth; and
- (5) Building the foundation to accelerate digital readiness in infrastructure and connectivity, data governance and cyber security, digital talent and skills, research, innovation and entrepreneurship and inclusivity.

19. The blueprint will be implemented in 3 phases:

(1) **Phase 1 (2025): Strengthen Digital Readiness**

Enhancing digital readiness in digital infrastructure, connectivity, digital talent, technology adoption, 5G adoption, cloud computing, research and innovation, cyber security, data monetisation, data management amongst others to encourage investment, business development and accelerate Digital Economy in Sarawak. Conducive regulatory and policy framework and digital readiness will provide smooth transition to **Phase 2 and 3**.

(2) Phase 2 (2027): Accelerate Digital Transformation

This phase will accelerate the digital transformation of priority economic sectors, enhance data-driven digital government services where technology and data are effectively used to benefit the society and businesses, attract high-tech investments, digitalise Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and grow high-tech start-ups.

(3) Phase 3 (2030): Digitally Developed Sarawak

By 2030 Sarawak will be digitally developed State with high ease of doing business, where the government creates conducive and agile environment for business to invest and grow, high-speed connectivity for all Sarawakians, equitable access to opportunities for all Sarawakians to uplift social-economic status and cyber secure and ethical digital environment.

20. The blueprint targets Sarawak to tap a percentage of the global digital economy to flow into Sarawak through strategies to grow cross-border data flow by establishing data centres, digital services delivery, and digital foreign direct investments.

21. We will build the ecosystem to attract new industries focusing on international standards data centres, digital content creation and boosting digital innovation and entrepreneurship.
22. We welcome the private sector to venture in the evolving digital economy. Under the Digital Blueprint 2030, the private sector will play dominant role through frontier technologies such as big data, blockchain, Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence solutions and immersive technology. On a broader scale, this will bring major economical, societal, and environmental impact to Sarawak.
23. We will continue to build enabling digital infrastructure to widen the coverage and provide connectivity, especially to the rural communities for inclusive development.
24. In order to ensure Sarawak is cyber secure, we will establish a dedicated Cyber Security team to operationalise the Cyber Security Framework focusing on effective governance and management, legislation and policy, compliance and enforcement, research, innovation and technology industry, capacity and capability building and collaboration.

25. By 2030, there shall be no distinction between the digital economy and the economy. All segments of the economy namely mining, agriculture and forestry, manufacturing, construction, and services will be digitally driven using ICT and frontier digital technologies. Ultimately, these will enhance productivity, yield, efficiency and generate high-skilled jobs for our people.
26. All government services will be easily and safely accessed online, supported by data sharing and data driven decision making to deliver more targeted policies, services and programmes to businesses and communities. Regulations will be in place to ensure Sarawak has a safe, cyber-secure and vibrant environment to maximise digital value.
27. All these initiatives will contribute approximately **20%** to Sarawak's GDP amounting **RM56.4 billion** in **2030**, creating more than **45,000** new high-paying jobs with **80%** of MSMEs adopting digitalisation.

Tuan Speaker,

GREEN ECONOMY

28. Our new economy will leverage on our strength in sustainably managing our abundant natural resources. We will be guided by **Sarawak's Green Economy Policy**.
29. This policy aims to pursue balanced economic growth, with a responsible approach towards managing our natural resources, and integrating climate adaptation and mitigation plans in line with the sustainable development principles of the United Nations.
30. To reap both economic and environmental benefits, we are shifting our economic activities towards a more circular economic model. I wish to inform this august House that Sarawak has achieved significant breakthrough on this front.

Tuan Speaker,

MICROALGAE

31. I would like to inform this august House that currently there are two facilities that are cultivating algae with different technologies. The first facility, on solar platform, is a collaboration between Sarawak Energy, Sarawak Biodiversity Centre, Eneos Corporation and Chitose Group from Japan at Sejingkat.

32. The other facility is employing the use of tanks and sea water. This is a collaboration between SEDC Energy and Petronas in Demak Laut.
33. Sarawak has taken a progressive step to explore microalgae as a potential source of renewable energy. Sarawak Biodiversity Centre in collaboration with Sarawak Energy Berhad as well as Chitose Laboratory and ENEOS Corp from Japan has established the world's largest mass microalgae biomass production facility, Chitose Carbon Capture Central (C4), spanning about five hectares in Sejingkat, Kuching.
34. The C4 will tap into the exhausted gas containing carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the Sejingkat Coal Power Plant to grow algae in a carbon circular economy. This is the first of its kind in Malaysia to demonstrate the industrial-scale utilisation of flue gas to enhance algae production. This 5-hectare scale facility will act as "liquid trees" to capture CO₂ while functioning as natural purifier by releasing oxygen through photosynthesis.
35. I believe that microalgae or "lumut" is an industrial crop that can help to expand and grow our economy and serve as a model to achieve our aspirations while preserving our environment. This facility will also serve as part of net zero emissions efforts with an expected

700 tonnes of CO₂ can be absorbed by the algae biomass.

36. The facility will produce around 350 tonnes of algae biomass annually, which will be transformed into high-quality products such as food and feed, cosmetics, and pharmaceutical ingredients.
37. Microalgae also offers potential for innovative and sustainable product development in the food industry. We will continue to pursue research on microalgae on their nutritional and medical benefits.
38. Many algae species have been found to have tremendous health benefits, and spirulina is a good example of a superfood. Spirulina is packed with essential nutrients, including vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, which make it a popular supplement for health-conscious individuals.
39. But beyond spirulina, we are also looking into other algae species for their potential medical applications. For instance, some algae have been found to have antibacterial and antiviral properties, which can help in the fight against infectious diseases.
40. Additionally, algae may be used to reduce inflammation, detoxify the body, boost the immune system, and even aid in weight loss.

41. The commercialisation of algae has only just begun. We anticipate significant growth in this industry with the planning of the Chitose group to expand the farm to **100** hectares in the next three years and to achieve **2,000** hectares by **2030** in Sarawak. We expect to create up to **5,000** new job opportunities and decarbonisation about **200,000** tonnes of carbon annually.

Tuan Speaker,

NEW SUSTAINABLE SOURCE OF OIL

42. In this pressing climate change and energy transition, Sarawak has the capacity to provide a green fuel solution from a sustainable source. Microalgae offer great potential to produce **Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)**, which is crucial to the aviation industry to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.
43. I wish to inform this august House that I have just came back from Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA) exhibition using aircraft powered by SAF, from a joint venture between PETRONAS and SEDC Energy. It is the world's first SAF produced using algae. This clearly proves Sarawak is able to produce safe and reliable SAF for commercial use.
44. I believe microalgae is a renewable source that can offer us a sustainable solution that does not compete with food source. Here in Sarawak, there is enough

sunlight, warm tropical climate and abundance of seawater that provides the right condition to continuously farm the oil source sustainably.

45. We have plans to scale up the cultivation to **1,000** acres that can produce about **500,000** tonnes per annum of crude algae oil or renewable oil according to our scientists. That can be equated to about **10,000** barrels of oil per day with about **37%** extraction rate of crude algae oil from the algae biomass.
46. This may mean we do not have to look for oil anymore offshore or onshore and we can have our “farmers” grow oil more sustainably. The unit cost per barrel is below **USD50** and today if sold to a biorefinery, it might fetch around **USD110** per barrel because it’s green oil.
47. As such, this innovative technology will not only be a valuable addition to drive our economy, but also a significant contribution towards achieving our Green Economy agenda for 2030.

Tuan Speaker,

BIOGAS

48. I am happy to inform this august House that we are adopting circular economy approach for our sago industry to solve river pollution arising from the disposal of sago waste.

49. CRAUN had developed a proof-of-concept pilot plant to recover, treat and utilise sago processing wastes in Mukah. This project is to turn sago mill wastewater and wet sago fibres into value-added product such as biogas for electricity and heat generation as well as dried sago *hampas* for animal feed.
50. CRAUN is currently developing another proof-of-concept pilot project to develop the first bio-compressed natural gas plant from sago waste. This green cooking gas will be distributed via gas-piping network to **147** selected rural households and public facilities in Mukah.
51. This project will contribute towards Sarawak's energy transition initiatives for greener energy while improving basic rural utilities and reducing dependency on fossil-based cooking gas.

Tuan Speaker,

CARBON TRADING

52. Sarawak has made another significant milestone where we have opened the doors for the private sector to actively participate in the carbon trading initiative. It is a significant global effort to address climate change.

53. Carbon trading in Sarawak is now possible because of the Forest Ordinance, which was passed in this august House sitting in May 2022, and the Forests (Forest Carbon Activity) Rules 2022, which took effect on 1st January 2023.
54. SaraCarbon, a private company from Sarawak, has taken up the challenge to become the first company to receive a Carbon Study Permit. The Carbon Study Permit allows them to conduct studies in their area of interest for a Carbon Licence application.
55. Carbon trading is a win-win solution for Sarawak. It provides an opportunity for companies to generate revenue while also contributing to the conservation of the environment. With our extensive forest cover, Sarawak has great potential to become a significant player in the international carbon market.

Tuan Speaker,

CARBON CAPTURE AND STORAGE

56. Sarawak has a world-scale potential for CO₂ storage, estimated to be around **9 billion tonnes**. In the near term, unlocking the stranded sour gas resources is a key objective. PETROS is leading the Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) agenda to unlock the potential long-term value for the region.

57. The implementation of CCS in Sarawak is expected to ensure long term energy sustainability and security. CCS will attract foreign direct investment and promote the growth of blue and green hydrogen and its derivative industries in the region.
58. Sarawak through PETROS is developing a comprehensive CCS Roadmap outlining the strategies and actions necessary to realise the full potential of the CCS value chain in Sarawak.
59. According to the World Bank, there are currently 73 global carbon pricing instruments in operation, compared with 68 when the World Bank issued its 2022 report last May, covering around 23% of global greenhouse gas emissions. The figure raised in 2022 in carbon revenues was up from around US\$84 billion raised in 2021. In 2017, a report by the High-Level Commission on Carbon Prices indicated carbon prices need to be in the US\$50-100 per ton range by 2030 to keep a rise in global temperatures below 2 degrees Celsius, the upper end of the limit agreed upon in the 2015 Paris agreement.

Tuan Speaker,

BOUTIQUE AIRLINE

60. I have informed in the last sitting of this august House that Sarawak is going to establish our own airline to boost the tourism industry and businesses in Sarawak.

I am happy that many of our Ahli-Ahli Yang Berhormat supported the initiative.

61. I am pleased to inform this august House that our Prime Minister has agreed in principle to the proposal of setting up the airline company by the Sarawak Government.
62. The business model I am introducing will allow us to run the airline to cover the overhead costs to fly within the region. It is not profit-motivated, rather the establishment of the boutique airline is to stabilise the airfares for flights to and from Sarawak. We will pursue this matter with the Federal Government.

Tuan Speaker,

MALAYSIA AGREEMENT 1963 (MA63)

63. I am pleased that the Federal Government is taking serious efforts in resolving the long overdue MA63 issues. The Federal Government has established the MA63 Implementation Action Council (MTPMA63) chaired by the Prime Minister.
64. This Council is supported by two Technical Committees, namely the Technical Committee chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister Malaysia II and the Coordination Committee chaired by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in charge of Sabah and Sarawak Affairs and Special Functions.

65. The Inaugural MA63 Implementation Action Council Meeting was held on 20 January 2023 in Kuching. Amongst the decisions which had been agreed are:

- (1) Appointment of the Sarawak State Financial Secretary as the representative of the Sarawak Government in the Inland Revenue Board (IRB);
- (2) Sarawak Public Works Department and Drainage and Irrigation Department are recognised as Technical Departments and are authorised to implement Federal projects in Sarawak with a limit of up to **RM50 million**;
- (3) Review of Financial Provisions of Special Grants under Article 112D of the Federal Constitution to increase the amount of the Special Grants for Sarawak up to **RM300 million**; and
- (4) Upgrading of the Immigration, Customs, Quarantine and Security Complex (ICQS) at Sarawak-Kalimantan border.

66. I wish to inform this august House that the Prime Minister had given a preliminary approval for an additional allocation of **RM1.0 billion** to upgrade the infrastructure, improve security and increase the capability of the ICQS complex at the borders of Sarawak and Sabah. We are now working closely with the Federal Government to implement the projects.

Tuan Speaker,

OMBUDSMAN AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

67. GPS Government always emphasises the importance of corporate governance in every aspect of administration and development.
68. That is why Sarawak Government has established the Ombudsman and Integrity Unit under the Department of the Premier of Sarawak, the first in the country. Among its objectives is to ensure a check and balance in the administration in addition to fostering a culture of integrity among all parties including politicians, civil service and general public.
69. GPS Government will ensure the culture of integrity is always practiced at all levels of the administration. Each Government Departments and Agencies has been tasked to create an Integrity Unit and an Internal Audit Unit and make reports and improvements on their administration and governance.
70. Sarawak Government has also established a Special Cabinet Committee (CABCOM) on Annual Financial Statement Reports and Annual Budget Estimates for State Statutory Bodies and Local Authorities since January 2023 to ensure efficient, transparent and accountable governance.

Tuan Speaker,

60 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

71. This year marks a historic milestone in the history of Sarawak. We will celebrate the 60th anniversary of our independence, our Diamond Jubilee on 22nd July 2023 with the theme *Sarawak Maju Makmur* or Prosperous Progressive Sarawak.
72. We have come a long way since 1963 when we gained our independence. Over the past six decades, we have witnessed incredible progress and development in Sarawak. Our economic prosperity that we are enjoying today does not come easy.
73. Let us celebrate this occasion to acknowledge the hard work, relentlessness and perseverance of our past and current leaders who have united the people and focused on developing Sarawak to improve the quality of life of the rakyat.
74. We must remain committed to build a sustainable future for our state, one that balances economic growth with environmental stewardship and social inclusivity. We must ensure that our progress benefits all Sarawakians.

Tuan Speaker,

PENUTUP

75. Kita rakyat Sarawak perlulah mengekalkan perpaduan yang erat, bekerjasama dan berusaha gigih demi mencapai aspirasi menjadi ekonomi maju menjelang tahun 2030 agar kesejahteraan rakyat dan generasi akan datang terjamin.

*Enam puluh tahun Sarawak Merdeka
22 Julai 1963 tarikh keramat
Sejarah dijajah jangan dilupa
Jasa pemimpin sentiasa diingat*

*Sarawak bertuah indah permai
Di persada dunia namanya masyhur
Rakyat hidup aman dan damai
Sarawak terus Maju dan Makmur*

76. Saya juga ingin mengucapkan terima kasih kepada Tuan Speaker dan kakitangan Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak yang telah mengendalikan persidangan DUN dengan teratur dan cemerlang.
77. Akhir kata, saya mengambil kesempatan ini untuk mengucapkan Selamat Hari Gawai, Gayu Guru Gerai Nyamai Lantang Senang Nguan Menua. Saya juga ingin mengucapkan Selamat Hari Raya Aidiladha kepada semua yang meraikan.
78. Sekian, terima kasih.