S A R A W A K

PENYATA RASMI PERSIDANGAN DEWAN UNDANGAN NEGERI

Sarawak State Legislative Assembly Official Reports and Debates

MESYUARAT KEDUA BAGI PENGGAL KEDUA

Second Meeting of the Second Session

20 – 29 NOVEMBER 2023

DEWAN UNDANGAN NEGERI SARAWAK KESEMBILAN BELAS

Nineteenth Sarawak State Legislative Assembly

ISNIN

20 NOVEMBER 2023

(6 JAMADILAWAL 1445H)

KUCHING

BELUM DISUNTING

Peringatan untuk Ahli Dewan:
Pembetulan yang dicadangkan oleh Ahli Dewan hendaklah disampaikan secara bertulis kepada Setiausaha Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak tidak lewat daripada **14 hari selepas persidangan.**

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DEWAN UNDANGAN NEGERI SARAWAK KESEMBILAN BELAS

Penyata Rasmi

MESYUARAT KEDUA BAGI PENGGAL KEDUA

Isnin, 20 November 2023

Dewan bermesyuarat di Petra Jaya, Kuching pada pukul 9.05 pagi

HADIR

Bil.	Nama	Konstituensi
1.	Yang Berhormat Tan Sri Datuk Amar Haji Mohamad Asfia bin Awang Nasar P.S.M., D.A., P.N.B.S., D.S.A.P., D.I.M.P., P.B.K., P.C.E. (Emas) *Speaker Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak*	
2.	Yang Berhormat Dato Haji Idris bin Haji Buang P.S.B.S., D.I.M.P., A.M.N., P.B.S., A.B.S., P.C.D., P.J.P.N., P.T.E. *Timbalan Speaker Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak*	*N.16 Muara Tuang*
3.	Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg D.P., P.M.N., D.A., P.N.B.S., J.B.S., P.C.E. *Premier Sarawak* *Menteri Kewangan dan Ekonomi Baru* *Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar* *Menteri Tenaga dan Kelestarian Alam Sekitar*	*N.26 Gedong*
4.	Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Douglas Uggah Embas D.A., P.N.B.S., P.G.B.K., P.C.E. *Timbalan Premier Sarawak* *Menteri Kewangan dan Ekonomi Baru Kedua* *Menteri Infrastruktur dan Pembangunan Pelabuhan*	*N.37 Bukit Saban*
5.	Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan D.A., P.N.B.S., P.G.B.K., A.M.N. *Timbalan Premier Sarawak* *Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua* *Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan*	*N.82 Bukit Sari*
6.	Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Dr Sim Kui Hian D.A., P.N.B.S., P.J.N., P.B.E. *Timbalan Premier Sarawak* *Menteri Kesihatan Awam, Perumahan dan Kerajaan Tempatan*	*N.14 Batu Kawah*
7.	Yang Berhormat Dato Sri Hajah Fatimah Abdullah P.N.B.S., P.G.B.K., P.C.E. *Menteri Pembangunan Wanita, Kanak-Kanak dan Kesejahteraan Komuniti*	*N.56 Dalat*
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10.	Yang Berhormat Dato Sri Lee Kim Shin P.N.B.S., P.J.N., K.M.N., P.B.S., P.P.B., B.B.S., P.B.E. *Menteri Pengangkutan*	*N.75 Senadin*
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40.	Yang Berhormat Dato' Sri Huang Tiong Sii D.I.M.P., S.S.A.P.	*N.45 Repok*
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55.	Yang Berhormat Ir. Christopher Gira @ Gira anak Sambang P.B.K.	*N.59 Tamin*
56.	Yang Berhormat Encik Rolland Duat anak Jubin	*N.48 Meluan*
57.	Yang Berhormat Encik Abdul Yakub bin Haji Arbi B.B.S., A.B.S., K.M.N., J.B.K.	*N.58 Balingian*
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59.	Yang Berhormat Encik Baru Bian	*N.81 Ba'Kelalan*
60.	Yang Berhormat Encik Kennedy Chukpai Ugon J.B.S., P.P.N., A.B.S.	*N.66 Murum*
61.	Yang Berhormat Encik Allan Siden Gramong P.B.S., A.B.S.	*N.50 Machan*
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64.	Yang Berhormat Encik Adam Yii Siew Sang A.B.S.	*N.74 Pujut*
65.	Yang Berhormat Puan Dayang Noorazah bte Awang Sohor P.B.S.	*N.28 Lingga*
66.	Yang Berhormat Dr Simon Sinang @ Sinang anak Bada A.B.S., P.B.S., K.M.N.	*N.21 Tebedu*

67.	Yang Berhormat Encik Billy anak Sujang P.B.S., P.P.B.	*N.1 Opar*
68.	Yang Berhormat Encik Azizul Annuar bin Pehin Sri Haji Adenan P.B.S.	*N.3 Tanjong Datu*
69.	Yang Berhormat Encik Yap Yau Sin P.B.S., K.M.N.	*N.12 Kota Sentosa*
70.	Yang Berhormat Encik See Chee How	*N.11 Batu Lintang*
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TIDAK HADIR

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Bil.	Nama	Konstituensi
1.	Yang Berhormat Dato Henry Harry anak Jinep P.S.B.S., A.B.S. *Timbalan Menteri Pengangkutan (Sungai dan Laut)*	*N.2 Tasik Biru*
2.	Yang Berhormat Dato Dennis Ngau P.S.B.S., J.B.S., P.B.S., P.T.E., B.B.S.	*N.77 Telang Usan*
3.	Yang Berhormat Dato Sri Tiong King Sing P.J.N., P.N.B.S., D.P.M.K., D.P.M.K., S.S.S.A., D.S.S.A., J.P.	*N.52 Dudong*
4.	Yang Berhormat Encik Awla bin Dris P.B.S., A.B.S.	*N.25 Simunjan*

TURUT HADIR

1. Encik Pele Peter Tinggom
   Setiausaha Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak
2. Encik Abang Mohammad Adib bin Abang Sallehhadin
   Pemangku Timbalan Setiausaha Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak
3. Inspektor Ahmad Khairul Aiman bin Hassan
   Bentara Mesyuarat
4. Inspektor Nelson anak Ensit
   Bentara Mesyuarat
5. Encik Lydwilkyn Andar anak Umbau
   Bentara Mesyuarat
6. Encik Mohd Saiful bin Ahmad Zaidi
   Bentara Mesyuarat
7. Inspektor Dylan Tan Hock Ming
   Bentara Mesyuarat
8. Inspektor Nizle anak Junep
   Bentara Mesyuarat

PETUGAS PERSIDANGAN

PEGAWAI UNDANG-UNDANG

1.	Encik Muhd. Syafiq bin Sapri	*Jabatan Peguam Besar Negeri Sarawak*
2.	Cik Christie Sereni anak Philimon	*Jabatan Peguam Besar Negeri Sarawak*

PEMBACA PRUF

1.	Puan Dayang Norazan Kartini binti Dato Pengiran Haji Zain	*Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Negeri Sarawak*
2.	Puan Coretta Herliana Kura	*Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Negeri Sarawak*

JURUTRENGKAS

1.	Puan Sharlina binti Mushar	*Pejabat Setiausaha Kewangan Negeri*
2.	Puan Malin anak Arit	*Pejabat Setiausaha Kewangan Negeri*
3.	Puan Khadijah Dato Haji Khaider	*Jabatan Perbendaharaan Negeri Sarawak*
4.	Puan Olivia Batan	*Jabatan Audit Negara Negeri Sarawak*
5.	Puan Bernadette Willon	*Jabatan Kastam Diraja Malaysia*
6.	Puan Katerin Jemali @ Maria Jamali	*Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara*
7.	Puan Doris anak Francis Harris	*Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)*
8.	Puan Meri Sabas	*Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)*
9.	Puan Noorina binti Hamdan	*Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)*
10.	Puan Ratna Airnwati binti Haji Md. Junaidi	*Perbadanan Pembangunan Perumahan*
11.	Puan Sabtuyah binti Adeng	*Perbadanan Pembangunan Perumahan*
12.	Puan Nori Othman	*Perbadanan Pembangunan Perumahan*
13.	Puan Zuriawati binti Mohd Laili	*Pustaka Negeri Sarawak*
14.	Encik Azhwan bin Bujang	*Regional Corridor Development Authority*
15.	Encik Mohd Alfadjer bin Tuah	*Pejabat Residen Bahagian Kuching*
16.	Puan Dorina Asort	*Kementerian Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi Sarawak*
17.	Puan Florence Jalong	*Kementerian Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi Sarawak*
18.	Puan Leidiana binti Azahari	*Kementerian Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi Sarawak*
19.	Puan Noor Afifah binti Bahaudin	*Kementerian Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi Sarawak*
20.	Puan Dayang Duraiza binti Haji Awang Jangka	*Lembaga Sumber Asli & Alam Sekitar Sarawak*

21.	Puan Anieta Sylvester Pungga	*Perbadanan Pembangunan Ekonomi Sarawak*
22.	Puan Juliana Lugom	*Perbadanan Pembangunan Ekonomi Sarawak*
23.	Puan Rosemary Langub	*Perbadanan Kemajuan Perusahaan Kayu Sarawak*
24.	Puan Derna anak Johin	*Unit Pemantauan Pelaksanaan Sarawak, Jabatan Premier Sarawak*
25.	Puan Azah Mohamad Jally	*Kementerian Infrastruktur dan Pembangunan Pelabuhan Sarawak*
26.	Puan Rosline anak Dominic Maon	*Kementerian Industri Makanan, Komoditi dan Pembangunan Wilayah Sarawak*
27.	Puan Nur Izzatul Fatihah Abdullah	*Kementerian Belia, Sukan dan Pembangunan Usahawan Sarawak*
28.	Puan Emely anak Edmund Beatie	*Kementerian Pertahanan Malaysia Cawangan Sarawak SPRM*
29.	Puan Nurhaida binti Amin	*Jabatan Penyiaran Kawasan Sarawak, Jabatan Penyiaran Negeri Sarawak*
30.	Puan Dzuridah binti Haji Sariee	*Pejabat Timbalan Setiausaha Kerajaan Negeri (Perancangan Ekonomi dan Pembangunan), Jabatan Premier Sarawak*
31.	Puan Valarie Jane anak Aitman	*Pejabat Pembangunan Persekutuan Negeri Sarawak, Unit Penyelarasan Pelaksanaan, Jabatan Perdana Menteri*

RAKAMAN PROSIDING

1.	Puan Nordiana binti Rabaee	*Jabatan Penyiaran Sarawak*
2.	Encik Hussein bin Shuini	*Jabatan Penyiaran Sarawak*
3.	Encik Vong Choon Chan	*Jabatan Penyiaran Sarawak*
4.	Puan Siti Nazilafatullaini binti Sukri	*Jabatan Penyiaran Sarawak*
5.	Encik Fareez Azizi bin Zakeria	*Jabatan Penyiaran Sarawak*

JURUCETAK

1.	Encik Awang Faidzul bin Awang Aboone	*Percetakan Nasional Malaysia Berhad*
2.	Encik Vincent Vyner ak Tubom	*Percetakan Nasional Malaysia Berhad*

JURUTEKNIK IT

1.	Encik Abang Hasmadi bin Abang Wahab	*SAINS*
2.	Encik Alan Chai	*SAINS*
3.	Encik Azmuddin Yazid	*SAINS*
4.	Encik Brandon Lim Tuong Shiu	*SAINS*

MESSENGER

1.	Encik Mohamad Zahari bin Hamden	*Jabatan Agama Islam Sarawak*
2.	Encik Lawrence Encharang	*Jabatan Pertanian Sarawak*
3.	Encik Helmy bin Abdul Rahman	*Jabatan Pertanian Sarawak*
4.	Encik Shah Riwandy Sia bin Ridzuan	*Jabatan Pertanian Sarawak*
5.	Encik Mohammad Zaidi bin Rambli	*Jabatan Pertanian Sarawak*
6.	Encik Edry Saiful bin Abdul Hamid	*Jabatan Pertanian Sarawak*
7.	Encik Mohd Sahfizal Atoy bin Mohamad Faizal	*Jabatan Pertanian Sarawak*
8.	Encik Mohamed Nazeerudin bin Gulam Mohamed	*Kementerian Industri Makanan, Komoditi dan Pembangunan Wilayah Sarawak*

ANGGOTA STAF DEWAN UNDANGAN NEGERI SARAWAK

1. Cik Noria binti Suut
2. Puan Nur Azira binti Abdul Kadir
3. Puan Rabiah binti Abdul Kadir
4. Puan Aisha Parveen binti Badron
5. Encik Abdul Rahman bin Suaidi
6. Puan Siti Norhiza binti Mohammad Yusri
7. Puan Hanisah Abdullah
8. Cik Siti Halimah binti Mohamad Nawawi
9. Puan Hasfarini binti Hassim
10. Cik Nurhaffizah Abdullah
11. Cik Natasha Nadia binti Mohd. Saidi
12. Puan Angela Lisa anak Mathew Linol
13. Encik Felix Aaron anak Michael
14. Cik Calista Abbie anak Sapa @ Patrick Sapa
15. Puan Norziana binti Haji Ahmad
16. Encik Mohd Hasfia bin Abdullah
17. Puan Nur Eliana Abdullah
18. Puan Nazmah binti Darham
19. Puan Tracy Lyana anak Bana
20. Encik Mohd Zulkhairy bin Mohammad Hejemi
21. Puan Dayang Nazira binti Abang Martaza
22. Puan Jasmine Sinja anak Robinson
23. Puan Dayang Noorazilla binti Jasni
24. Cik Parcelia Renyelia anak Pamg
25. Cik Nur Zafirah binti Affendy Michael
26. Puan Deidre anak Wilson
27. Encik Muhammad Elliyas bin Matali
28. Cik Siti Nur Marsitah binti Roslan
29. Puan Nur Amira Lystiani binti Poniman
30. Encik Razali bin Awi
31. Puan Nora binti Atem
32. Encik Zahari bin Bolhi
33. Encik Lukas Jammany anak Kated
34. Encik Hazrin Syah bin Hamzah
35. Encik Salman bin Jaya
36. Encik Alwie bin Haji Ali
37. Encik Romzi bin Bujang
38. Encik Musa bin Julai
39. Cik Hawa binti Morsad
40. Puan Suraya binti Hamden
41. Puan Noraisah binti Ahmad
42. Cik Siti Zalilah binti Samsawi

PELAJAR PRAKTIKAL

1. Cik Siti Zubaidah binti Arip
2. Cik Amyna A’eisya binti Ranani

(Mesyuarat dimulakan pada pukul 9.05 pagi)

[Tuan Speaker mempengerusikan Mesyuarat]

DOA

UPACARA ANGKAT SUMPAH

Tuan Speaker: Bismillahirrahmaanirrahim. Assalamualaikum Warahmattullahi Wabarakatuh. Selamat pagi dan Salam Sejahtera. Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, sidang kita pagi ini dimulakan dengan ucapan upacara angkat sumpah bagi Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.67 Jepak, Setiausaha Dewan akan memanggil Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Dewan Undangan Negeri N.67 Jepak untuk ke hadapan bagi melafazkan sumpah atau ikrar, selepas melafazkan sumpah atau ikrar Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi N.67 Jepak dikehendaki menandatangani surat cara sumpah atau ikrar di meja yang disediakan. Terima kasih.

YB Encik Iskandar bin Turkee: Saya, Iskandar bin Turkee setelah dipilih menjadi Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri bagi Negeri Sarawak adalah dengan sesungguhnya berikrar bahawa saya akan menunaikan kewajipan-kewajipan saya sebagai demikian dengan jujur dan dengan segala daya upaya saya bahawa saya akan bersumpah taat setia yang sejati kepada Negeri Sarawak dan kepada Persekutuan Malaysia dan bahawa saya akan memelihara, melindungi dan mempertahankan Perlembagaan Negeri Sarawak dan Perlembagaan Persekutuan.

PEMASYHURAN DARIPADA TUAN SPEAKER

Tuan Speaker: Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, Alhamdulillah, selesailah sudah Upacara Angkat Sumpah bagi Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri, N.67 Jepak.

Dengan lafaz sumpah atau ikrar daripada Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri, N.67 Jepak, maka tertunailah kehendak sepertimana yang diperuntukkan Perkara 22 Perlembagaan Negeri Sarawak dan Peraturan 3(1) Peraturan-peraturan Mesyuarat Dewan Undangan Negeri.

Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat dan sidang yang dihormati sekalian, bagi pihak Dewan yang mulia ini, saya ingin mengucapkan setinggi-tinggi tahniah kepada Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Dewan Undangan Negeri N.67 Jepak, Yang Berhormat Encik Iskandar bin Turkee di atas kejayaan memenangi kerusi Dewan Undangan Negeri N.67 Jepak pada Pilihan Raya Kecil (PRK) pada 4 November 2023 yang lalu.

Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, bersyukur kita ke hadrat Ilahi dengan limpah kurniaanNya, maka kita dapat berkumpul sekali lagi di Mesyuarat Kedua bagi Penggal Kedua Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak (DUNS) Ke-19 atau lebih dikenali sebagai Persidangan Belanjawan.

Saya mengucapkan selamat datang dan terima kasih di atas kehadiran Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat di persidangan ini. Persidangan kita akan berlangsung selama lapan hari mulai hari ini, 20 hinggga 29 November 2023 kecuali hari Sabtu, 25 November dan hari Ahad, 26 November 2023. Semoga kita dapat bersidang dalam suasana yang muhibah dan penuh tatatertib.

Dengan kesempatan ini, Dewan yang mulia ini, mengucapkan setinggi-tinggi tahniah kepada Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat yang telah dianugerahkan Darjah Kebesaran Bintang dan Pingat Negeri Sarawak bersempena dengan sambutan Perayaan Hari Jadi Ke-87, Tuan Yang Terutama Yang di-Pertua Negeri Sarawak pada 14 Oktober 2023 yang lalu. Sekalung tahniah ditujukan khas kepada Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat seperti berikut:

(a) YB Datuk Amar Dr Sim Kui Hian, Timbalan Premier Sarawak; Menteri Kesihatan Awam, Perumahan dan Kerajaan Tempatan; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.14 Batu Kawah yang telah dianugerahkan Darjah Utama Yang Amat Mulia Bintang Kenyalang Sarawak, Datuk Amar Bintang Kenyalang (D.A.) yang membawa gelaran *"Datuk Amar"*;

(b) YB Dato Sri John Sikie anak Tayai, Menteri di Jabatan Premier dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.60 Kakus; YB Dato Sri Haji Julaihi bin Haji Narawi, Menteri Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.27 Sebuyau; dan YB Dato Sri Roland Sagah Wee Inn, Menteri Pendidikan, Inovasi dan Pembangunan Bakat dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.20 Tarat. Ketiga-tiga Ahli Yang Berhormat yang telah dianugerahkan Darjah Yang Amat Mulia Bintang Sarawak, Panglima Negara Bintang Sarawak (P.N.B.S.) yang membawa gelaran *"Dato Sri".*

(c) Seterusnya, YB Datuk Ir. Aidel bin Lariwoo, Timbalan Menteri Infrastruktur dan Pembangunan Pelabuhan (Pembangunan Infrastruktur) dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.24 Sadong Jaya; YB Datuk Dr Ripin bin Lamat, Timbalan Menteri Belia, Sukan dan Pembangunan Usahawan (Pembangunan Usahawan) dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.72 Lambir; YB Datuk Dr Haji Hazland bin Abang Hipni, Timbalan Menteri Tenaga dan Kelestarian Alam Sekitar dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.5 Demak Laut; YB Datuk Maclaine Ben @ Martin Ben, Timbalan Menteri Industri Makanan, Komoditi & Pembangunan Wilayah (Komoditi & Pembangunan Wilayah) dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.22 Kedup; YB Datuk Ricky @ Mohammad Razi bin Sitam, Timbalan Menteri Pembangunan Wanita, Kanak-Kanak dan Kesejahteraan Komuniti (Kesejahteraan Komuniti) dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.35 Saribas; YB Datuk Jefferson Jamit anak Unyat, Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang dan Adat Bumiputera) dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.63 Bukit Goram; YB Datuk Michael Tiang Ming Tee, Timbalan Menteri Kesihatan Awam, Perumahan dan Kerajaan Tempatan (Kesihatan Awam dan Perumahan) dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.54 Pelawan. Ketujuh-tujuh Ahli Yang Berhormat yang telah dianugerahkan Darjah Bintang yang Amat Mulia Bintang Kenyalang Sarawak, Panglima Gemilang Bintang Kenyalang (P.G.B.K.) yang membawa gelaran *"Datuk".*

(d) Seterusnya, YB Dato Paulus Palu Gumbang, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.80 Batu Danau; YB Dato Dennis Ngau, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.77 Telang Usan; YB Dato Ir. Lo Khere Chiang, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.13 Batu Kitang. Ketiga-tiga Ahli Yang Berhormat telah dianugerahkan Darjah Utama Yang Amat Mulia Bintang Sarawak, Panglima Setia Bintang Sarawak (P.S.B.S.) yang membawa membawa gelaran *"Dato".*

(e) Seterusnya, YB Encik Kennedy Chukpai Ugon, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.66 Murum yang telah dianugerahkan pingat Johan Bintang Sarawak (J.B.S.). Seterusnya, YB Encik Fazzrudin bin Haji Abdul Rahman, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.6 Tupong; YB Encik Royston bin Valentine, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.57 Tellian. Kedua-dua Ahli Yang Berhormat telah dianugerahkan Pingat Johan Bintang Kenyalang (J.B.K.).

(f) Seterusnya, YB Encik Miro anak Simuh, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.18 Serembu; YB Encik Awla bin Dris, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.25 Simunjan; YB Encik Allan Siden Gramong, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.50 Machan; YB Puan Dayang Noorazah bt Awang Sohor, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.28 Lingga; YB Encik Billy anak Sujang, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.1 Opar; YB Encik Azizul Annuar bin Pehin Sri Haji Adenan, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.3 Tanjong Datu; YB Encik Yap Yau Sin, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.12 Kota Sentosa; YB Encik Anyi anak Jana, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.49 Ngemah; YB Encik Chieng Jin Ek, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.51 Bukit Assek; YB Encik Lidam anak Assan, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.62 Katibas; YB Encik Nicholas Kudi anak Jantai, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.64 Baleh; dan YB Encik Johnny Pang Leong Ming, Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.68 Tanjong Batu. Semua 12 Ahli Yang Berhormat ini telah dianugerahkan Pingat Pegawai Bintang Sarawak (P.B.S.). Syabas.Tahniah.

Tuan Speaker: Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, I have granted leave of absence under Standing Order 81 to Yang Berhormat Dato Henry Harry anak Jinep, Timbalan Menteri Pengangkutan (Sungai dan Laut) and Honourable Member for N.2 Tasik Biru; Yang Berhormat Dato Dennis Ngau, Honourable Member for N.77 Telang Usan for today's sitting until 24th November 2023. Yang Berhormat Dato Sri Tiong King Sing, Honourable Member for N.52 Dudong for today's sitting until 22nd November 2023 and Yang Berhormat Encik Awla Bin Deris, Honourable Member for N.25 Simunjan for today's sitting.

Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, bagi pihak Dewan yang mulia ini, saya ingin melafazkan takziah kepada keluarga mendiang Dato Sri Ambrose Belikau anak Enturan, mantan Ahli Dewan Undangan bagi Katibas yang meninggal dunia pada 9 September 2023; keluarga allahyarham Datuk Haji Talib bin Zulpilip, Ahli Dewan Negeri bagi Jepak yang telah meninggal dunia pada 15 September 2023 dan keluarga mendiang Datuk Lihan Jok, mantan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri bagi Telang Usan yang telah meninggal dunia pada 16 November 2023. Bagi menghormati allahyarham dan kedua-dua mendiang, marilah kita sama-sama berdiri bertafakur selama seminit dan membaca al-Fatihah untuk allahyarham Datuk Haji Talib Zulpilip.

(Bertafakur selama seminit)

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN–
BACAAN KALI YANG PERTAMA

SUPPLY (2024) BILL, 2023

Premier Sarawak; Menteri Kewangan dan Ekonomi Baru; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar; Menteri Tenaga dan Kelestarian Alam Sekitar; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.26 Gedong (YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg: Tuan Speaker, I beg to introduce a Bill intituled *"An Ordinance to apply a sum out of the Consolidated Fund for the service of the year 2024"* be read a first time.

Bill is read a first time

Premier Sarawak; Menteri Kewangan dan Ekonomi Baru; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar; Menteri Tenaga dan Kelestarian Alam Sekitar; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.26 Gedong (YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg: Tuan Speaker, I wish to give notice that this Bill would be read a second time today.

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN –
BACAAN KALI YANG PERTAMA

SARAWAK OMBUDSMAN BILL, 2023

Timbalan Premier; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua; Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari (YB Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan): Tuan Speaker, I beg to introduce the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 be read a first time.

Bill is read a first time

Timbalan Premier; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua; Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari (YB Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan): Tuan Speaker, I wish to give notice that this Bill would be read for a second time today, 20th November 2023.

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN –
BACAAN KALI YANG PERTAMA

ENVIRONMENT (REDUCTION OF GREENHOUSE GASES EMISSION) BILL, 2023

Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan); dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.7 Samariang (YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah binti Sayeed Aman Ghazali): Tuan Speaker, I beg to introduce the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 be read a first time.

Bill is read a first time

Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan); dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.7 Samariang (YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah binti Sayeed Aman Ghazali): I wish to give notice that this Bill to be read for the second time today. Thank you.

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN –
BACAAN KALI YANG PERTAMA

DISTRIBUTION OF GAS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

Menteri Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.27 Sebuyau (YB Dato Sri Haji Julaihi bin Haji Narawi): I beg to introduce the Distribution of Gas (Amendment) Bill, 2023 be read a first time.

Bill is read a first time

Menteri Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.27 Sebuyau (YB Dato Sri Haji Julaihi bin Haji Narawi): I wish to give notice that this Bill would be read the second time on 21st November 2023.

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN –
BACAAN KALI YANG PERTAMA

ELECTRICITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

Menteri Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.27 Sebuyau (YB Dato Sri Haji Julaihi bin Haji Narawi): I beg to introduce the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2023 be read a first time.

Bill is read a first time

Menteri Utiliti dan Telekomunikasi; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.27 Sebuyau (YB Dato Sri Haji Julaihi bin Haji Narawi): I wish to give notice that this Bill would be read a second time on 21st November 2023.

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN –
BACAAN KALI YANG KEDUA

SUPPLY (2024) BILL, 2023

Premier Sarawak; Menteri Kewangan dan Ekonomi Baru; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar; Menteri Tenaga dan Kelestarian Alam Sekitar; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.26 Gedong (YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg): Tuan Speaker, saya mohon mencadangkan supaya

Rang Undang-Undang bertajuk *"Suatu Ordinan bagi menggunakan sejumlah wang daripada Kumpulan Wang Disatukan untuk perkhidmatan bagi tahun 2024 dan bagi memperuntukkan wang itu untuk perkhidmatan tahun itu"* dibacakan bagi kali kedua.

Tuan Speaker, alhamdulillah saya ingin merafakkan kesyukuran setinggi-tingginya ke hadrat Allah S.W.T kerana dengan izinNya saya berpeluang untuk membentangkan Bajet Negeri Sarawak Tahun 2024 dalam Dewan yang mulia ini.

Tuan Speaker, before I delve into the 2024 State Budget, I would like to update this august House with an overview of the economic performance and challenges in 2023, and the outlook for 2024 as the backdrop for the 2024 State Budget proposal.

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE 2023 AND PROSPECT FOR 2024

Global Economy

The global economy is undergoing a gradual and uneven recovery, with economic activities generally still falling short of its pre-pandemic path, especially in emerging markets and developing economies. The prolonged effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and now the conflict in the Middle East, as well as the persistent issues related to the cost of living, continue to weigh on global economic recovery.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its October 2023 report, forecasted global growth to slow from 3.5% in 2022 to 3.0% this year due to subdued manufacturing activities. While the United States economy is anticipated to remain strong at 2.1%, with its resilience in consumption and investment, economic activity in Euro Area is subdued. Growth momentum has been weak, anticipated to slow down from 3.3% in 2022 to 0.7% in 2023 as consumer demand suffers from high inflation.

Growth in emerging markets and developing economies, especially low-income countries, experienced weaker recoveries, exacerbated by higher interest rates, depreciated currencies, and tighter financing conditions. On the other hand, China economy continues to recovery path, despite slower than anticipated growth due to moderation in export demand and faltering real estate investment. Overall, China's economic growth is forecasted at 5.0% in 2023.

World trade growth is expected to decline from 5.1% in 2022 to 0.9% in 2023, reflecting the weaker path of global demand and the shift towards domestic services. The fall in energy prices and to a lesser extent, food prices are expected to support the declining global inflation, which is expected at 6.9% in 2023 compared with 8.7% in 2022. The trend is expected to continue into 2024, registering a global inflation of 5.8%.

In 2024, IMF expects the global economy to slow further to 2.9% owing to the impact of higher interest rates, mounting geopolitical uncertainties and the fallout from the Middle East conflict, particularly oil prices.

Malaysia Economic Performance 2023 and Prospect for 2024

Tuan Speaker, amid global economic uncertainties, Malaysia economy is resilient and continues expanding. In the first half of 2023, Malaysia economy grew by 4.2% supported by strong domestic demand, particularly private expenditures.

Tourism flourishes with foreign visitors reaching nearly 13 million, tripling the numbers in 2022, rejuvenating growth of the services sector. At the same time, the nation continues to attract foreign investors, securing RM132.6 billion in approved investments for the first half of 2023.

The labour market remained strong, with an unemployment rate of 3.5% in the first half of 2023, indicating the trend of the labour market is returning to the pre-pandemic level. Inflation declined from 3.0% to 2.8% in the first eight months of 2023 compared with the corresponding period in 2022.

In 2024, Malaysia economy is forecasted to expand between 4.0% and 5.0%, driven by growth across all sectors and improved global trade prospects. The upcoming implementation of the MADANI economic reforms is expected to support the growth further for 2024.

Sarawak Economic Performance 2023 and Prospects for 2024

Tuan Speaker, the Sarawak economy continues to expand despite the challenging global environment. We anticipate that Sarawak economy will grow between 4.0% and 5.0% in 2023, supported by domestic demand.

The services sector is the main driver of growth, with improvement in wholesale and retail trade, restaurants, accommodation, and transportation and storage industries. Sarawak's resilient economy and our initiatives to bring in international events in Sarawak have also encouraged more visitor arrivals, doubling from 2.45 million from January to September last year to 5.12 million in 2023. Supported by visitors spending and higher consumer spending, we foresee the services sector will remain strong, with a projected growth of 9.0% in 2023.

Growth in the manufacturing sector is expected to moderate to 3.3% in 2023. Production of LNG declined in the first half of 2023 following feed gas supply interruptions, unplanned shutdowns, and sluggish external demand. The situation is expected to improve in the second half of 2023 with feed gas supply coming from Pegaga field. Manufacture of wood products also experienced a slowdown in the first half of 2023 due to weak international market demand.

The mining sector is expected to contract by 0.1% in 2023. Production of crude oil slowed in the second quarter of 2023. At the same time, production of natural gas also declined due to unplanned plant shutdowns.

Meanwhile, the oil palm subsector has performed favourably in the first nine months of 2023, driving growth of the agriculture sector. Production of crude palm oil and palm kernel oil increased by 5.3% and 4.3%, respectively, compared to the same period in 2022. CPO price is projected to trade lower compared to 2022 within the range of RM3,500 to RM4,000 per tonne. Overall, the agriculture sector is expected to expand by 3.0% in 2023.

The construction sector is expected to sustain its positive momentum and grow by 5.7% in 2023. In the first half of 2023, the construction sector has shown a significant increase in the implementation of non-residential projects. Further supporting the growth of this sector is the continuous implementation of strategic infrastructure and utilities projects approved under the 12th Malaysia Plan.

Demand Side

Tuan Speaker, on the demand front, growth is expected to be sustained by domestic demand, particularly from private sector expenditure. In 2023, private consumption is expected to grow by 5.3% supported by improvement in the labour market. The continuation of the monthly electricity bill discount initiative until end of the year under the Sarawakku Sayang Special Aid is expected to boost consumer spending.

Private investment is projected to register a growth of 4.2% in 2023. Indicators showed that from January to September 2023, a total of RM3.5 billion has been approved under the manufacturing sector. This includes investment to expand existing production of elecfoil, and electrical and electronic products. The realisation of the approved investments will have a

tremendous spillover impact on the economy. Investment in capital goods has expanded during the January to August period.

To stimulate the growth of the economy, the Government is also continuously investing in the development of digital and physical infrastructures. Amongst others, these investments include the construction of telco towers, implementation of *Projek Rakyat*, Digitalization of the Sarawak Water Supply System, Coastal Road Network, Second Trunk Road, Sarawak Water Grid and Rural Electrification Scheme Project. For 2023, we expected public expenditure to expand by 3.1%. With an allocation of RM5.8 billion to Sarawak for development purposes from the Federal Government as announced by Yang Amat Berhormat Prime Minister in his recent 2024 Budget Speech, this will further drive-up public investment and spur Sarawak economy in 2024.

Meanwhile, public consumption is expected to increase by 9.0% in 2023, supported by continued spending on emoluments and other operating expenditures, including the celebration of Sarawak's 60th Year of Independence.

As for external demand, there is an observed decline in growth for both exports and imports. For the first eight months of 2023, the total external trade declined by 11.4% from RM141.7 billion in 2022 to RM125.5 billion in 2023. Exports contracted by 15.7%, whilst imports contracted by 0.9%. By and large, the contracted export growth was due to lower demand for LNG and crude petroleum plus moderation in commodity prices. In addition, the value of exports for crude palm oil also contracted by 30.5%. The Brent crude oil price is expected to average at USD85 per barrel in 2023 compared with USD100.9 per barrel in 2022.

As an open economy, Sarawak is not spared from external factors, leading to a moderation in GDP for 2023. However, maintaining a resilient domestic economy helps to cushion the impact experienced by slower external demand. With an anticipation that global trade will improve in 2024, coupled with and improvement in inflation, Sarawak economy is projected to grow between 5.0% and 6.0% in 2024.

Inflation

Tuan Speaker, prolonged geopolitical uncertainties and global inflationary pressures have disrupted the flow of basic resources and supply chains globally. From January to August, Sarawak inflation rose from 2.6% in 2022 to 3.5% in 2023. This is mainly due to increased inflation for food and non-alcoholic beverages. However, there is also a sign that inflation is softening. Overall, inflation in Sarawak is expected at 3.3% to 3.5% in 2023.

Labour Market

Sarawak is expected to enjoy a stabilised labour market, with more jobs to be created and unemployment to remain between 3.0% and 3.5% in 2023. In the first half of 2023, Sarawak continues to experience full employment, with unemployment registered at 3.5%. From January to July 2023, Sarawak recorded a total of about 119,000 registered vacancies. Out of this, 17.5% is for a highly skilled workforce.

SARAWAK HIGH INCOME STATUS

Tuan Speaker, recently, the World Bank has qualified Sarawak as a high-income State along with Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan and Pulau Pinang. This means our Gross National Income (GNI) per capita has exceeded the World Bank's high-income threshold classification of USD13,845. In fact, based on the World Atlas method of calculation, Sarawak's GNI per capita reached USD18,360 in 2022**.** We welcome this timely recognition as it will enhance Sarawak's reputation globally and enable us to attract more quality investments, partnerships, collaborations and create more high-paying jobs for our people, especially in the digital

and green economy. This will also attract more talent, especially among the Sarawak diaspora, for them to help in augmenting the Sarawak development agenda.

As outlined in Sarawak Post COVID-19 Development Strategy 2030, we are committed to improving the monthly household income of Sarawakians from RM4,544 to RM15,000 by 2030. This is more meaningful than the GNI per capita, which is broadly an indicator of a State's overall economic capacity.

This is the very reason why my Administration is working diligently to:

(a) Accelerate infrastructure development throughout the State to facilitate inclusive socio-economic development, and ultimately improve our people's overall quality of life. Sarawakians will also be able to enjoy better access to education, healthcare, housing, and other essential services;

(b) Invest in human capital and entrepreneurship development to ensure our people are equipped with the right skills to improve employability, and meet the needs of the growing new economy;

(c) Invest in research and development, innovation hubs and technologies, and cutting-edge solutions to enhance Sarawak's competitiveness and resilience in the global market;

(d) Diversify our economy to reduce dependency on specific industries, thus generating more jobs and business opportunities; and

(e) Implement socio-economic programmes for inclusive and equitable development.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE STATE IN 2023

Tuan Speaker, before I present the proposed 2024 State Budget, I would like to update this august House on the State's financial performance for 2023.

REVENUE, 2023

For information of this august House, as of October 2023, our revenue collection stands at RM11,630 million or RM11.630 billion which has surpassed our original revenue estimate of RM11,035 million that is RM11.035 billion that is end of October. We anticipate that our revenue collection will be better than that of 2022. Based on our revenue performance thus far, our revenue collection for this year is projected to be RM12,718 million or RM12.718 billion an increase by RM808 million or 7% as compared to 2022 revenue collection of RM11,910 million. This will be Sarawak's record-breaking and highest ever revenue collection in its history.

The actual revenue collection of RM11,630 million is mainly from the following major sources as end of October:

(1) State sales tax (SST) of RM4,231 million comprises SST from:

   (a) Petroleum products of RM3,424 million;
   (b) Crude palm oil and palm kernel oil of RM630 million;
   (c) Aluminium of RM103 million;
   (d) Lottery of RM62 million;
   (e) Timber products of RM8 million; and
   (f) Coal of RM4 million.

(2) Cash compensation in lieu of oil and gas rights of RM2,862 million;
(3) Dividend of RM2,096 million;
(4) Interest and return from investment of RM748 million;

(5) Raw water royalty of RM496 million;
(6) Land premium of RM213 million;
(7) Forestry of RM263 million;
(8) Cash compensation in lieu of imports and excise duties on petroleum products of RM120 million;
(9) Federal grants and reimbursement of RM270 million; and
(10) Other sources such as mining royalties, water sales and land rents of RM331 million.

EXPENDITURES, 2023

The 2023 Ordinary Expenditure has been revised upwards from RM10,797 million or RM10.797 billion to RM11,165 million or RM11.165 billion an increase of RM668 million or 3.4% as approved in the last Dewan Undangan Negeri Sitting. As of October 2023, RM8,358 million or RM8.358 billion or 75% of the Ordinary Expenditure has been expended, of which RM3,258 million was expended for operating purposes, while RM5,100 million was appropriated to the Statutory Funds.

As for Development Expenditure, RM5,662 million out of RM8,006 million or 71% has been expended for the same period. As the development momentum continues to pick up and project implementation intensifies, the expenditure is expected to increase towards the end of the year.

STATE BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR 2024

I would like now to table the 2024 State Budget proposal with the theme Development for All: Together, Building A Prosperous, Sustainable and United Sarawak. This theme is more than just a guiding principle, it is our unwavering commitment to the people of Sarawak, under this Government. This Budget is meticulously crafted to ensure that development touches every corner of our State and bridges gaps between urban and rural areas to propel Sarawak towards a future where prosperity is not just a dream for the few but a reality for all.

This Budget strikes a balance between responding to immediate challenges that we are now facing, creating more opportunities for Sarawakians, laying a strong foundation for a more resilient and secure economy, while at the same time, ensuring a long-term fiscal sustainability. The Budget will deliver cost of living relief in some areas to reduce financial burden of low and middle income groups, make targeted investments and continue to implement vital programmes and projects for the benefits of the *rakyat*.

The 2024 State Budget will continue to be an expansionary Budget to boost government spending and will stimulate the State's economic growth. This Budget proposed to increase the operating and development expenditure from RM11,503 million in 2023 that is RM11.503 billion in 2023 to RM13,601 million in 2024, an increase of RM2,098 million or 18%.

In a nutshell, the 2024 Budget is framed across 12 Strategic Thrusts as follows:

First : Accelerating Economic Growth

Second : Stimulating Regional and Rural Development

Third : Promoting Investments, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Fourth : Transforming Sarawak into a Competitive and Resilient Economy

Fifth : Strengthening Human Capital and Talent Development

Sixth : Intensifying Digital Transformation

Seventh : Promoting Environmental Sustainability

Eighth : Strengthening Social Welfare and Safety Net

Ninth : Promoting Sports and Youth Empowerment

Tenth : Developing an Innovation-based and Knowledge-oriented Economy

Eleventh : Combating Poverty and Enhance People's Wellbeing

Twelfth : Enhancing Government Capacity and Service Delivery

REVENUE ESTIMATES, 2024

The Government is projected to collect a revenue of RM12,749 million that is RM12.749 billion in 2024. This is the highest revenue ever projected, reflecting our commitment to strengthening the State's fiscal position.

As crude palm oil, petroleum, and gas commodities are the main contributors to the State revenue of which their prices are dictated by global market, we chose to be prudent and take a conservative approach in preparing the 2024 revenue estimates.

The State's revenue estimates is derived from the following major sources:

(1) Tax Revenue totalling RM5,704 million or RM5.704 billion or 45% of the total expected revenue in 2024, comprising the following:

(a) RM4,572 million or RM4.572 billion from State Sales Tax, of which RM3,534 million or RM3.534 billion from crude oil, liquefied natural gas and other petroleum products. RM850 million from crude palm oil and crude palm kernel oil, RM80 million from aluminium products, RM70 million from lottery, RM33 million from timber products, while the remaining RM5 million from coal;
(b) RM600 million from raw water royalty;
(c) RM290 million from forest royalty, timber premium and tariff; and
(d) RM242 million from mining royalties, land rents and others.

(2) Non–Tax Revenue is estimated at RM6,390 million or RM6.390 billion or 50%, mainly derived from the following sources:

(a) RM2,862 million or RM2.862 billion from cash compensation in lieu of oil and gas rights;
(b) RM2,160 million or RM2.160 billion from dividend income;
(c) RM698 million from interest income;
(d) RM400 million from land premium;
(e) RM120 million from cash compensation in lieu of import and excise duties on petroleum products; and
(f) RM150 million from others, including licences, service fees, permits and rentals.

(3) Non – Revenue Receipt is expected to be RM28 million mainly from unclaimed deposits, overpayment recovered, and disposal of vehicles; and

(4) Federal Grants and Reimbursements is expected to be at RM627 million. Revenue contribution for this source has been increased due to the decision by the Federal Government to increase the interim Special Grant rate for Sarawak to RM300 million from RM16 million previously.

ORDINARY EXPENDITURE, 2024

The 2024 State Budget proposes a total Ordinary Expenditure of RM12,363 million, RM12.363 billion, of which RM4,563 million or RM4.563 billion is for Operating Expenditure, while RM7,800 million or RM7.8 billion is for appropriation to the Development Fund Account to finance various development programmes and projects.

The Operating Expenditure of RM4,563 million is allocated to finance the following expenses:

(a) RM1,067 million or RM1.067 billion or 24% for personnel emoluments;
(b) RM1,761 million or RM1.761 billion or 39% for supplies and services;
(c) RM1,524 million or RM1.524 billion or 33% for grants and fixed payments, which includes operating grants to Statutory Bodies and Local Authorities, servicing of public debts and payments of gratuities, pensions, and scholarships, including financial and welfare assistances;
(d) RM107 million for procurement of assets; and
(e) RM104 million for other operating expenses.

The expenditure budget will always face demands that are greater than the available fiscal resources. Public spending is essential for stimulating the economy, providing public services, and financing investments that will provide public goods to support current and future growth. We need to ensure that spending is focused on productive and prioritised activities, and that programmes and projects are carried out efficiently. Waste must be reduced and much more attention will be paid to achieving value for money with the implementation of Value Management Framework. With this, overall accountability and transparency is strengthened.

BUDGET SURPLUS, 2024

Tuan Speaker, I am pleased to inform this august House that with the projected revenue of RM12,749 million or RM12.749 billion and total Ordinary Expenditure of RM12,363 million or RM12.363 billion, the 2024 State Budget is expected to generate a surplus of RM386 million. This is the largest ever Budget unveiled by the Sarawak Government in history, a testimony to the success of our revenue reengineering efforts and prudent financial management. With this, we are adopting an expansionary Budget that invests heavily in infrastructures and places the well-being of the *rakyat* at its centrepiece.

DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE, 2024

The 2024 State Budget provides an allocation of RM9,038 million or RM9.038 billion for development purposes, of which RM8,915 million or RM8.915 billion will be funded by State fund while RM123 million through Federal loan and reimbursable grant. The Budget will continue to provide allocation to key sectors to accelerate economic development and eventually make the State economy prosperous, robust, and resilient.

STRATEGIC THRUSTS AND INITIATIVES

I will now highlight the strategic thrusts and initiatives of the 2024 State Budget.

STRATEGIC THRUST ONE: ACCELERATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Initiative 1: Development-Biased Budget

The State is committed to pursue inclusive economic growth, which is attested by a higher allocation budgeted for development purposes of RM9,038 million as compared to RM4,563 million for operating purposes next year. This represents 66% of the total proposed expenditure for 2024 meaning 66% for development.

I would now like to dwell on specific initiatives, programmes, and project that would have a transformative impact on our economy and touching the lives and livelihood of our people. Among the major projects in the 2024 Budget are as follows:

(a) RM550 million for implementation of *Projek Rakyat;*
(b) RM420 million for Rural Transformation Projects (RTP);
(c) RM200 million for Regional Development Agencies; and
(d) RM260 million for Minor Rural Projects (MRP).

These projects are expected to generate significant economic multipliers for the State, create additional employment prospects for the local people and revitalise the construction and service sectors. With bigger allocation from the annual budget and other sources of funding, coupled with the continuous efforts of the Government to ensure project completion and delivery, the State is expected to achieve an economic growth of between 5% and 6% next year.

STRATEGIC THRUST TWO: STIMULATING REGIONAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Initiative 1: Ensuring Greater Urban-Rural Economic Integration

Balancing urban-rural development and achieving sustainable urban-rural integration will be the key priority to ensure balanced development, as Sarawak progresses towards becoming a developed region. The focus of rural development is to uplift the well-being of the rural community and enhance the economic potential of the rural areas based on their local strengths and peculiarities.

Under the 2024 Budget, emphasis will continue to be given to providing basic infrastructure and services, to improve rural connectivity and accessibility that will drive economic growth and development in this area. More roads, bridges, ports, water and electricity supplies and air transport will be provided, creating economic vibrancy in the surrounding areas, improving the liveability and mobility of local communities, invigorating businesses, and creating employment opportunities. Among the major projects are as follows:

Roads and Bridges Projects

Road development, including bridges, have always been given priority by the Sarawak Government as we strive to connect all areas in Sarawak. Under the 2024 State Budget, a sum of RM662 million will be provided for the implementation of various roads and bridges projects such as:

(a) Design and Construction of Inner Ring Road in Kuching;
(b) Jalan Pakan/ Ulu Kota, Pakan, Sarikei (Phase III) and Replacement of Seven Temporary Bridges Under Phase 1 to Permanent RC Bridges;
(c) Jalan Sg. Bidut/ Kpg Tutus/ Kpg Sebedil/ Kpg Bungan Kecil, Sibu;
(d) Marudi Bridge Over Batang Baram in Miri;
(e) Sg. Limbang Bridge, Sg. Bunut No. 2 Bridge and connecting roads, Limbang; and
(f) Various roads and bridges projects under *Projek Rakyat*.

Under the Alternative Funding initiative, amongst the ongoing catalytic initiatives are the construction of the Coastal Road Network and the Second Trunk Road projects, with an estimated total cost of RM11 billion. Currently, the projects are at various stages of implementation.

WATER AND ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES PROGRAMMES

Water Supply

The Sarawak Government has set a high priority on expanding the coverage of safe and treated water supply throughout the State. The initiatives to provide reliable, efficient, resilient, safe,

and sustainable water supply will continue to be intensified to achieve this objective.

A sum of RM156 million will be allocated in 2024 for the implementation of continuation and new water supply projects under the Mid-Term Review of 12th Malaysia Plan such as:

(a) *Pembinaan Loji Salim Fasa* III, Sibu;
(b) Serian Regional Water Supply Phase II;
(c) Construction of 1.35 ML Storage Pond, Intake Weir and Sump at Suai Water Treatment Plant;
(d) Long Lama Water Supply – Phase III;
(e) Construction of Sludge Treatment for Batu Kitang Plant, Kuching; and
(f) Gerigat Water Supply, Kabong.

In addition, a total sum of RM552 million will be provided under the Alternative Funding Initiative in 2024 to continue the implementation of water supply projects, including the following:

(a) Transmission Main Across Batang Sadong Bridge to Simunjan: Pipeline Replacement, Relocation, and Extension at Sebangan and Sebuyau;
(b) Upgrading of Lubau Water Treatment Plant;
(c) Upgrading of Bayong Water Treatment Plant;
(d) Kapit Water Treatment Plant Augmentation and Improvement Works;
(e) Belaga Water Supply – Jalan Belaga/ Menjawah, Kapit;
(f) Miri Water Supply Source Development – Phase 2;
(g) Trusan Regional Water Treatment Plant;
(h) Tinjar Water Supply; and
(i) Sarawak Alternative Water Supply (SAWAS) Phase 2.

Electricity Supply

Tuan Speaker, to achieve the Sarawak Government's objective of having a well-developed power infrastructure by 2030, we will continue to ensure full coverage of electricity supply and reduce electricity interruption. These electricity supply initiatives will also serve as an enabler to unlock the potential for localised economic development, especially in rural areas.

An allocation of RM24 million will be allocated in 2024 for the following new projects:

(a) Connect Stand-alone Sarawak Alternative Rural Electrification Scheme (SARES) to Sarawak Electricity Grid;
(b) Connection of off-grid SARES and solar hybrid scheme to existing electricity grid for villages that have road accessibility and near to the grid;
(c) Battery Replacement and Key Component for Stand-Alone Solar System;
(d) SARES battery replacements to ensure remote inaccessible communities continue to benefit with 24-hour electricity; and
(e) 33 kilovolt Medium Voltage Covered Conductor (MVCC) from Nanga Gaat to Tunoh.

Additionally, RM298 million will be provided in 2024 for the continuation projects under the Rural Electrification Scheme, and another RM1,600 million is required in 2024 under Alternative Funding for projects including:

(a) Rural Power Supply Scheme for High Voltage substations;
(b) Medium Voltage Covered Conductor (MVCC) overhead lines;
(c) The Rural Electrification Scheme (RES) for Last Mile Connections;
(d) Stand-alone off-grid Sarawak Alternative Electrification Supply (SARES) for remote rural communities; and
(e) ALAF for newly completed premises in rural areas after rural electricity infrastructures were completed.

Ports, Navigational Safety and Riverine

Under the 2024 Budget, a total sum of about RM83 million will be allocated for port development, navigational safety, and other ongoing riverine projects. These include:

(a) Proposed Vehicles Yard and Associated Facilities at Senari Port, Kuching;
(b) Port development and maintenance dredging grants to State Port Authorities;
(c) Proposed Construction and Completion of Tanjung Embang Terminal Phase 1, Kuching Port;
(d) Master Plan Study for Ports; and
(e) Construction of wharves, jetties, river wall and waterfront.

Ports are catalysts for economic development as they enable trade and support supply chains. The Sarawak Government is committed to supporting port development for better and more efficient port services. The installation and commissioning of new quay cranes for Kuching Port Authority, costing approximately RM72 million will increase cargo handling productivity and spur growth in cargo volume.

To achieve robust economic growth and boost trading activities, the State ports will continue to work with port users to improve the profitability, productivity, and overall efficiency of the logistic supply chain. Our long-term aim is for Sarawak to become a maritime transit hub, given its strategic location along the Southeast Asia regional trading route.

Seamless Transportation

The linkage between rural and urban areas will be strengthened by improving connectivity and mobility to foster greater economic integration.

In order to modernise and transform urban transport, we have embarked on the implementation of Kuching Urban Transportation System (KUTS) Project, in which the implementation of Phase 1 includes the development of three Autonomous Rapid Transit (ART) Lines. The operation of KUTS Phase 1 will be supported by Hydrogen Feeder Bus service to provide passengers with first and last-mile connectivity.

I am pleased to update this august House that we have achieved a historical milestone when the Prototype ART Hydrogen Vehicle Engineering Run exercise was implemented in September 2023 at Isthmus Kuching, followed by the Proof of Concept (POC) exercise in Samarahan. The purpose of this exercise is to obtain the prototype vehicle's performance data and to showcase the ART's capabilities to the public. The cost of implementing this initiative is financed by Alternative Funding and for next year, a sum of RM900 million will be set aside for the project.

In addition, in our effort to improve and upgrade the public transport system, a sum of RM5 million will be provided in 2024 for the implementation of smart buses for Miri City to provide better connectivity and increase mobility for the people.

Initiative 2: Accelerating Rural Development

Rural Focused Budget

We will continue to focus on developing rural areas so that our people will not be left behind. This effort is being reinforced by establishing nine Regional Development Agencies, which is playing a pivotal role in empowering local communities through our bottom-up approach to initiate development projects.

Thus, to expand economic opportunities for the rural areas, the 2024 State Budget will continue to be rural-biased, whereby out of RM9,038 million proposed for Development Expenditure Estimates, RM5.695 billion or 63% will be for development in rural areas.

Native Land and Rural Development

The continuous development of rural areas is crucial in ensuring a thriving rural society. The Government will continue to pursue the development of native land to sustain the income of NCR landowners.

Hence, this Budget provides a sum of RM35 million for SALCRA in the form of Federal loan for replanting oil palm in existing estates involving 10,500 hectares and for new planting of 6,400 hectares. The Government will also continue to assist oil palm smallholders in complying with The European Union (EU)'s European Deforestation-free Regulation (EUDR) policy by implementing various strategies to promote sustainable agro-commodity production such as Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) certification which covers all stages of the production chain in the sector.

Lot Title Survey Programme under Section 18

A sum of RM10 million was approved under 12th Malaysia Plan to continue issuing land titles to the scheme participants. To date, 50,823 hectares involving 28,849 lots of NCR land have been involved with SALCRA's oil palm development programme. The total number of participants' land issued with Section 18 stood at 18,392 lots or 63.8%, involving 33,890 hectares, while another 4,577 lots have been surveyed and are pending issuance of land title. To accelerate the issuance of Section 18 land title, this Budget allocates a sum of RM2 million for the programme.

Rural ICT Digital and Human Training Programme

To accelerate the adoption of smart agriculture and enhance the level of ICT literacy among our rural population, the Government will continue to strengthen its capacity building programmes among the farmers, agro entrepreneurs and the targeted rural community group. A sum of RM1 million will be allocated in 2024 to further implement these programmes.

Initiative 3: Boosting Tourism Sector

As the tourism sector is one of the major contributors to the State economy, we will vigorously strike to transform Sarawak as a leading destination for eco-tourism and business event driven by empowered communities to conserve heritage, culture and bio-diversity. A sum of RM52 million will be allocated under this budget to Sarawak Tourism Board and business event Sarawak for their operations, marketing and promotions.

Overall, the 2024 budget provides RM200 million for the implementation of various tourism programmes and projects which include the following:

(1) The development of new tourism attraction and upgrade the existing facilities among others as follows:

    (a) Sarawak Museum Campus and Heritage Trails;
    (b) Santubong Archaeological Park and Wallace Centre;
    (c) Improvement and Upgrading Works to Sarawak Museum Old Building and Ancillary Historical Building; and
    (d) Upgrading and Development of New Museum in Miri and Kuching Division.

(2) Strategic partnerships with Government agencies and tourism stakeholders to advocate and promote responsible tourism based on sustainable development goals principle.

(3) Explore niche markets and penetrates second tier destinations such as France, Italy, Spain, Finland, Kaohsiung and Taichung in Taiwan and Xiamen and Chengdu in China,

culminating in dynamic alignment with Tourism Malaysia forthcoming initiative - Visit Malaysia Year 2026; and

(4) Enhance a connectivity and stability with other cities in the other ASEAN region such as Indonesia, Brunei and the Philippines.

Tuan Speaker, now I touch to,

STRATEGIC THRUST THREE: PROMOTING INVESTMENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMES

Initiative 1: Facilitating domestic investment and making Sarawak a preferred investment destination for foreign investors (FDI)

Sarawak has been one of Malaysia's most preferred investments destinations for the manufacturing sector in pasts years due to our business trending policies, political stability and comparative advantages.

My administration is committed to creating a conducive climate for investments to enhancing our investment policies and programme to accelerate economic growth. The setting up of invest Sarawak as a one stop agency for investment will further improve the ease of doing business and facilitate both Domestic Direct Investment (DDIs) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDIs). This budget will allocate RM7 million to invest Sarawak for the operations and implementations of its activities next year.

To make Sarawak as an attractive investment destination and compete with our regional peers we will be formulating a comprehensive state investment policy. We have set aside RM3 million for this study of which amount of RM1 million will be provided for next year.

Initiative 2: Facilitating Business and SMEs

Small and medium enterprises is the back born for Malaysia's economy including Sarawak which contribute significantly to economic growth, export and employment. Therefore, it is crucial that we continue to support a nature the growth of our SMEs so that their contribution can be further enhanced.

The 2024 budget will continue to provide allocation for the implementation of various programme to assist the SMEs to revitalize and grow their businesses including capacity building, product development, financial assistance, e-commerce, promotion and marketing. These programmes will also upskill our local SMEs to be more competitive and thrive in a new business landscape by embracing digitalization in their business operations. Among the major programmes are as follows:

(a) Skim Kredit Mikro Sarawak and Skim Pinjaman Industri Kecil dan Sederhana (SPIK) with an allocation of RM6 million. For the information of this august House RM13.9 million has been disbursed in 2023 under this initiative and has benefited 315 SMEs;
(b) Special Relief Fund targeted relief and recovery facility (TRRF) and Penjana Tourism Fund (PTF). They provide interest subsidy for 3.5 years to those illegible SMEs. The initiative has benefited 3,320 recipients with a total subsidy of RM77 million;
(c) Go Digital Programme. With an allocation of RM4.5 million has been set aside for next year to encourage SMEs to go on board digital entrepreneurship. In 2023, 500 SMEs has benefited from this initiative with a total assistance of RM5 million;
(d) Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Development Programme and Program Pembangunan Latihan Keusahawanan with an allocation of RM2.5 million to assist entrepreneurs with technical skills to start and expand their businesses.

The State is also undertaking a study to establish a master plan to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of SMEs in Sarawak, of which RM3 million is provided under this Budget.

Initiative 3: Increasing Bumiputera Contractors' participation in Government Projects

To increase the participation of Bumiputera contractors in Government projects, my administration will implement the Competitive Contractors Development Programme. Under this programme, at least 30% of projects with a value between RM200,000 to RM2.5 million will be allocated to Bumiputera contractors to be undertaken through selective tender to ensure competitive bidding. A sum of RM1 million will be allocated in this Budget for the programme to enhance the participants' technical skills and competencies.

STRATEGIC THRUST FOUR: TRANSFORMING SARAWAK INTO A COMPETITIVE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

Initiative 1: Advancing Industrialisation Agenda

As part of the strategies to transform Sarawak into a competitive and resilient economy, the Government will pursue its industrialisation agenda to develop the high-added industry, particularly the petrochemical industry, as one of the main drivers of growth for its manufacturing sector.

The establishment of the State-owned methanol plant under Sarawak Petchem Sdn Bhd in Bintulu, and later on, the ammonia plant, as well as the development of onshore Gas Plants which forms part of Sarawak Integrated Sour Gas Evacuation System (SISGES) will be a catalyst to advance the State's industrialisation through downstream activities of the petrochemical industry. This will transform the economic landscape of Sarawak, as well as creating employment opportunities for our people.

Under the 2024 Budget, the Government will continue its efforts to diversify the industrial sector through deepening and strengthening the value chains in oil and gas, energy-intensive, high-tech, food, and shipbuilding, alongside the traditional timber-based, oil palm-based, and other manufacturing activities. Industrial facilities will be further enhanced to able to meet the growing needs of the industries. Towards this, RM60 million will be provided to develop industrial parks and business premises. Among the projects are:

(a) Expansion of Demak Laut Industrial Park;
(b) Samalaju SME Cluster;
(c) Kuching High-Tech Park;
(d) Various Industrial Estates such as in Sibu, Sematan, Bau and Marudi; and
(e) Various Anjung Usahawan projects such as in Kuala Lawas, Gedong, Limbang.

Initiative 2: Developing Mining Sector

Sarawak has various mineral resources that are very valuable and important for use in the energy and manufacturing industry. The value of mineral resources in Sarawak is estimated to be approximately RM1.25 trillion, and we expect this value to increase further once the entire area of Sarawak is completed with mineral exploration and geological mapping. A total of RM26 million for undertaking a Geological Mapping of our mineral resources has been approved under the 12th Malaysia Plan, of which RM5.5 million will be allocated in 2024.

Initiative 3: Industrialising Agrofood Sector

Agriculture Commercialisation Initiatives

The Government has taken and will continue to undertake numerous initiatives to attract private firms, either locally or from abroad, to venture into commercial agriculture in Sarawak. To facilitate the investment for greater private sector participation in the agriculture sector, key initiatives including, expanding food production areas by providing essential infrastructure in these production areas.

Development of Agro Parks

A sum of RM23 million will be allocated in 2024 to complete Package 3 of Sungai Baji Agropark, Sarikei which is expected to commence operation by early 2024. The other agroparks includes Asajaya and Parit Bugis which will be allocated a sum of RM2.5 million. Another RM4 million will be allocated for the Development of Essential Infrastructure at Bebuling Agropark, Betong.

Recently, the Government has also approved the development of new areas for agroparks, namely Gedong-Semalatong Agropark, Simanggang Agropark, and Dalat Agropark, of which RM200,000 each will be allocated for preliminary works. In addition, a sum of RM53.6 million has been set aside for the development of Lubok Tamang Agropark in Betong Division, of which RM18 million will be required in 2024.

Aquaculture Park

A sum of RM5 million will be allocated to develop and upgrade Loba Stoh Aquaculture Park in Rambungan to boost the production of shrimp products. In addition, to enhance the development of inland fisheries, a sum of RM500 thousand will be set aside in 2024 for the development of Aquaculture Park in Samariang Batu, Kuching.

Precision Farming Park

To accelerate the development of modern farming in Sarawak, the Government has approved a sum of RM60 million to implement Precision Farming Park at Sg. Sebiew in Bintulu and in Kabuloh, Miri. The development of these modern agriculture parks is expected to commence in 2024 with an allocation of RM14 million. These parks are expected to attract greater involvement of youth and agropreneurs.

Smart Agriculture

To enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the Sarawak agriculture sector, the Government is actively pursuing the adoption of modern technology along the agriculture supply chain. This is in line with the Government's aspiration to develop Sarawak as a technology-driven agriculture sector that will ensure food security and safety, create wealth for the agro-based and rural community, and establish Sarawak as a net food exporter by 2030. In this regard, a sum of about RM500 thousand will be allocated in 2024 for the implementation of the Internet of Things (IoT) for agriculture. Similarly, a sum of RM2.5 million will be provided in 2024 to intensify the mechanisation and automation programme in Oil Palm Estates to boost productivity in operation and reduce the reliance on foreign labour.

Development of Sarawak Agro-Technology Park (SARTECH)

The development of Semenggok and Tarat SARTECH is expected to attract more global technology-based agricultural firms towards transforming Sarawak agriculture into a technology-driven sector.

These projects will be allocated RM3 million and RM12.5 million respectively in 2024. To date, Tarat SARTECH has approved its first tenant, which is a joint venture project between the State Farmers' Organization and a local investor to produce shallot.

Assistance to Smallholders, Agropreneurs and Farmers' Institutions

The Government will continue to support the development of farmers and smallholders in Sarawak towards raising and sustaining their income. For 2024, a sum of RM20 million will be allocated to implement various crop development programmes and projects, while another RM5 million will be provided for inland fisheries and aquaculture development programmes and projects.

The Government, through the respective Ministry and Department, will continue building the knowledge and skill capacity of farmers through agricultural training, extension, mechanisation and automation. A sum of RM23 million is set aside for this purpose. Meanwhile, a total sum of RM27 million will also be allocated in this Budget to carry out livestock and veterinary programmes.

Enhance Food Security

Sarawak relies heavily on the import of rice to meet local demand. In 2022, Sarawak imported 164,621 metric tonnes of rice valued at RM362 million.

Thus, Sarawak Government is making concerted efforts to step up its measures to ensure food security, which includes the following initiatives:

(a) To increase food production, a sum of RM1.15 million will be allocated in 2024 to continue the rehabilitation and upgrading of the drainage and irrigation infrastructures at Tanjung Purun Irrigation Scheme, Lundu. Another RM1.5 million has been approved for Kampung Mujat, Serian while RM3 million will be allocated to continue the development of drainage and irrigation infrastructure at Lubok Punggor, Gedong. In addition, a sum of RM2 million will be allocated in 2024 to develop drainage and irrigation infrastructure at Selepong Panggil, Sri Aman Division for paddy cultivation.

(b) Sarawak is targeting to produce 240,000 tonnes of rice a year with the use of hybrid rice seeds from Vietnam. This promising hybrid will be planted in Lubok Punggor in Gedong, Tanjung Bijat in Sri Aman, Spaoh in Betong, and Tanjung Purun in Lundu. Using the hybrid seeds would encourage paddy farmers to shift their method of cultivation, not only it can increase the input intensity but also its growth productivity rate. Our farmers will be able to produce rice in three seasons per year by using this hybrid seeds. We, therefore, would like to request the Federal Government to provide greater allocation for the construction and upgrading of drainage and irrigation infrastructures in these paddy planting areas.

(c) *The* Government is also actively increasing the production of cattle and buffalo to address the low self-sufficiency level (SSL) of beef in Sarawak through the implementation of cattle breeding programme. To achieve this, the Government will allocate RM15 million in 2024 to acquire quality cattle breeder stock. Meanwhile, under the Mid-Term Review of 12th Malaysia Plan, a sum of RM2 million has been proposed to develop Ruminant Biotechnology Centre at Sungai Pinang, Simunjan. This initiative is expected to contribute to achieving Sarawak beef Self-Sufficiency Level (SSL) target of 25 percent by 2030.

STRATEGIC THRUST FIVE: STRENGTHENING HUMAN CAPITAL AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Initiative 1: Enhancing Quality of Education

Teaching of Science and Mathematics in English Language (Dual Language Programme)

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak is the only State that has fully implemented the teaching of Science and Mathematics in English under the Dual Language Programme Sarawak. We will continue to improve the standard of English while providing a strong foundation in Science, Technology,

Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education for our students. In 2024, a sum of RM1.2 million is allocated to continue this programme.

State-owned International Schools

The first Stated-owned International School in Sarawak has entered its 2nd year of operation at Petra Jaya, Kuching with 178 students. The second international school located at Mile 12, Kuching-Serian Road, is scheduled to be completed at the end of this year for full operation thereafter. Under the 2024 Budget, a sum of RM16 million will be provided to cover operation costs of these schools.

Upgrade and Repairs of Dilapidated Schools

Tuan Speaker, our effort to ensure safe and conducive teaching and learning environment continues with the redevelopment of SK Sageng and SMK Gedong in Simunjan. The Government will set aside an allocation of RM100 million towards the upgrading of these two schools, of which RM28 million will be allocated next year. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2024 with expected completion within two years.

Tuan Speaker, even though education is under Federal Government, we cannot let our student to study in dilapidated environments because of that, for the future of our students, the State Government have to come in and help the Federal Government because we are responsible Governments.

Continuous Professional Development

The efforts to upskill and reskill teachers and school leaders continue in Sarawak to ensure that they are equipped with the latest educational content and technologies in teaching. This Budget provides approximately RM1 million for the upskilling and reskilling non-option teachers in English, Mathematics, and Science. In addition, RM1.3 million will be allocated towards upskilling teachers on ICT know-how to achieve the Advanced Level of using Raspberry Pi devices in their schools.

Initiative 2: Promoting Employability of Workforce

Sarawak Career and Training Fair (SCaT Fair)

The Sarawak Career and Training Fair (SCaT Fair), which was put on hold due to COVID-19, will be revived as it seeks to provide information on education and career opportunities to the public, as well as to empower youth to make more informed decisions that would enhance the employability of graduates and youth. A sum of RM400 thousand will be allocated to for this programme next year.

Initiative 3: Strengthening Skilled Workforce

Sarawak is committed to developing a digital talent pool to produce local digital talents that align with the industry's needs and produce a digitally skilled workforce, laying a foundation to cater to the needs of high-growth, high-value industries.

A sum of RM40 million operating grant will be provided in 2024 to Centre of Technology Excellence Sarawak (CENTEXS) for them to provide industry-based competency training programmes, with the majority being internationally certified by leading industry players in technology areas. These programmes include the following:

(a) Digital and green energy programmes. Presently, CENTEXS is partnering with leading companies, including Huawei, Solarvest, EON Reality, Keysight, Bosch Rexroth, Digital Marketing Institute, and KNX;

(b) Advanced robotics and automation towards supporting Electric Vehicles (EV), green energy technology, and medical robotics;

(c) Electrical and Electronics comprises Semiconductors and Chargeman, and Energy Transition training programmes;

(d) 5G, Starlink Satellite, Hyperscale Data Centre; and

(e) Nipah extraction and production test bed facilities.

Initiative 4: Providing Educational Assistance Programmes

My Administration will continue to provide substantial allocation for various educational assistance programmes as this is a crucial investment for the future of our children. These include the following:

(a) RM30 million as assistance for the repayment of PTPTN loan for Sarawakian graduates who have repaid 30% loan repayment discount as incentive for settlement of loan balance as incentive for settlement of the outstanding loan balance. To date, this incentive not given by any other States, only Sarawak. This incentive has benefited 22,900 Sarawakian graduates;
(b) RM35 million operating grant for University Technology Sarawak;
(c) RM5 million operating grant for Kolej Laila Taib; and
(d) RM6 million for *Biasiswa Tunku Abdul Rahman*.

Tuan Speaker, we also recognise the need for us to mitigate the cost-of-living pressures among the low and middle-income groups, especially when it comes to bearing the cost of our children's education. As a caring and responsible GPS Government, I am pleased to unveil two key initiatives in this Budget:

(1) Book Voucher of RM500 per person for IPTA and IPTS Sarawakian's students for household with per capita income of RM1,500 per month and below. This book voucher assistance is expected to benefit 35,000 university and college students. A sum of RM17.5 million will be allocated for this purpose next year, which will be managed by Yayasan Sarawak.

(2) Free laptop to be given to Sarawakian students who have successfully enrolled into IPTA and IPTS for household with per capita income of RM1,500 per month and below. This assistance is expected to benefit 5,000 students with an allocation of RM15 million in this Budget. This initiative promises to empower our students with the essential technology they need to excel in their academic pursuits.

On top of that, the Government will also provide funding for three other existing student assistance schemes under Yayasan Sarawak as follows:

(1) Additional grant of RM5 million for the Free Tuition Programme. With this additional sum, the Free Tuition Programme will receive an increase in allocation from RM10 million now to RM15 million. The target group will be extended to cover Form 3 to Form 5, thus expanding the number of students entitled to receive such assistance. An estimated of 58,520 students especially from the B40 households are expected to benefit from this initiative in 2024. The augmented programme will feature complementary initiatives, including motivational activities, smart learning component, fostering a comprehensive approach to academic enrichment and excellence.

(2) Additional grant of RM2 million for the School Uniform Assistance Programme, aims at benefiting an additional 10,000 students, bringing the total number of assisted students in 2024 to 30,000 students. This allocation helps to further mitigate the financial burden on families, enabling a broader spectrum of students to access essential school attire and supplies. This

increase brings the total allocation for the School Uniform Assistance Programme to RM6 million in 2024.

(3) Special grant of RM6 million to Yayasan Sarawak to top-up the existing allocation of RM3 million to enhance the Local Scholarship programme by doubling the existing assistance amount per student from RM400 to RM800. This allocation aims at addressing the rising pressures of daily expenses, ensuring that the assistance to our needy students covers essential needs such as food, stationeries, footwear and more. Anticipated to benefit a total of 11,250 students, this progressive step again underscores the Government's commitment to easing the financial strains on Sarawakians families especially those from the low-income group.

Tuan Speaker, I am very hopeful that through these initiatives, our students will continue to excel in their studies and help those who need a leg up in progressing to their next stage in life.

STRATEGIC THRUST SIX: INTENSIFYING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak has embarked on a digital economy in 2018 to shift its dependence on a non-renewable resources' energy economy. The first Digital Economy Strategy (2018-2022) was introduced in December 2017, after I was appointed as Chief Minister. The strategy comprised 47 strategic actions in eight economic sectors and seven enablers.

Since the commencement of the digital economy agenda in 2018, Sarawak has successfully enhanced the Sarawak's economic development through a transformation in several sectors including agriculture, oil palm industry, e-commerce, finance and fintech, digital government, smart city, tourism, manufacturing, and services industry.

A number of high impact projects have shown significant results such as SPay Global formerly known as Sarawak Pay, Talent Development and Entrepreneurship programmes, Digital Infrastructure and end-to-end online Government agencies services.

The key initiatives implemented under the digital economy agenda include the following:

Initiative 1: Sarawak Linking Urban, Rural and Nation (SALURAN)

In continuing the efforts to widen the internet coverage to the whole of Sarawak, the Government is exploring diverse approaches tailored to our unique topography challenges. This aims at ensuring every Sarawakian has access to stable and reliable connectivity. A total of RM1.89 billion has been allocated to support the SALURAN initiative through various projects by my administration and complemented by the Federal Government.

Additionally, the Federal Government, through Digital National Berhad (DNB), has allocated RM1 billion for the development of 5G in Sarawak until the year 2030. Sarawak is proud to be an early adopter of 5G, with plans for 589 operational sites by 2024, covering about 60% of populated areas in Sarawak.

Initiative 2: Sarawak as a Hub for Data Centres

Experts have forecasted the global demand for data centre services to increase three times from USD187 billion in 2020 to USD517 billion in 2030. Sarawak, likewise, is expected to experience the same intensity in demand. This demand will come from the implementation of the PCDS 2030, the Sarawak Digital Economy Blueprint 2030, the growth of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), immersive technologies, and the adoption of hybrid remote working in the post-pandemic era.

Therefore, the Government will vigorously promote the development of data centres in Sarawak, given the availability of our renewable energy. This will help to create a digital platform for us to transition towards an advanced economy.

Initiative 3: Delivering Better Services Through Digitalisation

The development of digital government services will ease and further simplify interactions between citizens and the Government through delivering secured and trusted seamless services. Thus, a total of RM26 million will be allocated in 2024 for the implementation of numerous key digital projects, which include the following:

(a) Licence Management System for Sarawak Carbon Capture & Storage this is, Tuan Speaker, a new initiative;
(b) Integrated Social Management System;
(c) State Online Foreign Workers Transformation Approach Development System; and
(d) Unit Keselamatan dan Penguatkuasaan Sarawak Advanced Security Enforcement System. This seems to be something new also and the Federal Government is looking at our technology. They may want to adopt our technology. *Maknanya* Sarawak quite advance, Tuan Speaker.

All digital Government services shall be accessible through a single sign-on using SarawakID. Currently, more than 957,000 users are registered to access Government services. Moving forward, SarawakID Corporate is available for corporate entities to sign-on and access Government online services. All Government online services related to business sectors are to be enabled with SarawakID Corporate by 2024.

The Government is also introducing SarawakPass, which will enable every Sarawakian to have access to *"digital passports"*, allowing them to carry their credentials wherever they go and share them with any entity, be it in the private or government sectors.

Initiative 4: Implementation of Digital Economy Blueprint 2030

The Government has formulated the Sarawak Digital Economy Blueprint 2030 to transform Sarawak from a conventional resource-based economy to a technology-driven economy and society. Under the Blueprint, we will continue to accelerate the digital transformation of our economic sectors to strengthen Sarawak's competitiveness, create job opportunities, produce new digital industries, as well as develop a vibrant tech sector.

Initiative 5: Cybersecurity

And Initiative 5, and this is very important in our efforts toward digitalization that is Cybersecurity. Cybersecurity stands as one of the most critical components in the digital era. As our world becomes increasingly interconnected and reliant on digital technologies, protecting sensitive information, digital assets, and critical infrastructure cannot be overstated. Moving forward, the Government is establishing a comprehensive cybersecurity team capable of providing cyber security services to both the government and private sectors. A Cybersecurity Unit will be established to spearhead the development and implementation of the Cybersecurity framework and policy.

Tuan Speaker,

STRATEGIC THRUST SEVEN: PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Initiative 1: Promoting Environmental Sustainability

Sarawak aspires to be globally recognised for sustainable management of tropical forests and biodiversity conservation, while enhancing the growth of the timber industry by 2030. This would help Sarawak to achieve the following outcomes:

(a) Sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation;
(b) World recognition;
(c) Revenue enhancement, export earnings and rural transformation; and
(d) Environmental sustainability.

A total of 39 projects in the forestry sector have been identified under PCDS 2030. Of this, 21 projects have been approved under the 12th Malaysia Plan with a total ceiling of approximately RM130 million. For 2024, a sum of RM48 million will be allocated to implement forestry projects, among others, as follows:

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) Programme

The FLR programme plays a significant role in Sarawak's environmental sustainability goal, which aims to restore ecological integrity and improve the productivity and economic value of degraded forest landscapes through programmes such as replanting of trees. Sarawak is targeting to plant 35 million trees under the 12th Malaysia Plan. As of August 2023, a total of about 28 million trees have been planted. For next year, a sum of RM5 million will be allocated for this project.

Totally Protected Area and Wildlife Protection and Management

Sarawak has targeted to designate one million hectares of Sarawak landmass as a Totally Protected Area by 2025. As of the second quarter of this year, 2.1 million hectares have been gazetted as TPA that is Totally Protected Area. These forest lands are managed to generate sustainable benefits for society through the following measures:

(a) Conservation and protection of wildlife and their habitat;
(b) Preservation of specific natural geological or physiographical features, landscapes, of special interest for archaeological, recreational, educational or conservation purposes; and
(c) Facilitating study and research on the biodiversity of the State.

Under the 12th Malaysia Plan, RM16.5 million has been approved, of which RM3 million is set aside in 2024 to develop and upgrade facilities at selected TPA, and RM1 million for effective management and protection of TPA.

UNESCO World Heritage Site and UNESCO Global Geopark

We have nominated Niah National Park as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the assessment has recently been carried out by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

Sarawak also aspires for Sarawak Delta to be a UNESCO Global Geopark by 2026. To achieve this aspiration, RM4 million has been approved to implement programmes and activities in the Sarawak Delta Geopark, such as public awareness and community engagement, infrastructure development and management plan.

Development of Integrated Watershed Spatial Master Plans

We will also ensure that all land use and development are planned and implemented at the watershed level, using the watershed’s natural hydrological boundaries. This is to enable integrated water resources management to be incorporated into Government decision-making processes.

The Watershed Spatial Master Plans will guide coordination and integrate land use planning and management for development, water resources and environmental protection. The plans will specify the areas to be set aside for protection (For example, flood risk zones, riparian buffers, and others prior to other land use planning).

Thus, two Watershed Spatial Master Plans will be developed for the watersheds of Balui and Baleh, with a 12th Malaysia Plan ceiling of RM3 million, of which RM1.2 million will be allocated in 2024.

Tuan Speaker,

STRATEGIC THRUST EIGHT: STRENGTHENING SOCIAL WELFARE AND SAFETY NET

Initiative 1: Enhancing Social Protection and Services

My Administration is committed to continuing the social inclusivity agenda by providing targeted *"cradle-to-grave"* assistances and services, from the needs of the children, our future human capital, to the elderly, the vulnerable, and other disadvantaged groups. Under the 2024 Budget, various initiatives to enhance social protection and services will be continued, among others:

(a) One-Stop Early Intervention Centre (OSEIC) Sarawak with an allocation of RM3 million for the continuation of the programme at OSEIC Metrocity and Kompleks Kebajikan Dalat and for the establishment of OSEIC Miri. OSEIC emphasises high quality early intervention services focusing on special needs children.

(b) Early Childhood Institution Fee Subsidy of RM2.5 million will be provided next year to ease the burden of parents in paying the institution fee, which will benefit 2,500 children.

(c) Post Natal Care Assistance (Bantuan Ibu Bersalin (BIB)) with a total sum of RM16 million to be made available in 2024, which will benefit about 36,000 mothers. The scheme provides RM450 to every mother who gives birth to help them with their nutritional and personal care needs during confinement. *Beranak saja, Perintah akan kasih.*

(d) Endowment Fund Sarawak (EFS) of RM15 million to be made available in 2024 that will benefit 15,000 children.

(e) Enhancing Early Childhood Education with an allocation of RM20 million in 2024 to cover the operating costs of SeDidik early childhood institutions. Currently, SeDidik runs 100 TADIKA and TASKA throughout the State.

(f) Geran Tahunan Khas (GTK) Institusi Pendidikan Awal Kanak-Kanak (IPAKK), with an allocation of RM14 million next year for 3,000 early childhood institutions, which will benefit more than 80,000 children in Sarawak.

(g) Death Compassionate Assistance for Kenyalang Gold Card holders of RM15 million will be made available next year for eligible KGC… *(Interruption)…* RM15 million will be made available next year for eligible Gold Card, KGC Card Kenyalang Gold Card holders to help ease the burden of the family to bear the cost of the funeral. *Maknanya dari lahir sampai mati*, GPS Government look after them.

(h) Haemodialysis Assistance for Kidney Patients of RM4.7 million will be allocated next year to assist 260 patients to undergo treatment; and

(i) i-SURI Voluntary Incentive with an allocation of RM4.2 million in 2024 to assist eligible *Isteri Ketua Isi Rumah* (IKIR) or *Ketua Isi Rumah Wanita* (KIRW) in Sarawak to contribute to EPF Voluntary Contribution scheme. This is a very good scheme, Tuan Speaker. They will benefit especially the beneficiaries.

On top of that, the integrated social intervention programme and community support will continue to be implemented by the Government to provide access to temporary shelter for homeless and displaced persons as follows:

(a) RM500,000 for the set-up of a Temporary Shelter for a Low-Income Recovery Community in Kuching;
(b) RM500,000 for the continuation of *Tempat Transit Gelandangan*;
(c) RM2 million for the setting up of Special Needs Community Centre (SNCC); and
(d) RM2 million for the setting up of the Community Social Support Centre (CSSC) at Sri Aman, Sibu, Bintulu, Lawas and Mukah.

Tuan Speaker,

STRATEGIC THRUST NINE: PROMOTING SPORTS AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Initiative 1: Youth Entrepreneur Development

Our youth are the backbone of our nation's future. One of the programmes that have been and continue to be implemented is the Youth Entrepreneur Setup (YES) where the programme acts as an initial exposure to the youth in the field of entrepreneurship by sharing business information from relevant government agencies. The programme also focuses on producing competent youth entrepreneurs, growing their businesses, and strengthening support systems and networks that can propel them forward.

For this, we are allocating an amount of RM2 million in the 2024 Budget to support the youth, sports, and entrepreneur development programme. This Budget reflects our commitment to nurturing talent, fostering innovation, and creating an environment conducive to entrepreneurial success.

Initiative 2: High Performance Sports Development

I am pleased that Sarawak was selected and entrusted by the Malaysia Games Supreme Committee (MGSC) to host the 21st SUKMA 2024. The biennial sports event will be held throughout the nine divisions in Sarawak. The State hosted the event in 1990 and 2016, where Sarawak bagged the title of champion and second place.

Aiming to become the 21st SUKMA 2024 Champion again, a sum of RM69.35 million is allocated to the Sarawak State Sports Council to equip our athletes with the finest sporting equipment together with physical and mental endurance by exposing them to the latest and current sporting, competitions, and training trends.

For operational facets such as developing sports talents, sports development activities and manning sports infrastructures, a sum of RM50 million will be allocated in 2024 to Sarawak Sports Corporation (SSC).

With our vision to become the Nation's Sports Powerhouse and commitment to developing and managing sports professionally in producing world-class athletes, the Government, through SSC, is consistently advancing our sports landscape from the grassroots level through collaboration with schools and other sports agencies.

INITIATIVE 3: SPORTS FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

The Government will also allocate RM75 million for new development and refurbishment of existing sports facilities in this Budget. Among the sports projects that have been approved are the High-Performance Centre, upgrading of Stadium Sarawak football field and refurbishment of existing sports facilities to meet the international standards from bodies such as The International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) and the World Athletic Federation. The Sarawak Sports Village (SSV) and Cricket and Rugby Ground Petra Jaya and Wushu Centre are expected to be completed next year. The completion of these three projects will create more opportunities and allow the State to bid and host major international events such as Borneo International Games (BIG), SEA Games, Commonwealth Games and other tournaments at the newly completed facilities.

STRATEGIC THRUST TEN: DEVELOPING AN INNOVATION-BASED AND KNOWLEDGE-ORIENTED ECONOMY

Initiative 1: Promoting Research & Development (R&D) and Innovation in Science and Technology

Tuan Speaker, R&D can lead to breakthrough innovations and discoveries, which can spur economic activities or even open-up new economic opportunities. We will continue to intensify our effort to promote R&D and innovation as one of the key enablers in achieving our 2030 vision.

Research and Innovation Activities

To further stimulate the R&D and Innovation ecosystem in Sarawak, the Government will continue to provide research grants through the Sarawak Research and Development Council (SRDC). This will enable further development of highly impactful, vibrant science and technology-based research and innovation with the potential prospect of commercialisation. These grants target four research areas: Bioindustry & Biomedical Research Health Sciences, Biodiversity & Environment, Food & Agriculture, and Engineering Science & Technology. A total of RM15.4 million in research grants will be made available in 2024.

Sarawak Infectious Disease Centre R&D Activities

The Sarawak Infectious Disease Centre (SIDC) has been established to focus on research involving emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases. For 2024, RM10.7 million is allocated for its development and operation. Next year, SIDC plans to launch a real-time Disease Surveillance programme, encompassing a collaboration with local and global partners, including the US National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Disease. The programme's objectives include the establishment of the Disease Surveillance Consortium (DiSC), the development of a disease surveillance framework, the implementation of mobile laboratory setups, and surveillance of a range of diseases such as simian malaria, rabies, tuberculosis, and others.

Sarawak Science Centre

The Sarawak Science Centre is being established as an educational space, promoting general science and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects among our younger generation. The centre also aims at enhancing scientific literacy and public awareness of global issues, encouraging students to pursue STEM-related careers. The construction of the Centre is expected to be completed by December 2025. For its development and future activities, the Government will allocate about RM33 million in 2024.

Talent Development in the Semiconductor Industry

We have set up SMD Semiconductor, a wholly owned Government company specialising in designing analogue and mixed-signal integrated circuits or chips. It will render chip design services to world-class foundry partners such as X-FAB in chip development and develop highly skilled talents for Sarawak in the industry. This is the future industry, and we need to prepare our young people for it. The global semiconductor industry is projected to exceed USD1 trillion by 2030, growing at an annual rate of 7%. Hence, for 2024, a total of RM12 million will be allocated for SMD's operations and talent development programme.

Biodiversity Research and Development

In our efforts to promote research and development in applications from our rich biodiversity, an Algae Research and Production Facility to demonstrate the feasibility of algae cultivation at the community level will soon be trial tested in Gedong. To implement this, RM5 million has been approved under the 12th Malaysia Plan, of which RM500 thousand will be channelled to the Sarawak

Biodiversity Centre in 2024. Overall, a total of RM19 million will be allocated to the Sarawak Biodiversity Centre in 2024 for its operations and various R&D projects.

Sago Research

To support our ongoing R&D in developing technologies and applications in relation to sago and sago biomass, an allocation of RM23 million will be provided for CRAUN Research in 2024 for its operations and R&D projects.

Research in Tropical Peatland

In continuing our effort to undertake research to manage tropical peatland in Sarawak in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner, an allocation of RM6.5 million will be allocated to Sarawak Tropical Peat Research Institute in 2024 for its operations and seven research projects.

Tuan Speaker,

STRATEGIC THRUST ELEVEN: COMBATING POVERTY AND ENHANCE PEOPLE'S WELLBEING

Under the PCDS 2030, we aim to ensure all poor households will be alleviated from poverty by improving their household income and quality of life. This will be achieved through deliberate and conscious intervention by the Government. Various ministries and agencies are currently undertaking catalytic initiatives using multidimensional approaches focusing on developing productive and resourceful human capital, capacity building, and active involvement of low-income households in various economic activities.

In order to ensure that the poverty issue is being tackled holistically, and taking into consideration Sarawak's own peculiarities, the Government has recently commissioned the Study on Poverty Alleviation in Sarawak. The objectives are to do a baseline study on the incidence of poverty in Sarawak, review the effectiveness of current poverty alleviation initiatives, and proposes comprehensive plan to alleviate poverty in Sarawak by 2030. A sum of RM3 million will be allocated next year for the study.

My Administration will continuously prioritise and intensify efforts to elevate the *rakyat*'s economic stature through the implementation of various programmes and projects, which include the following:

Initiative 1: Establishment of Sarawak Social Innovation Fund

To improve the well-being of individuals and communities based on outcome-driven programme design, products, and services, I am pleased to announce that the State will allocate RM10 million for the establishment of the Sarawak Social Innovation Fund (SSIF).

This Fund is to enable NGOs, higher learning institutions, and private companies to undertake promising community-based and private sector driven solutions that have evidence of results or outcomes in six priority areas such as:

(a) Economic and job opportunities;
(b) Healthy futures and people's wellbeing;
(c) Youth empowerment and development;
(d) Green and sustainable development;
(e) Emerging technology adoption; and
(f) Digital inclusivity.

The Fund, which is part of a Whole-of-Government approach in affecting change in our society, also aims at promoting public and private sector participation in solving socio-economic problems on sustainable, effective, and efficient manner.

Initiative 2: Empowering Low-Income Group in Small Businesses

Efforts will continue to be intensified to ensure the focus group, especially the B40 group, is provided with the opportunity to generate and increase their income. The Government is implementing micro capital assistance to kick off small business which includes:

(a) Low-Income Household Empowering (LIFE) programme with an allocation of RM3.8 million next year to assist 2,500 recipients. This programme assists the vulnerable, risky and affected group to uplift their income through small business ventures; and

(b) *Bantuan Ketua Isi Rumah Wanita Sarawak* (KIRWAS) with an allocation of RM300 thousand next year that provides cash assistance of RM500 to empower 600 Sarawak women entrepreneurs.

Initiative 3: Providing Welfare Aids

The Government will continue to provide cash assistance targeting the hardcore poor households, elderly and the vulnerable, children and the disabled. Under this Budget, a sum of RM53 million will be allocated for various assistances, including Bantuan Am, Bantuan Bencana, and Bantuan Orang Kelainan Upaya.

Initiative 4: Providing Affordable Housing

In our strenuous effort to provide a decent home for the *rakyat,* especially for the low-income group, this Budget allocates RM105 million for the implementation of 17 affordable housing projects in Kuching, Limbang, Miri, Betong, Mukah and Sarikei involving 1,481 units. The industrialised building system (IBS) method will be used to expedite the delivery of these houses.

Initiative 5: Enhancing Home Ownership & Affordability

Besides providing affordable houses, the Government also provides end-financing facilities and other assistance to ensure the *rakyat*, especially the poor households and B40 to own a house. Among the assistances are as follows:

End-financing for Affordable Housing

The Government has allocated RM122 million for Mutiara Mortgage and Credit Sdn. Bhd (MUTIARA), a wholly owned subsidiary of HDC to address the end-financing problem affecting low-income group (B40) and middle-income group (M40) home buyers. As of August 2023, a total of RM84 million involving 1,455 accounts have been approved, and out of this, RM54 million has been disbursed to 1,052 successful applicants.

Housing and Repayment Assistance Scheme

Housing and Repayment Assistance Scheme (HDRAS) provides financial assistance of RM10,000 to eligible home buyers under B40 and M40 groups to purchase affordable houses for housing projects sanctioned by the Government. HDRAS also provides repayment assistance of RM200 per month for up to 48 months. Home buyers approved with 100% loan financing from any financial institution are also eligible for repayment assistance.

Under this initiative, RM40 million has been set aside for this scheme, targeted to benefit 4,000 home buyers. First home buyer, *rumah kedua tidak boleh*. As of September 2023, 854 applications has approved involving a sum of RM7.5 million.

Tuan Speaker, I would like to elaborate bit here our State is the only State that have the home buyer to pay deficit RM10,000, free, we give them free, they don't have to pay back.

Longhouse Loan Scheme

For 2023, the Sarawak Government has allocated RM50 million to implement the Longhouse Loan Scheme. As of July 2023, all allocations have been disbursed, which benefited 78 longhouses consisting of 1,698 doors.

The Government will make available another RM50 million for the scheme in 2024.

Resettlement Scheme (SPS) and Village Extension Scheme (SPK)

The implementation of the Resettlement Scheme (SPS) and Village Extension Scheme (SPK) reflects the priority and concern of the Government towards low-income individuals who require land to build their own houses.

As of August 2023, a total of 319 schemes have been provided, with a provision for 41,651 residential lots. Under the 12th Malaysia Plan and *Projek Rakyat* allocation, a total of 65 new SPS and SPK projects have been approved, which will provide 7,035 residential lots with an estimated cost of RM1,134 million, that is 1.134 billion.

Out of these 65 projects, 12 have been fully completed, and the remaining 53 will continue until the end of 2025. This Budget will allocate a sum of RM166 million for this purpose.

The Government has also set aside a land premium fee not exceeding RM2,500 for each residential lot within the SPS and SPK, even though the cost of providing each lot falls within the range of RM120,000 to RM150,000. This demonstrates the Government's commitment to helping the *rakyat* who are in need.

Urban Renewal Project

The main objective of the Urban Renewal Project is to improve the standard and quality of life of the people by providing affordable housing, well planned settlements with basic infrastructure, recreational facilities, places of worship and business premises.

To achieve this objective, a total of 16 Urban Renewal projects have been approved under the 12th Malaysia Plan with a ceiling of RM601 million, out of which RM122 million will be allocated in 2024 to implement various projects as follows:

(a) Sand filling and infrastructure works at Kemuyang, Sibu of RM60 million;
(b) Sungai Bedaun Housing Project of RM40 million;
(c) Jepak Redevelopment Project of RM13.5 million; and
(d) Tabuan Melayu and Tabuan Foochow Redevelopment Project of RM6 million.

Among the projects currently being implemented and completed is Darul Hana Redevelopment Project Phase I. Another two new Urban Renewal projects, namely Bukit Assek Development Project and Kampung Seberang Kedai Lawas Redevelopment Project, have been approved under the Mid-Term Review of 12th Malaysia Plan.

As of August 2023, a total of 1,099 affordable housing units have been completed under the programme. Meanwhile, 1,829 units will be built in 2024, expected to be completed by early 2026.

INITIATIVE 6: HOUSING RENTAL AND REPAIR

We will also continue to provide house rental assistance and repair of houses to improve the well-being of the *rakyat* through the following programmes:

Sarawak Rental Assistance Scheme

To assist the low-income group in reducing living costs and mitigating urban poverty, the Sarawak Government has introduced a rental subsidy initiative through the Sarawak Rental Assistance Scheme (SRAS) with an allocation of RM48 million. Under the scheme, eligible applicants will receive rental assistance of RM200 a month for up to 36 months. For 2024, 6,000 households are targeted to benefit from this initiative, which involves a sum of RM12 million.

Program Penambahbaikan Rumah Rakyat Miskin Sarawak (MRP – PPRMS)

A sum of RM60 million will be provided in the 2024 Budget to continue with the programme to repair dilapidated houses targeting the B40 group. The allocation is for repair works with a maximum of RM15,000 per house. Since its introduction in 2018, a total of 45,666 beneficiaries have benefitted from this programme, with an expenditure amounting to RM254.3 million.

STRATEGIC THRUST TWELVE: ENHANCING GOVERNMENT CAPACITY AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Reform Efforts

Tuan Speaker, reform efforts are being undertaken to build more responsive and effective public civil service so that it is able to deal with the current and future challenges.

The objectives of this reform initiative are:

(a) increase capacity of Government strategic human resource management and workforce planning;
(b) strengthen the recruitment system;
(c) strengthen the performance-oriented policies and performance management system; and
(d) enhance the well-being of State Civil Service.

Initiative 1: PCDS 2030 Monitoring and Performance Management

Given the importance of tracking the implementation of PCDS 2030 to achieve our aspirations, a sector has been established in the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) Sarawak to monitor the implementation of PCDS 2030, namely the *Performance Management and Delivery Sector* (PMD). The *Performance Dashboards* for each PCDS 2030 sector tracks the *yearly Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)* based on the PCDS 2030 objectives for each of the sector. We will publish the *first PCDS 2030 Annual Report for 2023*, showcasing the key highlights and progress across the six economic sectors and seven enablers.

Initiative 2: Capacity Building of State Civil Service

Restructuring Of State Civil Service

Sarawak Civil Service's (SCS) workforce plays a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth functioning of government agencies. Their function in providing efficient and quality government services would create trust and confidence among the *rakyat* towards the Government.

Recognising the vital role of SCS as the pulse of the Government, we are embarking on a transformation journey in response to rapid development and changing circumstances. The

Government is currently conducting a comprehensive study on SCS's functions and structures to restructure and transform SCS. The study is expected to be completed soon, and its recommendations are to be implemented in 2024.

Enhancing Performance Management System

The performance management system will also be enhanced based on improved evaluation criteria in line with the organisation's performance. For this purpose, a sum of RM1.5 million will be allocated in 2024 under the SCS Talent Management System.

Capacity Building of Sarawak Civil Service

Capacity building goes hand-in-hand with cultivating a high-performance culture. This synergy ensures that our SCS is knowledgeable, highly effective, responsive, and proactive.

In this regard, we are embarking on various capacity-building programmes in the SCS. This include *Hadiah Latihan Dalam Perkhidmatan* or HLDP which allows officers to continually seek knowledge and embrace a high-performance ethos. In 2023, we have sent State officers to attend training programmes at renowned higher learning institutions such as Harvard University, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies, and Melbourne Business School.

We will continue to develop the talent of our SCS to its fullest potential. Hence, for 2024, a sum of about RM20 million will be allocated for capacity building of the Sarawak Civil Service.

SCS Employee Well-being Initiatives: Enhancing Job Performance and Boosting Productivity

We recognise the dedication and contribution of the SCS and pensioners in driving the State's development. Therefore, ensuring their well-being and welfare, is a priority and a responsibility we hold dear. I am pleased to inform this (august House) that we have approved several well-being initiatives this year. Among them are Medical Incentives at Private Hospitals or Clinics, enhancements to the *Skim Kemudahan Pinjaman Kerajaan* and *Kemudahan Perubatan Untuk Ibu Bapa,* which is specifically for the parents of retired SCS personnel.

In addition, we are rolling out awareness programmes to equip our SCS with up-to-date information and techniques to maintain their financial, physical, and mental well-being.

The Government is also embarking on an initiative to provide a conducive working environment for SCS. Proper facilities would enable the State machinery to function more efficiently. Thus, a sum of RM28 million will be set aside for the maintenance of State Government buildings, including offices and quarters, and an additional sum of RM360 million for the upgrading of existing Government buildings and new construction.

Initiative 3: Strengthening Good Governance

My Administration will ensure the culture of integrity is always practised at all levels of the administration. All State Departments and Agencies have been tasked to establish an Integrity Unit and make reports and improvements on their administration and governance. More SCS Officers will be trained and accredited as Certified Integrity Officers (CeIOs). To date, 164 CeIOs have been placed in various Departments and Agencies to assist the Head of Departments in cultivating integrity and good governance.

I would like to express my appreciation to SPRM for giving training to our officers. The tabling of the Ombudsman Bill in this DUN Sitting is also another clear testament of this Government commitment to strengthen governance and ensure efficient delivery of services to the *rakyat*.

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE AND GREEN ECONOMY

Energy Transition Policy (ETP)

Tuan Speaker, allow me for a few minutes to, you know, to elaborate on this. We have initiated the drafting of Energy Transition Policy for Sarawak. The policy aims to ensuring the State and its people have safe, clean, affordable, and efficient energy that is secure and reliable.

Clean energy is a critical component of the Energy Transition Policy. Sarawak has abundant renewable energy resources, such as hydropower, solar, and possibly wind. These resources can be used to generate clean and affordable electricity, which can help to reduce Sarawak's reliance on fossil fuels and mitigate climate change. Thus, I have requested Sarawak Energy Berhad to come up with a Renewable Energy Plan and expedite the implementation of renewable energy projects.

Net Zero Strategy and Carbon Plan for Sarawak

Sarawak is also committed to reducing emissions and delivering its net zero targets in a pro-business and pro-growth way, in line with Malaysia's Commitment towards carbon neutrality as early as 2050.

In doing so, the Sarawak Government will allocate RM2 million next year for the formulation of the Sarawak Net Zero Strategy and Carbon Plan to develop a roadmap for us to achieve a net zero target by 2050. This includes policies for the carbon market and trading that are internationally recognised.

In addition to renewable energy, the Just Energy Transition Policy will promote the development of green hydrogen, bioenergy, and CCUS. These technologies can help to decarbonise Sarawak’s energy sector and to achieve the State long-term climate goals.

Forest Carbon Activity

Malaysia is a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In 2022, the Sarawak Government amended the Forests Ordinance, 2015, to provide provision for licensing of Forest Carbon Activity. Forest carbon activity is one of the strategies to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through carbon sequestration and storing it within the forests. This key initiative will also create new sources of revenue for us.

The Forest Department Sarawak will undertake a detailed forest carbon assessment to determine the current status of carbon stock in forested areas. Thus, RM1.4 million will be allocated next year to quantify forest carbon stock in Sarawak. Currently, one carbon study permit and one carbon storage licence have been issued.

Study on the Sarawak Climate Change Policy and
Low Carbon Society Blueprints in Cities and Towns

The Government is undertaking a Study on the Sarawak Climate Change Policy and Low Carbon Society Blueprints covering Kuching, Miri, Sibu and Bintulu, with an allocation of RM1.5 million. Under the Study, mitigation and adaptation measures will be formulated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance climate resilience. To strengthen this effort, we will be embarking on Sarawak Green Economy Policy and Action Plans Study, with an allocation of RM3 million in 2024.

The Sarawak Blue Economy Policy and Roadmap
(2023-2030)

The livelihood of our coastal communities is very much dependent on marine resources; with more than 1,000km of shoreline and rich marine resources within Sarawak's continental shelf, it is believed that the coastal and marine ecosystems of Sarawak provide enormous economic potentials.

Recognising the significance of these marine resources, we will develop a Sarawak Blue Economy Policy and Roadmap (SBEP) for the sustainable development of coastal and marine ecosystems. The SBEP promotes a holistic and participatory approach to the conservation of coastal and marine ecosystems and sustainable use and management of associated resources such as fisheries, coastal tourism, renewable energy, and marine biotechnology.

Operationalisation of Sarawak Sovereign Wealth Future Fund

Tuan Speaker, the GPS Government has made a momentous and forward-looking step to safeguard the economic prosperity of Sarawak with the establishment of the Sarawak Sovereign Wealth Future Fund (SSWFF), which is scheduled to commence operations early next year.

The initial appropriation to the Fund in 2024 will be at RM8 billion, which is to be approved in this Dewan Undangan Negeri sitting. With this appropriation, the Fund is expected to grow sustainably with no withdrawals except in the case of critical events which might arise within this 20-year period or when the Fund performs better than targeted.

The Board of Guardians comprising experts in finance, investment, and legal affairs have been appointed, and has conducted their first Board meeting recently.

Revenue Reengineering

My Administration will continue to implement revenue reengineering initiative, focusing on measures to broaden the State's revenue base, as well as strengthening revenue monitoring and collection mechanism, leveraging on digitalisation. For the information of this August House, we have introduced SST on timber products with effect from 1st June this year and to date, we have collected RM8 million revenue from this source.

In our efforts to diversify our revenue base, we will also be introducing a Bill entitled Environment (Reduction of Green House Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 in this Dewan Undangan Negeri Sitting. This Bill allows the imposition of levy on carbon trading and the emission of carbon or other greenhouse gases from activities and processes by the economic sectors in the State.

We need to be continually innovative to find new ways of raising additional revenue to fund the cost of State's administration, meeting the high expectations for development by the *rakyat* and ultimately, to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the State.

Federal Funding

During the tabling of the recent 2024 Federal Budget, the Federal allocation to Sarawak for development purposes increased from RM5.6 billion to RM5.8 billion. I would like to thank the Federal Government for this increase. However, this allocation represents only 6.4% of the total Federal Development Budget of RM90 billion for 2024. It is obviously far from enough to meet our development needs and address the imbalances between Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia, and our federal counterpart knows this very well. Given Sarawak significant contribution to the national economic growth, as well as the Federal coffer, especially revenue from oil and gas, I, therefore, call upon the Federal Government to provide much more allocation to us in its future Budget.

CONCLUSION

Tuan Speaker, in a nutshell, this Budget helps making things a little easier for many parents, older Sarawakians, students, and children by mitigating some of the costs they currently face.

Our sustained investments since the last three years have transformed our economy and strengthened our resilience. With the continuing growth momentum, it has given our people much optimism in looking forward to the future.

We are also proud of our socio-economic achievements. Considering the envisaged development agenda under PCDS 2030, and the constrained fiscal space, we have carefully balanced the difficult choices in resource allocation in order to finance the highest priority that will propel Sarawak to a greater height of prosperity. I am confident that we have made the right choice moving forward.

By planning prudently and focusing our investments on priority areas that matter to our people, we have made considerable progress on our path to another surplus budget. Because of our thoughtful and well-crafted plan, we can do this while still delivering our plan to support families, workers, and businesses across Sarawak.

We will continue, the GPS Government will continue to transform Sarawak that our people can be proud of, not only today, but in the future as well:

(a) A Sarawak that continues to have a robust and strong economy.
(b) A Sarawak that has well-developed infrastructure for greater mobility and connectivity.
(c) A Sarawak that has highly trained and competent workforce for the jobs of today and tomorrow.
(d) A Sarawak that protects you and your family from adversities of life.
(e) A Sarawak that is going to be a regional hub for green energy, investments and trade.
(f) A Sarawak that has a bright future ahead for our children and grandchildren.
(g) A Sarawak that is united, harmonious, caring and progressive.

Tuan Speaker, this should be our collective vision, a common endeavour, which I believe we can achieve, if we put our minds together and focus on executing the plan that we have laid out. Hence, I urge all of us civil servants and the population to continue working together with the Government and be committed in implementing the various plans and policies. At the same time, I also call upon our business community and civil society to continue giving their support to the GPS Government in building a stronger and united Sarawak.

We should set aside our differences beyond party politics and stand united for Sarawak *SEGULAI SEJALAI, SEJIWA SENADA***.** We have the responsibility to protect the uniqueness of Sarawak, with its special multi-ethnic characters. *INTU SARAWAK, PROTECT SARAWAK,* our GPS motto is apt in this respect. This Government is committed not only to bring more development and welfare to everyone, but to safeguard our rights and protect our interests as well.

Maka, belanjawan ini merupakan laluan kita untuk menuju masa depan yang lebih cerah, lebih makmur, lebih mampan. Bagaimanapun, jalan ini tidaklah semudah yang kita jangka. Kita akan berdepan dengan ketidaktentuan ekonomi, baik di peringkat nasional mahu pun global. Oleh itu, adalah penting semua lapisan masyarakat termasuk sektor swasta, memainkan peranan mereka masing-masing untuk sama-sama melonjakkan ekonomi kita ke mercu yang lebih tinggi.

Keupayaan dan kejayaan kita bersama dalam menangani cabaran getir wabak COVID-19 tiga tahun lepas, menunjukkan kita boleh mengatasi segala halangan walaupun sebesar pun. Inilah semangat juang anak-anak Sarawak. *AGI IDUP AGI NGELABAN*.

Semangat juang ini harus kita kekalkan dalam mana kita terus berusaha untuk mempertahankan hak-hak dan kepentingan Sarawak dalam Persekutuan Malaysia melalui

Malaysian Agreement dan juga IGC. Oleh itu, Kerajaan GPS akan terus komited untuk berjuang bagi mendapatkan kembali hak-hak Sarawak yang telah terhakis di bawah Perjanjian Malaysia 1963.

Ini telah terbukti dengan beberapa kejayaan kita hasil rundingan dengan Kerajaan Persekutuan sejak zaman Allahyarham Tok Nan lagi. Yang terbaharu ialah persetujuan Kerajaan Persekutuan untuk menyerah balik Lembaga Pelabuhan Bintulu kepada Sarawak. Usaha ini akan kita teruskan termasuklah mendapatkan kuasa autonomi dalam bidang pendidikan, kesihatan dan alam sekitar.

Saya menyeru agar Kerajaan Persekutuan mendengar dan memahami aspirasi rakyat Sarawak agar masa depan Persekutuan Malaysia akan sentiasa aman dan terjamin sepanjang zaman. Saya yakin dan percaya hubungan baik dan rapat antara Kerajaan GPS dengan Kerajaan Persekutuan sekarang akan memberi penyelesaian muktamad yang kita harapkan.

Dengan ini Tuan Speaker, saya memohon mencadangkan Rang Undang-Undang ini dibaca bagi kali yang kedua.

Timbalan Premier Sarawak; Menteri Kewangan dan Ekonomi Baru Kedua dan Menteri Infrastruktur dan Pembangunan Pelabuhan (**YB Datuk Amar Douglas Uggah Embas):** Tuan Speaker, I beg to second.

USUL UNTUK MERUJUK RESOLUSI ANGGARAN PERBELANJAAN PEMBANGUNAN BAGI TAHUN 2024 KEPADA JAWATANKUASA PEMBEKALAN

SUPPLY (2024) BILL, 2023

Premier Sarawak; Menteri Kewangan dan Ekonomi Baru; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar; Menteri Tenaga dan Kelestarian Alam Sekitar; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.26 Gedong: Tuan Speaker, I beg to move that the following resolution be referred to the Committee of Supply; "*That this Dewan resolves to approve the Development Estimates, 2024 as contained in Command Paper No. 11 of 2023 laid on the Table on 20th November 2023.*"

As presented in Command Paper No. 11 of 2023 the total development expenditure for 2024 amounts to RM9,038 million. Out of this amount RM8,915 million will be financed by State Fund while the balance of RM123 million will be financed by Federal Government to reimbursable DUN's and Grant.

The sum of RM9,038 million as proposed has been allocated on the basis of projected expenditure commitment and requirement for approved development activities during the year.

The proposed Education for the major sectors are as follows:

(a) A total of RM6,345 million is allocated under the Economic Sector for the following programmes;

(i) RM4,993 million ringgit is for commerce and industry such as state corporate investment development agencies programs and projects, State Industrialization, tourism industry development and promotion and conservation and protection of heritage collection;

(ii) RM819 million is for transport of which include roads, bridges, riverine infrastructure and ports, navigational safety and various infrastructure project under *Projek Rakyat*;

(iii) RM156 million is for energy and public utilities focusing on upgrading and expansion of water supply and electricity connectivity especially to the rural areas including a sum of RM58 million to Kuching Water Board and RM30 million to Sibu Water Board.

(iv) RM148 million is for agriculture development such as for crop research industry development, livestock, mechanisation and agriculture infrastructure, veterinary services, agriculture education and promotion, inland fisheries, and agriculture development;

(v) RM50 million is for digital economy initiatives;

(vi) RM55 million is for scientific research and development including establishment of Sarawak Science Centre and Infectious Disease Centre;

(vii) RM37 million is for feasibility studies on State development planning, and policy formulation;

(viii) RM86 million is for environment which includes forestry research and development forest management, urban drainage and flood mitigation as well as river and coastal engineering; and

(ix) RM1.3 million for the development of mineral industry.

(b) A total of RM2,290 million is allocated under social sector for the following programmes:

(i) RM1,545 million is for the village and community development mainly for the implementation of various rural transformation projects, minor rural projects, urban development and residential schemes, and family development;

(ii) RM286 million is for housing development mainly for the various kampung redevelopment, construction of affordable houses under Housing Development Corporation and Program Penambahbaikan Rumah Miskin Sarawak (PPRMS);

(iii) RM254 million is for local authorities and social welfare services which also includes urban sewerage and waste management as well as landfill development;

(iv) RM128 million is for education and training of our Sarawakian students; and

(v) RM77 million is for culture, youth and sports which includes upgrading of various sports facilities throughout the State for SUKMA 2024.

(c) A total of RM403 million is allocated under general administration sector for building of various government offices and service quarters, schools, as well as implementation of government ICT projects.

Tuan Speaker, I beg to move.

Timbalan Premier Sarawak; Menteri Kewangan dan Ekonomi Baru Kedua; dan Menteri Infrastruktur dan Pembangunan Pelabuhan (**YB Datuk Amar Douglas Uggah Embas)**: Tuan Speaker, I beg to second.

Tuan Speaker: Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, the debate on the Supply (2024) Bill, 2023 stand adjourned until Wednesday, 22nd November 2023. We have a lunch break. Dewan resume at 2.30 p.m.

(Mesyuarat ditangguhkan pada pukul 12.38 tengah hari)

(Mesyuarat dimulakan pada pukul 2.36 petang)

[Tuan Speaker mempengerusikan Mesyuarat]

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN –
BACAAN KALI YANG KEDUA

SARAWAK OMBUDSMAN BILL, 2023

Timbalan Premier; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua; Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari (YB Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan): Tuan Speaker, I beg to move a Bill intituled, "*An Ordinance to establish the Sarawak Ombudsman and to provide for measures against maladministration by the State Public Service agency and for matters connected therewith*", to be read a second time.

For the information of the Honourable Members of this august House, the tabling of this Bill is the Government's fulfillment of election promise in the manifesto of the GPS Government during its 15th State General Election, which is efficient Government administration with high integrity as a catalyst of development in Sarawak.

This Bill epitomizes Sarawak's strategic direction as outlined in the Post-Covid Development Strategy 2030 (PCDS 2030) towards attainment of a high-income economy by 2030. To realize this aspiration, there must be an administration with high integrity, practices good governance principles, efficient and committed, and which enjoy the trust and confidence of all stakeholders. Having such an administration will provide a conducive environment to attract foreign and domestic direct investments into Sarawak which will enhance economic growth so essential towards attainment of the goal of becoming a developed State by 2030.

The Ombudsman is a recognised concept adopted by most democratic countries across the globe, with 115 out of 195 countries having an Ombudsman institution. In a world where transparency and accountability are essential for a functional democracy, the Ombudsman plays essential roles in ensuring the voice of the people is heard, and the Government operates in the best interest of its citizens.

Benchmarking Visit to Sweden

In an effort to produce a practical and implementable law for the State of Sarawak and to learn about the best practices, the Sarawak Government, led by the Right Honourable Premier on 21st August 2023, went to Sweden to meet with the Swedish Chief Parliamentary Ombudsman, Mr. Erik Nymansson.

Sweden serves as an exemplary model for countries around the world due to its pioneering role in establishing the Ombudsman system since 214 years ago. The world's first Ombudsman was appointed in Sweden in 1809 by King Charles XII. Officials who misused their powers or authority were held to account. Consequently, confidence in the country's administrative system improved by upholding the principles of public accountability and good governance. Therefore, it is evident that Sweden's experience with the Ombudsman system can provide valuable insights for other countries to emulate when establishing similar Ombudsman systems.

For that reason, Sweden has been chosen to be the model for the establishment of Sarawak Ombudsman. A government administration with the respect and trust of the people, provides a platform for sustaining the State's prosperity. As quoted by acclaimed financial journalist, Anna Bernasek, "*the attributes of trust and integrity, beyond being simply virtuous ideals, are actually the bedrocks of a successful economy and culture*".

Establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman

Pursuant to item 7 of List II (State List) of the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution, the State is empowered to legislate on matters relating to the machinery of the State Government which is exclusively for State services. Hence, we are now exercising our constitutional authority to establish the Sarawak Ombudsman with the primary objective of elevating the standards of accountability in public administration and to provide measures against maladministration by the State Public Service agencies.

The law will therefore enhance transparency and accountability in government agencies by allowing the public to report maladministration to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman will ensure check-and-balance elements are in place and will enable the Government to improve its public delivery systems and procedures. This will lead to a better administration and to increase public trust and respect in the Government.

The establishment of our very own law on Ombudsman will provide independent oversight on the performance of our State Public Service agencies. The Sarawak Ombudsman will ensure fairness, transparency and accountability in their service delivery which is essential for Sarawak to progress towards becoming a developed State by 2030.

Appointment of the Chief Ombudsman, etc

Tuan Speaker, the Sarawak Ombudsman will be led by a Chief Ombudsman and a Deputy Chief Ombudsman, along with three to five other Ombudsmen who possess relevant expertise or experience to ensure its effectiveness. The appointment of these Ombudsmen will be made by the Yang di-Pertua Negeri, and they will take an oath of office for a maximum term of three years, with the possibility of reappointment. This is a clear manifestation of our commitment to maintain integrity and to ensure that the State Public Service agencies provide a high-quality service to the *rakyat*.

The Sarawak Ombudsman's office will be managed by the Chief Administrator, who is appointed by the Minister from among the members of the State Public Service and he is to be assisted by such number of officers. The Ombudsman staff and others acting on their behalf are immune from civil and criminal proceedings in the discharge of their official duties.

Powers and Functions of Ombudsman

Tuan Speaker, the legal framework required for the Sarawak Ombudsman to efficiently perform their duties and authority in supervising the State Public Service agency, which encompasses:

(a) The State Civil Service;
(b) Local authorities;
(c) State statutory bodies; and
(d) Government-linked companies.

Therefore, the purpose of this Bill is to give the Ombudsman the power to:

(a) Receive, investigate, and resolve complaints including to dismiss any baseless and frivolous complaint;
(b) Recommend corrective or preventive action to be taken by a state public service agency;

(c) Monitor the implementation of the recommendation made by the Ombudsman;
(d) Prepare and publish reports relating to the maladministration in the state public service agency;
(e) Direct the production or inspection of materials that can assist the Ombudsman in the investigation;
(f) Make factual findings based on the evidence procured in the course of the investigation;
(g) Enter and inspect places related to the complaint; and
(h) To do such matters and things related to the exercise of its powers under this Bill.

Investigation into Complaint

Tuan Speaker, the Ombudsman is empowered to investigate any complaints and in so doing, if it is necessary, the Chief Ombudsman may opt to form an Investigation Committee. The Chief Ombudsman may appoint any relevant persons to be members of the Investigation Committee to investigate complaints and may require the attendance of any person who may assist the investigation including to require the production of any documents. Notwithstanding any complaint, the Ombudsman may initiate any action on its own if it thinks it is necessary in the interests of the *rakyat*.

Offences and penalties

Tuan Speaker, this Bill makes the following an offence:

(a) Intentionally giving false information;
(b) Failure to appear upon receiving notice;
(c) Exercising improper influence;
(d) Wilfully obstructs, hinders, or resists the Ombudsman or any other person in the exercise of their powers;
(e) Commits contempt towards the Ombudsman; and
(f) Making misrepresentation and the penalties that can be imposed upon conviction are fines ranging from RM10,000 to RM50,000 and imprisonment ranging from six months to three years respectively or to both.

Tuan Speaker, I believe that these offences and penalties are necessary to ensure that the Ombudsman can carry out their duties effectively and impartially. The Ombudsman will have broad investigative powers to effectively discharge their duties. This includes the powers to compel witnesses to give information, to produce documents, arrest, conduct search and seizure and etc.

Reporting to Dewan Undangan Negeri

This Bill requires the Ombudsman to submit reports to the Dewan Undangan Negeri, through its Minister, on:

(a) its activities and its affairs;
(b) the result of any enquiry carried out by the Ombudsman including any findings, recommendations and opinion; and
(c) other reports which the Ombudsman may consider necessary.

This is to ensure that the Ombudsman's findings are transparent and accessible to the public, and this august House has oversight over the performance of the Ombudsman and the actions or activities undertaken by him in pursuance of the provisions of the new law. It portrays the independency of the Ombudsman’s institution which is free from any interference whether political or otherwise.

Power to Make Rules

Tuan Speaker, the Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri may make rules or may be expedient or necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Bill including:

(a) the prescription of offences and its punishments for any contravention of any rules made hereunder;
(b) procedures and forms for compounding of offences;
(c) the procedure for investigation;
(d) Code of Conduct of the Ombudsman; and
(e) such other purposes which may be considered necessary for the exercise of the powers and the performance of the functions of the Ombudsman under this Bill.

Conclusion

Tuan Speaker, The Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 and the establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman Office will bring positive impacts, including:

(a) Increased transparency and accountability of the Sarawak Government;
(b) Improved quality of Sarawak Government administration; and
(c) Increased public trust in the Sarawak Government.

This Bill once passed will place Sarawak as the first State in Malaysia to have Ombudsman law. Therefore, I humbly urge all Members of this august House to support this Bill. Tuan Speaker, I beg to move.

Timbalan Premier, Menteri Kesihatan Awam, Perumahan dan Kerajaan Tempatan (YB Datuk Amar Dr Sim Kui Hian): Tuan Speaker, I beg to second.

Tuan Speaker: Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, I shall call upon Honourable Members to debate on this Bill under Standing Order 31 (8), I limit the speeches to 20 minutes. As Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, may I call upon the Member for Beting Maro to speak first.

YB Tuan Haji Razaili Bin Haji Gapor: Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh dan Salam sejahtera. Tuan Speaker, thank you for giving Beting Maro the floor to participate in the debate for the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023.

Tuan Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan, Honourable Member for N.82 Bukit Sari; Deputy Premier; Second Minister for Natural Resources and Urban Development; and Minister for International Trade Industry and Investment who had tabled this Bill in the *Dewan* today.

As having an Ombudsman system is considered one of the criteria for a developed country, the tabling of this Bill is timely and welcomed. This Ordinance has been established in Sweden for over 200 years and have also been practiced in hundreds other countries. I believe that we are on the right track.

Tuan Speaker,

Progress of the Ombudsman System in Sarawak

Since the announcement by the Yang Amat Berhormat Premier on May 24th, 2023, during the last sitting, Sarawak would establish its own Ombudsman law. I have been closely following the developments. When it was announced that the Bill would be presented in this Sitting, I felt a strong urge to participate in the debate to express my unwavering support for it.

Tuan Speaker, since assuming the leadership position in 2017, the YAB Premier has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to establishing a government defined by integrity, transparency, and good governance. In pursuit of this goal, the Ministry's portfolio in the Chief Minister's Department (Integrity and Ombudsman) was created, with the late Yang Berhormat Datuk Haji Talib bin Zulpilip appointed as the responsible Minister. The Yang Berhormat Datuk's unwavering efforts in upholding integrity have been commendable and always be remembered, laying a solid foundation for future excellence.

Six years after the establishment of the portfolio, YAB Premier has taken a significant step towards strengthening integrity by introducing the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. This legislation aims to ensure that the Government administration becomes more transparent, accountable, and operates with integrity, leading to improve service delivery to the people. The involvement of the public in upholding integrity within the Government's administration is strongly encouraged, as they serve as the Government's eyes and ears. Therefore, their constructing views are essential. I firmly believe that with the unwavering commitment and dedication of our leader to foster a more systematic approach to the Government's administration, the passage of this Bill by this esteemed House with pave the way for the establishment of an official body empowered to enhance and transform service delivery.

Benefits of having Ombudsman Office in Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, it is crucial to acknowledge that both the Federal and State Governments have made commendable strides in establishing mechanism for citizens to file complaints and have their issues addressed. We commend this initiative. However, there's room for some improvement to ensure that these efforts remain relevant and sustainable in the long run. The establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman is a significant step toward fostering accountability and responsibility within the Government's administrative machinery. It represents a reciprocal relationship where the Government bears the responsibility to provide high quality services to the people maintaining a zero tolerance, policy for corruption, abuse of power, and dishonesty.

Tuan Speaker, the onus lies on every civil servant in the State to assume full responsibility for their decision and action. By adhering to all applicable laws and regulations they can contribute to upholding the high standards of public service. This in turn will foster a positive and supportive work environment. As public recognizes that their rights and needs are being safeguarded by dedicated Government officials, their trust in the Government will inevitably strengthened.

On the other hand, citizens bear the responsibility to report any misconduct committed by the Government officials including violations of system and procedures, abuse of power or any other action that could tarnish the reputation of the public service. The public plays a crucial role in providing constructive feedback in the delivery of the Government's services. It is aptly said that it takes two to tango. Therefore, I firmly believe that establishing an ombudsman institution in Sarawak can play a pivotal role in fostering a more responsible society. Additionally, by introducing an element of humaneness to the institution, it can contribute employee satisfaction, motivation, and retention. This can be achieved by providing a safe and informal avenue for individuals to express their grievances and be heard.

Tuan Speaker, as we collectively strive to realize our aspiration of becoming a developed State by 2030, it is imperative that our governance structure embodies integrity at every level, earning the trust of both the public and potential investors. This aligns seamlessly with the 2nd Strategic Thrust; Ease of Doing Business, which aims to position Sarawak as a premier investment destination.

Ombudsman as People's Defender

Tuan Speaker, the ombudsman is an independent public office that investigates complaints and serves as a mediator between the individual citizen and the State. In Spain, it is known as *Defensor del Pueblo* which means, "*defender of the people*", and it accurately describes the nature

of the ombudsman's work. The ombudsman ensures good governance by promoting and respecting the fundamental rights of the people and working within the laws and regulations. Additionally, the ombudsman ensures that the Government is free from corruption and committed to preventing maladministration, which could lead to injustice.

In its modern form, the ombudsman is a crucial element in the democratic system that ensures checks and balances. The concept of the rule of law forms its basis, whereby the Government not only creates the law but is also subject to it. The Ombudsman plays a vital role in preventing the State from gaining absolute power without any constraints, accountability, or controls. Constraints on the power exercised by the Government are necessary for the public to have confidence in its actions. For a government to be effective, it needs legitimacy and hence, I believe, the Bill is tabled today to ensure that.

Tuan Speaker, I hope that the impending appointment of the Sarawak Ombudsman will be entrusted to an individual who possesses in depth knowledge of the system's workings and is unwavering in their commitment to upholding integrity while pursuing the transformation of the Government's service delivery into a world-class standard.

Furthermore, I trust that the appointed Ombudsman will wholeheartedly fulfil their role as a steadfast advocate for the people. I hold the utmost respect for their work, which many carry out under exceptionally challenging circumstances, and sometimes at considerable personal risk. Whilst realism is essential, it should never come at the expense of our ideals. The longest journey commences with a single, resolute step.

Tuan Speaker, to conclude, the tabling of the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 is an important milestone for the State in its effort towards achieving a developed State by 2030. Sarawak will not only be seen as a pioneer, but also as the first State that implements progressive policy to address maladministration practice in the public service.

The Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 will be the legacy of the State Government in upholding transparency and accountability as whatever complaints against maladministration in the public service will be directly taken up to the State Assembly.

With that, Tuan Speaker, hereby Beting Maro gives full support to the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Bukit Assek.

YB Encik Chieng Jin Ek: Tuan Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity in participating the debate on Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. The introduction of the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 is a timely and much needed step forward towards ensuring the proper administration and providing the effective measures against the maladministration by the Sarawak public service agencies. The establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman Office will play a crucial role in upholding the principles of accountability, transparency, and good governance within the Sarawak Government.

The concept of the Parliamentary Ombudsman originates in Sweden. The office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman was established in 1809 as part of the Sweden's instrument of government and this institution was created to oversee the Government's action and ensure the public authority either in accordance with the law and respected the right of citizens. Over time, many other countries around the world have adopted similar ombudsman institutions to provide oversight, investigate complaints, and promote transparency and accountability in the Government's actions.

Tuan Speaker, for the information of the Honourable Members of this august House, currently, there are only three ASEAN countries with such institutions:

(a) The Philippines: The Office of the Ombudsman, established in year 1987;

(b) Indonesia: Komisi Ombudsman Republik Indonesia was established in year 2000; and
(c) Thailand: Office of the Ombudsman of Thailand, also established in year 2000.

And these established ombudsman institutions share the similar functions, which include addressing and investigating complaints of maladministration or wrongdoing by government agencies and officials and it is important to note that although not all ASEAN countries have ombudsman institutions, many have set up alternative mechanisms to handle the complaints and also uphold the human rights and accountability.

Therefore, I am confident that the establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman will propel Malaysia forward and making it the fourth country within the ASEAN to adopt the ombudsman system.

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak is fortunate to have a forward thinking and visionary leader of YAB Premier Sarawak and since his assuming office in year 2017, he has recognized the crucial role of establishing an ombudsman institution. And with the introduction of the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023; the GPS Government has taken a decisive step towards ensuring that the Government's administration adheres to the principles of integrity, transparency, and accountability.

It is heartening to witness the growing recognition among the State of the importance of an ombudsman system. Sarawak has been acknowledged as a model and reference point in this regard, demonstrating that we have taken the right steps at the right time. As pioneers, we have ventured into uncharted territory and paved the way for others to follow and this positive impact is indeed encouraging.

Tuan Speaker, I would like to focus my debate today on the significant impacts of the ombudsman system to the economy. With the establishment of the ombudsman system in Sarawak, it can indirectly contribute to the improvement of the economy in several ways.

Reducing Corruption

Corruption poses a significant barrier to economic growth. It can distort market mechanisms, deter investment, and undermine the public trust in institutions. The Ombudsman plays a pivotal role in combating the corruption by investigating allegations of maladministration within the public bodies. By holding the officials accountable, and promoting transparent and ethical practices, the ombudsman system contributes to the creation of a more favourable business environment. And this, in turn, attracts investment, and fosters economic growth.

Improving Public Service Delivery

Inefficiencies and mismanagement within the Public Services can impede economic development. The ombudsman system serves as a check against such issues, ensuring that public services are delivered effectively, impartially, and responsively to citizens needs. By addressing complaints and providing suggestions for improvement, ombudsman can help streamline bureaucratic processes, reduce unnecessary regulations, and enhanced service delivery and this has a positive impact on economic productivity and competitiveness.

Protecting Business and Consumer Rights

Tuan Speaker, the Ombudsman institutions extend their services not only all individuals but also to businesses and consumers. They address the complaints arising from regulatory issues, unfair treatment, or abuse of power by the government entities. By providing a fair and impartial mechanism for dispute resolution, the Ombudsman contributes to fostering a conducive business environment and safeguarding the rights of entrepreneurs, and investors. And, this contributes to the enhancement of economic confidence, promote entrepreneurship and attract foreign investment.

Promoting Transparency and Accountability

The Ombudsman systems serves as a powerful advocate for transparency and accountability within public administration. By thoroughly investigating complaints of maladministration and making recommendations for corrective actions, the Ombudsman plays a paramount role in fostering greater transparency, and accountability in government institutions and this helps to bolster the public's trust in governance, reduce uncertainty, and cultivate an environment conducive to economic activity.

While the impact of the Ombudsman system on the economy may not be immediately apparent, the promotion of good governance, transparency, accountability, and efficient public service delivery lays the foundation for sustainable economic growth, increased investment, and overall economic development. In this regard, Sarawak is well-positioned to achieve its aspiration of becoming a developed State by 2030, as outlined in the Post-Covid 19 Development Strategy (PCDS 2030). This vision is not merely a hollow declaration, but a tangible reality that can be realised through unwavering commitment and concerted efforts.

With that, Tuan Speaker, I fully support the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 to be materialised. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Tellian.

YB Encik Royston bin Valentine: Terima kasih, Tuan Speaker, kerana memberi ruang kepada Tellian untuk turut serta dalam perbahasan Rang Undang-undang pada petang ini.

Salam Sejahtera dan Salam Sarawak Maju Makmur. Tuan Speaker, terlebih dahulu saya ingin mengucapkan tahniah kepada Bukit Sari merangkap Timbalan Premier Sarawak dan Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan iaitu Menteri yang bertanggungjawab dalam membawa usul untuk suatu ordinan bagi menubuhkan Ombudsman Sarawak, pelantikan Ketua Ombudsman dan Ombudsman untuk memastikan pentadbiran yang betul dan untuk memperuntukkan langkah-langkah terhadap penyelewengan oleh agensi perkhidmatan awam dan perkara-perkara yang berkaitan dengannya.

Rang Undang-undang yang dibaca pada hari ini, merupakan buah fikiran yang sudah pasti akan mengukuhkan lagi kedudukan Kerajaan kita, sekaligus meningkatkan keyakinan rakyat dan pelabur luar terhadap kerajaan Sarawak. Selain itu, dengan kewibawaan kepimpinan Yang Amat Berhormat Premier bersama Kerajaan GPS yang sudah terbukti keupayaannya dalam tadbir urus Kerajaan, penggubalan dasar-dasar yang sungguh efektif sekali gus mempunyai misi dan visi yang jauh ke hadapan.

Rang Undang-undang ini merujuk kepada peranan yang sering tidak disedari tetapi memainkan peranan penting dalam menegakkan akauntabiliti, keadilan, dan ketelusan dalam pentadbiran sesebuah Kerajaan.

Tuan Speaker, Ombudsman adalah entiti bebas dan saksama yang dilantik untuk menyiasat aduan dan rungutan terhadap institusi dan organisasi Kerajaan. Peranan unik ini berfungsi sebagai jambatan antara rakyat dan pihak berkuasa sekali gus memastikan hak dan kepentingan pelbagai peringkat pihak sentiasa dilindungi. Di mana-mana sahaja di dalam dunia, ketidakseimbangan kuasa yang wujud bukan sahaja dari ketidakstabilan politik tetapi berlaku juga dipelbagai peringkat pentadbiran yang boleh membawa kepada ketidakadilan apa-apa jua situasi, maka, di sini Ombudsman akan memainkan peranan penting sebagai penjaga demokrasi dalam sesebuah Kerajaan.

Mereka bertindak dan memberikan ruang kepada individu untuk menyatakan kebimbangan dan mencari jalan penyelesaian. Dengan menawarkan platform yang tidak berat sebelah dan sulit, Ombudsman memberi kuasa kepada rakyat dan membantu memastikan mereka yang berkuasa bertanggungjawab atas sebarang keculasan dan kekhilafan yang berlaku.

Secara umum, Ombudsman bertindak sebagai pemeriksaan terhadap aktiviti Kerajaan demi kepentingan rakyat dan mengawasi penyiasatan aduan aktiviti Kerajaan yang tidak wajar terhadap rakyat. Sekiranya aduan didapati dibuktikan, Ombudsman berfungsi untuk membetulkan masalah dan bertindak untuk penyiasatan aduan ataupun Penyiasatan Kesalahan, dimana kedua-duanya mempunyai asas tindakan masing-masing.

Tuan Speaker, suka untuk saya nyatakan disini, terdapat beberapa sebab mengapa Ombudsman sangat penting untuk diwujudkan.

Bebas dan Saksama

Ombudsman beroperasi secara bebas dan saksama, memastikan individu mempunyai pihak yang neutral untuk meminta bantuan dan penyelesaian kepada apa jua kebimbangan mereka.

Ketelusan

Ombudsman menggalakkan ketelusan dengan menyediakan platform untuk rakyat menyuarakan kebimbangan dan rungutan mereka mengenai tindakan atau keputusan Kerajaan. Ini membantu membina kepercayaan antara Kerajaan dan rakyatnya dan memastikan operasi Kerajaan dijalankan secara adil dan saksama sepanjang masa.

Saluran Yang Boleh dan Mudah Diakses untuk Aduan

Ombudsman menyediakan jalan yang mudah diakses untuk menyuarakan rungutan mereka dan mencari jalan penyelesaian. Ini akan membantu menangani isu-isu pada peringkat awal, menghalang ia daripada terus meningkat menjadi masalah yang lebih besar dan menular menjadi satu masalah yang sudah pasti akan mengganggu gugat pentadbiran sesebuah Kerajaan. Jangan kerana nila setitik, rosak susu sebelanga.

Menyelesaikan Pertikaian dan Konflik

Ombudsman berfungsi sebagai pengantara, memudahkan penyelesaian konflik dan pertikaian antara individu dan organisasi, serta masalah yang timbul di dalam sesebuah organisasi oleh sebab ketirisan di dalam pentadbiran. Mereka berperanan membantu mencari penyelesaian yang dipersetujui bersama, menyelesaikan aduan tepat pada masanya dan saksama, memastikan hak rakyat dilindungi dan memberikan hasil yang adil kepada semua pihak yang terlibat.

Meningkatkan Akauntabiliti Organisasi

Dengan menyiasat aduan terhadap organisasi yang bertanggungjawab atas tindakan mereka, Ombudsman membantu memastikan institusi menegakkan tanggungjawab mereka dan mematuhi standard etika dan undang-undang. Maka, piagam pelanggan setiap organisasi yang terpapar megah di dinding pejabat akan dipraktik dengan sewajarnya.

Penambahbaikan Sistemik

Melalui penyiasatan dan analisis mereka, Ombudsman dapat mengenal pasti corak ketidakadilan atau ketidakcekapan dalam Kerajaan. Mereka boleh membuat cadangan penambahbaikan sistemik, perubahan dasar atau pembaharuan untuk meningkatkan kualiti dan kecekapan perkhidmatan dan operasi Kerajaan.

Menggalakkan Tadbir Urus yang Baik

Ombudsman memainkan peranan penting dalam menggalakkan amalan tadbir urus yang baik dalam Kerajaan. Dengan meningkatkan kesedaran tentang hak rakyat, menyiasat aduan, dan

mempertanggungjawabkan entiti Kerajaan, mereka menyumbang kepada peningkatan standard tadbir urus keseluruhan dan memastikan pentadbiran awam berfungsi dengan baik.

Meningkatkan Kepercayaan Awam

Kewujudan Ombudsman ini diyakini akan menggalakkan kepercayaan orang ramai terhadap institusi dan organisasi Kerajaan dengan menunjukkan komitmen untuk menangani kebimbangan dan melindungi hak individu. Secara keseluruhannya, Ombudsman ini akan membantu mengekalkan masyarakat yang adil dan saksama dengan menyediakan ruang bagi individu untuk mencari penyelesaian, memupuk sikap akauntabiliti, dan meningkatkan ketelusan dalam organisasi.

Tuan Speaker, jalan menuju keadilan tidak boleh tidak akan menghadapi halangan dan tidak semudah seperti yang tertulis di atas kertas. Ombudsman pasti akan menghadapi cabaran di dalam mengejar keadilan dan ketelusan mereka. Sumber yang terhad, halangan birokrasi dan penentangan daripada pihak berkepentingan yang kukuh boleh menghalang keupayaan mereka untuk melaksanakan perubahan.

Walau bagaimanapun, dedikasi, dan komitmen yang tidak berbelah bahagi pasti dapat mengatasi cabaran-cabaran ini dan memberi kesan yang berkekalan. Oleh itu, kita harus memastikan Rang Undang-undang yang kita bahas hari ini memenuhi setiap kehendak dan keperluan bagi mewujudkan Ombudsman Sarawak tanpa ada sedikit pun perkara penting yang terlepas pandang.

Walaupun cabaran wujud, adalah penting untuk mengenali peluang yang diberikan oleh Ombudsman. Dengan menyediakan saluran khusus untuk menyelesaikan pertikaian, Ombudsman boleh menghalang konflik daripada meningkat menjadi krisis yang lebih besar. Peranan mereka sebagai pengantara yang dipercayai bukan sahaja menjimatkan masa dan sumber, tetapi juga memupuk budaya kerjasama dan sikap amanah dalam diri setiap individu. Maka, salah satu perkara tersirat dalam kewujudan Ombudsman ini adalah mampu membuka peluang untuk perubahan ke arah yang lebih baik dan pengurusan dan pentadbiran dalam sesebuah organisasi.

Tuan Speaker, izinkan saya berkongsi beberapa contoh inspirasi untuk menggambarkan kuasa Ombudsman dalam tindakan.

Dalam komuniti kecil di luar bandar, sekumpulan rakyat sudah pasti ada merasakan kebimbangan terhadap projek perindustrian yang tidak diendahkan yang memberikan kesan buruk terhadap kesihatan. Wakil rakyat pula bimbang akan projek pembangunan yang dirancang, mahupun yang sudah diluluskan yang sering mengalami masalah di pelbagai peringkat pelaksanaan. Maka, tanggungjawab ini jelas akan diletakkan ke atas Ombudsman, yang akan menjalankan siasatan yang tidak berat sebelah sebagai orang tengah, yang akan merungkai sekaligus menyelesaikan apa-apa sahaja masalah yang timbul di dalam pelaksanaan projek-projek pembangunan oleh pelbagai pihak. Melalui usaha mereka, Ombudsman diyakini dapat membawa perubahan dasar yang melindungi kesejahteraan rakyat secara keseluruhan.

Campur tangan Ombudsman membawa kepada resolusi yang bukan sahaja menangani rungutan individu dan komuniti, tetapi juga mendorong perubahan dalam pentadbiran organisasi.

Tuan Speaker, Ombudsman telah diguna pakai oleh banyak negara di seluruh dunia dan telah dilaksanakan dalam pelbagai bentuk di negara-negara yang berbeza. Beberapa negara yang telah menubuhkan institusi ombudsman adalah:

(a) Sweden: Sweden ialah negara pertama yang menubuhkan institusi ombudsman pada tahun 1809;

(b) Norway: Norway juga menubuhkan institusi Ombudsman pada awalnya, pada tahun 1962;

(c) Finland: Finland melaksanakan sistem Ombudsman pada tahun 1919;

(d) United Kingdom: United Kingdom mempunyai beberapa institusi Ombudsman yang mengawasi pelbagai sektor, seperti Ombudsman Perkhidmatan Parlimen dan Kesihatan;

(e) Australia: Australia mempunyai pelbagai pejabat ombudsman di peringkat persekutuan dan negeri, termasuk Ombudsman Komanwel dan NSW Ombudsman;

(f) Afrika Selatan: Afrika Selatan menubuhkan sebuah institusi Ombudsman pada tahun 1995 yang dikenali sebagai Pelindung Awam; dan

(g) New Zealand: New Zealand mempunyai Pejabat Ombudsman yang mengendalikan aduan mengenai kelakuan pentadbiran agensi-agensi kerajaan.

Ini hanyalah beberapa contoh, dan banyak negara lain telah melaksanakan beberapa bentuk sistem Ombudsman untuk memastikan ketelusan, akauntabiliti dan keadilan dalam tadbir urus dan perkhidmatan awam. Penting untuk diperhatikan bahawa struktur dan skop institusi Ombudsman mungkin berbeza dari negara ke negara berdasarkan kerangka undang-undang dan pentadbiran kerajaan masing-masing. Oleh itu, Ombudsman dilihat begitu penting untuk diwujudkan sebagai pelengkap kepada undang-undang Kerajaan Sarawak yang sedia ada.

Tuan Speaker, Tellian menyokong penuh usul ini. Sekian, terima kasih.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Katibas.

YB Encik Lidam anak Assan: Tuan Speaker, thank you for allowing me to participate in the debate on this important Bill. Congratulations also to the Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar for Bukit Sari, Deputy Premier for successfully tabling this Bill this afternoon.

The establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill is indeed timely as Sarawak aspires to achieve PCDS 2030. Sarawak needs to improve its transparency index and alienating itself away from Malaysia's overall index in the conduct of Sarawak's business both local and abroad.

An Ombudsman is an independent official appointed to investigate and address complaints or concerns from individuals about the actions or decisions of government agencies, organizations, or businesses. The role of an Ombudsman is to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability in the handling of disputes, striving to resolve issues impartially and promoting good governance.

Tuan Speaker, having an Ombudsman in Sarawak management offers several advantages. Firstly, it provides a designated avenue for citizens to voice concerns and complaints about government actions, promoting transparency and accountability. Secondly, the Ombudsman acts as an impartial mediator, facilitating fair resolution of disputes between individuals and state entities.

Additionally, the Ombudsman's oversight helps prevent corruption and maladministration, fostering public trust in governmental institutions. As for now there is no autonomous body to rely upon to address our grievances for example, projects delay for very unreasonable times. Often as *Wakil Rakyat,* we always as the victims of the circumstances. For example, among others are Jalan Banjor - Makut under URDA, Jungle Produce Market from Premier Office under Majlis Daerah Kapit and many more in my *kawasan.*

The *rakyat* are waiting for these projects as some are platform to earn a daily living like Jungle Market Produce. In overall, the presence of an Ombudsman is to enhance the efficiency and integrity of State management by ensuring responsive and ethical governance.

While an Ombudsman plays a crucial role in enhancing governance, there are potential disadvantages also such as the risk of bureaucracy as the introduction of another layer may lead to delays in the decision-making processes.

We hope that there is no possibility of the Ombudsman's office being influenced or politicised, compromising its independence. It might not be foolproof and could be subject to abuse, potentially becoming a tool for settling political scores. Striking the right balance and ensuring the Ombudsman's autonomy are essential to mitigate these potential disadvantages.

To enhance Ombudsman practices and to reap its full benefit, it is important to allow its function to be as independence with autonomy as possible. It must operate independently from political influence, allowing it to carry out its duties objectively and impartially.

Undeniably through its process to promote transparency in the processes and decision-making it will build public trust. Regularly communicate the outcomes of investigations and resolutions.

As the Ombudsman Office will improve public awareness of the role and functions, making it easier for citizens to access and utilize the services. This could involve outreach programs, educational campaigns, and user-friendly communication channels. It is important also to foster collaboration between the Ombudsman's office and other government agencies, NGOs, civil society to strengthen its effectiveness and impact. By implementing these measures, Ombudsman practices can be strengthened, contributing to a more effective and responsive governance system.

Tuan Speaker, with the foregoing merits on how the introduction of Ombudsman can bring Sarawak to another level, when properly empowered and functioning independently, can positively impact the delivery of our public services for the citizen of Sarawak by promoting accountability, transparency, and responsiveness within the government agencies. We, together as Sarawakians will have a better tomorrow to achieve our aspiration for social inclusivity, economic prosperities, and sustainable environment based on data and innovation that we will achieve PCDS 2030, even before 2030.

Tuan Speaker, in conclusion I wholeheartedly support the Bill due to its potential positive impact to Sarawak. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Baleh.

YB Encik Nicholas Kudi anak Jantai: Tuan Speaker, terima kasih kepada Tuan Speaker kerana telah memberi peluang dan ruang serta kesempatan kepada saya untuk mengambil bahagian bagi membahaskan Rang Undang-undang Sarawak Ombudsman, 2023 yang dibentangkan oleh Timbalan Premier, Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua, dan Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan di Dewan yang mulia pada petang ini.

Tuan Speaker, pujian harus diberikan kepada Kerajaan Negeri Sarawak di bawah kepimpinan Premier Sarawak kerana beliau begitu serius dalam memerangi rasuah di samping menyemai dan mendidik masyarakat dengan nilai integriti serta memacu pertumbuhan sosioekonomi demi mencapai aspirasi Sarawak maju menjelang tahun 2030.

Ini jelas terbukti dengan pengenalan portfolio Integriti dan Ombudsman dalam kabinet Sarawak, iaitu Unit Integriti dan Ombudsman, Jabatan Premier Sarawak atau singkatannya UNIONS. Objektif penubuhan UNIONS adalah bagi:

(a) Mewujudkan kesaksamaan, akauntabiliti dan ketelusan dalam sektor Perkhidmatan Awam Negeri Sarawak;
(b) Menyelesaikan aduan Ombudsman dengan cekap, adil dan berkesan;
(c) Memperkukuhkan sistem kawalan dalaman organisasi yang lebih berkesan;
(d) Sebagai asas ke arah penyampaian perkhidmatan yang lebih baik; dan

(e) Merancang program berkaitan integriti.

Tuan Speaker, dari segi definisi, Ombudsman bermaksud pegawai atau badan rasmi ataupun separa rasmi yang bertanggungjawab menerima dan menyiasat aduan daripada orang ramai yang tidak berpuas hati dengan apa-apa perkara yang berkaitan dengan jentera Kerajaan.

Menurut International Ombudsman Association (IOA), kebanyakan negara terdapat Ombudsman yang menangani aduan daripada orang ramai berkaitan keputusan, tindakan atau kesilapan pentadbiran awam.

Peranan Ombudsman adalah untuk melindungi rakyat daripada pencabulan hak, penyalahgunaan kuasa, kesilapan, kecuaian, ketidakadilan dan kesilapan pentadbiran selain untuk meningkatkan pentadbiran awam dan pada masa yang sama menjadikan tindakan Kerajaan lebih terbuka dan lebih bertanggungjawab terhadap orang ramai.

Di sesetengah negara, Ombudsman mempunyai peranan dan kuasa yang lebih besar seperti menyoal siasat kes rasuah sama ada terhadap pegawai Kerajaan mahupun Hakim Mahkamah Tinggi.

Tuan Speaker, menurut sumber Suruhanjaya Pencegahan Rasuah Malaysia (SPRM) untuk tahun 2023 sahaja sehingga bulan September, sebanyak 978 tangkapan sudah dibuat terhadap penjawat awam termasuk pegawai penguat kuasa, orang awam dan swasta, membabitkan pengurusan tertinggi, peringkat pengurusan serta profesional dan pegawai sokongan.

Daripada jumlah ini, kira-kira 40% membabitkan penjawat awam, manakala, 60% ialah orang awam dan swasta. Untuk kes berprofil tinggi dan berkepentingan awam yang melibatkan jumlah RM1 juta ke atas, lebih 60% daripada 156 kertas siasatan telah dibuka oleh Bahagian Operasi Khas, SPRM dari tahun 2020 hingga 8 Jun 2023 membabitkan ahli politik. Daripada jumlah tersebut, seramai 211 individu telah ditahan dengan 91 orang daripadanya yang dituduh di mahkamah melibatkan 454 pertuduhan.

Tuan Speaker, statistik yang sangat membimbangkan ini jelas menunjukkan bahawa Sarawak melangkah satu langkah ke hadapan di Malaysia dengan memperkenalkan Rang Undang-undang Sarawak Ombudsman, 2023.

Harapan kita melalui Rang Undang-undang ini amat tinggi agar ianya dapat menjadi benteng kepada cabaran semasa seperti risiko rasuah dan penyalahgunaan kuasa di semua peringkat.

Melalui penubuhan Ombudsman ini juga, ianya dapat berfungsi sebagai pemantau bagi projek-projek Kerajaan yang dilihat sering bermasalah, diantaranya lambat siap, projek lewat dari jadual dan lebih teruk, projek sakit dan terbengkalai. Dengan kewujudan Ombudsman ini nanti, ianya boleh menjadi pemerhati dan membantu dalam usaha menambah baik sistem Kerajaan Negeri.

Dari penelitian saya, Rang Undang-undang ini tidak melangkaui kuasa seperti polis, SPRM dan sebagainya, selain mengikut piawaian yang diamalkan di negara maju yang sudah lama mengamalkan Ombudsman. Sebaliknya, Ombudsman adalah alternatif kepada penyelesaian masalah dan yang paling penting sekali, Rang Undang-undang ini akan menarik lebih ramai pelabur-pelabur dari dalam dan luar negara kerana mereka melihat kesungguhan kita menangani permasalahan ketidakcekapan urus tadbir dan rasuah di semua peringkat.

Tuan Speaker, sebagai kesimpulan, saya dengan ini menyokong sepenuhnya Rang Undang-undang Sarawak Ombudsman, 2023 diluluskan di Dewan yang mulia ini. Terima kasih.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Padungan.

YB Encik Chong Chieng Jen: Thank you, Tuan Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to participate in the debate on Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. Before I dwell into the debate, let me congratulate Tuan Speaker for your reappointment as the Speaker of the House. You have congratulated a lot of the Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri this morning, but I think they have forgotten to congratulate you in return.

So, let me congratulate you for not only been reappointed as the Speaker of the House but also if my recollection is not wrong, you are also the longest serving Speaker of the Parliament of the Legislative House in the Commonwealth countries as well. Tahniah, tahniah. So, the next time be kind to me aaa ... (*Laughter)…*

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Padungan, you have this special skill... *(Laughter)…*

YB Encik Chong Chieng Jen: Thank you, thank you. Tuan Speaker, I will structure my debate in two parts. One, is the general overview of this Ombudsman, the function and how it can be a more effective Ombudsman and the second part of my debate would be on the several sections and clauses of the Bills which need some amendment or which I will suggest some amendment or some, *ya,* some amendment will do.

Alright, firstly, Ombudsman is an independently elected officer which take on the crucial role of investigating and resolving disputes between citizen and public officers. There are tasks to investigate any maladministration, corruption, abuse of power, and also misappropriation of a public funds. The Ombudsman would also compliment efforts of anti corruption, enforcement agencies as well as provide additional check and balance to our current systems. That is the overall function of the Ombudsman. And how to make it more effective Ombudsman. There is four essential criteria or characteristic of the Ombudsman that will make it more effective:

(a) Independence;
(b) Impartiality and fairness;
(c) Credible review process; and
(d) Confidentiality of the whole proceeding.

Firstly, on the independence of the Ombudsman. That is the backlog of all Ombudsman institution because it is task of scrutinizing the administration. Therefore, it has to be independent and whether the Bills here that we are proposing today has given enough independence to the Ombudsman. It's a question that I will dwell on later.

Impartiality and fairness, *ya*, that is it goes about saying that only when is not only impartial and fair, but it must also be seen as impartial and fair. And that will make people more likely to refer their grievances and complaints to the Ombudsman. Otherwise, if the public has no confidence in the fairness and impartiality of the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman will be just there for show.

And credible review process that requires all agencies staff to cooperate and give full access of document and information to the Ombudsman. I went through the Bill and surely there are sufficient provision to compel government officers to give full access of the document and information to the Ombudsman except when it comes to the ministerial power, but I will dwell on it later. And have to achieve this credible review process, there must also be publication and publishing of the final outcome, recommendation of the findings of the investigation.

And number four, confidentiality. The confidentiality is to protect the whistle-blower and to ensure that you know, there is no retaliation by the administration. The fear, a fear of reprisal by the person been complaint. So, these are the four characteristics that are required if an Ombudsman were to be effective and would achieve its goal for the setting out of the Ombudsman. That is my overview for the observation and my overview for the, how an Ombudsman can be effective.

Now I go into the separate Clauses of the Bill. Firstly, on Clause 2 which is the Applicability of the Ordinance. The definition of Public Service Agencies. Literally it includes all Public Agencies but it is not short at whether Government Link Companies or companies which is fully owned by the Government, whether this entities are also subject to the investigation and scrutiny of the Ombudsman.

Let me refer, Tuan Speaker, to Clause 2 of the definition of Public Service Agencies. The Public Service Agencies mean any government agencies, public authorities, statutory bodies, local authorities, and any public service agencies that carries public service function under the State or any office that emolument of which are wholly or impart derived from revenue of the State including its officers, employees, servants, representatives, and agents.

Now Tuan Speaker we have many Government owned companies under the Ministry of Finance and these companies also subject to the Ombudsman scrutiny. From what I see in this definition section, they do not because they are not government agencies, they are incorporated companies not agencies, they are not public authorities because they are not created by any act of this House or statutory body, they are not local authorities, and they are not any public service agencies that carries public services function.

For that definition of public service agencies that carries public service function, I believe that the Sarawak Energy Berhad, Syarikat SESCO Berhad is under the scrutiny of this Ombudsman but how about the other companies like Equisar and other incorporated companies owned solely by the Minister for Finance, Ministry of Finance. So, I believe this section needs to be expanded to cover this companies wholly owned by the State Government because their employees staffs. If you look at the law strictly are not pay out of the Consolidated Fund, but the company's capital is raised through public money. Therefore, to be more complete the act should include GLCs or at least those companies wholly owned by the State Government. Secondly, the Clause that I would like to raise is about the appointment by the TYT.

Tuan Speaker, that is in Clause 5 whereby it's provided that the Sarawak Ombudsman shall consist of the Chief Ombudsman, a Deputy Chief Ombudsman and not less than three of not more than five other Ombudsman of whom shall be appointed by the Yang di-Pertua Negeri by notification in the Gazette. We all know the Tuan Yang di-Pertua Negeri do not carry out executive function and all his act should be at the advice of the Premier. Therefore, I would suggest that to reflect the true situation that the appointment by the Yang di-Pertua Negeri should be on the advice of the Premier to make it complete. What more to say, in the removable clause, subsequent removable clause to remove Ombudsman, the TYT has to act after consultation with the Premier, after consultation with the Premier and also even the appointment of the ombudsman on the advice of Premier, then in a way the Ombudsman who is appointed are beholden to the Premier and the administration for the recommendation, for the support and mind you, Tuan Speaker, this Ombudsman should be an Officer of this legislation, it should not be officer of the executive because the task of the Ombudsman is to scrutinised and provide check on the executive.

Therefore, there should not be view as an officer or an arm of the executive but an officer to this House. As such the appointment should also get the approval of the super majority of this House. 75%, two-thirds, I know, Tuan Speaker, at this current moment, it makes no difference because the GPS has more than two-thirds, more than 75% even 90% of the Member of the House but we are talking about to institutionalize the check and balance appointment system. Therefore, at least the House must endorse the appointment of this Ombudsman so as to give a perceive independence of the Ombudsman appointed not directly by the TYT on the advice of the Premier but is appointed, endorsed by this House and it was consolidated that the perception or the connotation that the Ombudsman is an officer of this House and the next clause, I would like to highlight is Clause 22(4) and Clauses 43, 44 that relate to reports by the Ombudsman. It seems that under the proposed Bill, the Ombudsman has a discretion not to publish the report when it comes to matter of public interest.

Tuan Speaker, if the Ombudsman is as creative as Tuan Speaker yourself, in the interpretation of words, public interest can mean anything and everything that is brought under the before the Ombudsman and your creativeness in interpretation of the words are can be seen when you rejected all our motion, so, my worry is that if discretion is given to the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman is the person with such creativity as Tuan Speaker yourself, then everything will be of public interest and everything will not be reported and not be published and at the end of the day, that goes back to the criteria that I have spoken, credible reveal process whether you are credible reveal process of the whole system. Therefore, I urge that we make it compulsory for the Ombudsman to publish the report or at least table it in this House. Make it public so that any member of the public if they so wish they can apply and view the judgement of the Ombudsman.

And Tuan Speaker, there is one clause that I am not particularly comfortable with. That is Clause 34(2) about the law against self in crimination whereby if a person, a witness has been summoned before the Ombudsman and he feels that he is in the opinion that whatever he says will in criminate him; he has the right not to speak up.

Tuan Speaker, when we talk about when a person is brought forward to the Ombudsman, I believe it is a case bordering line on criminal offense or maybe not criminal but just a negligence or just a missed maladministration but so long as that witness is of the view what he says may in criminate him; he has the right under Clause 34(2), he has the right not to speak up. You see, that is what Clause 34(2) says, *"such person shall be legally bound to answer all questions put to him by the investigating officer, but the person may refuse to answer any questions that answer to which has the tendency to expose him to a criminal charge or a penalty of the feature".* So, it has the tendency of exposing him. So, if he is so believed that this will in criminate me, I will not speak up. Then, it defeats the whole purpose of this Act.

Therefore, a better suggestion can be found in the corresponding clauses in the New Zealand Ombudsman Act, Section 19(6), *"except on the trial of any person for perjury within the meaning of the Crimes Act 1961, in respect of his sworn testimony. No statement made or answers given by that or any other person in the cause of any injury by or any proceeding before of the Ombudsman shall be admissible in evidence against any person or any caught or any inquiry or in any other proceedings and no evidence in respect of the proceeding of the Ombudsman shall be given against any person".*

This clause is similar to the clauses applicable to us as ADUN is this House. What we speak of here is not *admissible* in any court of law. Therefore, I think this clause will sufficiently protect the person against self in crimination. Therefore, I think this clause should replace the existing clause in the Bills so that witnesses will not be wriggle out their obligations to give evidence. And the clause that I most particularly, most uncomfortable with and I object to that clause is Clause 34, Power of Arrest.

Tuan Speaker, it is provided in Clause 34 here. Not 34; 35, sorry. Clause 35 here, Power of Arrest, Sub-Clause 2(2) "*the Ombudsman or any authorised officer or any police officer not below the rank of inspector or any police officer who in-charge of a police station may without warrant arrest any person reasonably suspect of having been concerned in any sizeable offence or if the person refuses to give his name or resident refuses to give its name or resident of such",* sorry, ya..that's right, that's right. So, the power is given to the Ombudsman or any authorised officer.

Tuan Speaker, the Power of Arrest is a big, huge power and it involves the restriction of personal liberty which is the govern under, which is guarantee under the Federal Constitutions. Tuan Speaker, even for police to arrest a person; police of certain rank are only authorised to arrest without warrant. Only police of certain rank are authorised to arrest without warrant. But here, we have this Power of Arrest by the Ombudsman himself or an authorised person officer. Who is that officer? And Tuan Speaker, in any form of arrest, it will involve physical forces and to arrest a person is not as easy as it seems. There's some technically, there's some law regulations procedure to comply. You cannot just simply go out and arrest a person; the person will fight back. And how much force is

going to be used to arrest the person; to affect the arrest? What constitute reasonable force? What constitute excessive force? And only trained officers; enforcement unit and enforcement offices are properly trained to do the arrest. But, here now, we have the Ombudsman or an authorised officer and who is that authorised officer? We do not know. It's up to the Ombudsman to engage and what if the officer exerted excessive forces in the cause of the arrest? And I believe, as most of the witnesses; possible potential witnesses, summoned by the Ombudsman would be the Government servant, they will be most cooperative to give evidence because there are other punitive sections that they will have to face if they refuse to cooperate with the summons to give evidence and therefore, is no necessity to affect any arrest. And not only that, after the arrest; it seems that the power to detain witnesses is greater to the power given to the police to detain witnesses. First, after the arrest; the officer or the Ombudsman has the power to keep detain the person, the witness. Not the suspect; the witness for 24 hours and after that 24 hours, the investigation has not completed, the Ombudsman will send the witness to a police station for the another 24 hours of detention before CPC; the Criminal Procedure Code come in where the police will produce the person to the magistrate to ask for a longer remand period.

So, in effect under this Bills, the power to detain a witness or any person is literally 48 hours before the person is produce before a Magistrate for the extension of the remand. So, therefore, I believed that all the Sections 35 (Arrest), 36 (Release on Personal Bond), can be 37, 38 and 39 can be dispense with for any Ombudsman to carry out their duties.

Therefore, I urged the administration to, the Honourable Deputy Premier to consider deleting those Clauses because at the end of the day, you know, we don't want any unfortunate incidents happening in the lockup or in the cause of arrest. Even with the strict criminal procedure court providing for the mode of arrest, the procedure on lockup detentions, there are still a lot of incidents where undue injury on the person arrested and even death in the lockup. So, Tuan Speaker, that is one of the provisions that I am worried and I will urge Yang Berhormat Deputy Premier to take that Clause out and Clauses 45 and 46, that is on the appointment of the CEO *…(Interruption)…*

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Padungan, you have exceeded your time.

YB Encik Chong Chieng Jen: Yes, Tuan Speaker, I congratulated you that took out some of my time. Let me some, let me a few more minutes*…(Interruption)…*

Tuan Speaker: *…(Interruption)…*That is*…(Interruption)…*

YB Encik Chong Chieng Jen: *…(Interruption)…*Just a bit of, just some concluding*…(Interruption)…*

Tuan Speaker: That is a bribery*…(Interruption)…*

YB Encik Chong Chieng Jen: No. Tuan Speaker, how can that be bribery? No ratification. It is extension of goodwill. Give me three minutes. I will finish it in three minutes, alright?

Tuan Speaker: You have to conclude.

YB Encik Chong Chieng Jen: Okay, alright. Okay. On the CEO. The CEO are also the Government Servants. The CEO and the officers of the Ombudsman are civil servants, right? They are Civil servant under Clauses 45 and 46. Don't shake your hand. They are provided, they are from the Civil Service.

Therefore, besides the Ombudsman who are not Civil servant, his staff will be Civil servant and when he makes order to investigate other Civil servant, that the perceives independent is not there. The perceives independents of the whole office of the Ombudsman is not there and there is no financial provision guarantee to the Ombudsman office. They have to depend on the Executives to approve the money for them to operate. There must be certain guarantee sum to run the office and not dependent on the Executive to approve the Budget.

Therefore, I think that is something that has no sufficient in independence and I will conclude with the last 2nd Schedule of the Bill which exclude the Ministers, Deputy Ministers from investigating by investigation by the Ombudsman.

Tuan Speaker, isn't it the very famous legal maxim that now be used so high the law is, you are not above the law, but when we are subjecting the whole Civil servant to the scrutiny of the Ombudsman. Why are we excluding the Head of this Civil servants who are the Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers? Shouldn't they be subject to the same scrutiny upon which they are now subjecting the Civil servant, public servant too?

Therefore, I will find that, you know, by excluding the Ministers and the Deputy Ministers from the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman. It is, though the Bill is good, safe for the observation, but is at best a half-baked Bill, a half step towards an Ombudsman system and what we called normally or else the local words to use *is alang-alang. Itu Rang Undang-Undang alang-alang saja*. So, I, I. It is a good start, it is a good start. *Tetapi alang-alang*. It can be a better start. I do agree the Deputy Premier on, it is a good start but still *alang-alang saja. Tapi lebih baik boleh*, you can do better than that, you know? Subject everyone to the same scrutiny by the Ombudsman, and so that, because why I, Tuan Speaker, I have a basis to call for that. The basis is that, a lot of the administration, administrative action comes from a Minister's order. A Minister's order*…(Inaudible)…*

Tuan Speaker: Okay*…(Interruption)…*

YB Encik Chong Chieng Jen: A Ministers order *…(Interruption)…*

Tuan Speaker: Better conclude*…(Interruption)…*

YB Encik Chong Chieng Jen: Ya. So, if the Minister is excluded from the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman, it is a very easy way out for officers to push away. To say that, you know, this is the order from the Minister and that's it. Case closed. It is out of the jurisdiction. A simple pretext for the officers to run away from the investigation or enquiry by the Ombudsman.

Therefore, all should be equal before the law and we should not, you know, pass a law that gives somebody or some position above the operation of the law. With that observation, I hope the administration, Honourable Deputy Premier will look into it, my proposal and consider do some amendment to the Bill. Thank you, Tuan Speaker.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Members, the Ombudsman Law has been time tested in Scandinavian countries. Sweden has it for the last 200 years. The fundamental and paramount difference is this. All anti-corruption laws and acts in Malaysia, they report to the Chief Executive whereas this Ombudsman Law is reported to this House. That is the main difference. You can debate when it is reported to this House.

Therefore, it cannot be weaponized and use personally by the Chief Executive because it is referred to this Honourable House and any report made by Ombudsman; it is debated in this House. That is the most fundamental, crucial paramount difference between previous laws and this law. That is why the Swedish economies are growing, and it has been time tested. It will be reported to this House. It will not be weaponized by the Chief Executive. I call upon Honourable Member for Tanjong Batu.

YB Encik Johnny Pang Leong Ming: Thank you, Tuan Speaker. Salam Sarawakku Sayang. Hereby I also would like to congratulate you to be extended as a Speaker, but I would not extend the time. Today, I stand before this august House to debate on a matter of profound significance for our beloved Sarawak. The Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. This Bill, inspired by the effective Ombudsman model in Sweden, marks a historic step towards enhancing transparency, accountability and good governance in our State.

Tuan Speaker, the Ombudsman, as envisioned in this Bill, is not merely an official but a symbol of our commitment to upholding the highest standards of public service. Entrusted with the authority to investigate complaints against maladministration by public authorities, the Ombudsman stands as a guardian of public trust.

Drawing power from the Federal Constitution, particularly Item 7 of the List II – State List, the Ombudsman's role extends beyond mere oversight. It embodies a proactive approach to rectify inefficiencies and injustices in public administration.

The function laid out in the Bill, from investigating complaints to recommending corrective measures, demonstrates a comprehensive strategy to enhance the governance framework in Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, the Bill also outlines a clear procedure after investigations empowering the Ombudsman to refer issues to relevant authorities and make necessary recommendations. This ensures that no complaint goes unheard, and every grievance is addressed with the seriousness it deserves.

Moreover, the Bill mandates annual reporting to this august House, ensuring that the activities of the Ombudsman are transparent and accountable to the people of Sarawak. This level of scrutiny is vital for the credibility and effectiveness of the Ombudsman.

Tuan Speaker, however, it is important to note that the Ombudsman's jurisdiction is carefully defined, respecting the boundaries of other pivotal State and Federal entities. This balance ensures that the Ombudsman's role is focused, effective, and respectful of existing governance structures.

In conclusion, the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 is a beacon of our dedication to good governance. It promises a future where public administration is not only efficient and effective but also just and equitable. This Bill is not just a legal document; it is a commitment to our future generations that Sarawak will continue to uphold the principles of integrity, transparency, and accountability.

Therefore, Tuan Speaker, let us unite in support of this landmark Bill, for it represents a significant stride towards a better, brighter Sarawak for all. With that, I would like to record my full support on the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Kabong.

YB Encik Mohd Chee bin Kadir: Thank you, Tuan Speaker. First and foremost, I wish to thank the Honourable Member for Bukit Sari for tabling the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. I also wish to extend my congratulations to the Sarawak Integrity and Ombudsman Unit and Sarawak Attorney General's Chambers for developing this Bill, which I verily believe will have a transformative effect on our socio-economic landscape particularly with regards to the State Public Service as a whole.

As the guardian of the people, the establishment of Sarawak Ombudsman shall strive, in collaboration with all public service agencies to foster integrity, efficiency and high ethical standards in public service through proactive graft prevention measures, public assistance, prompt investigation of complaints and vigorous prosecution of cases filed against errant public officials and employees.

The ombudsman's office must be genuinely independent, led by individuals appointed by the Government who are God fearing, highly competent, honest, and possess the utmost integrity. Its primary responsibility is to safeguard the interest of the people, in accordance with its constitutional mandate.

The office of the ombudsman is committed to upholding the highest standard of quality and efficiency while carrying its duties with integrity and excellence for the benefit of the *rakyat*. This commitment is demonstrated by the Government continuous improvement of our quality management system to ensure compliance with global standards and exceed *rakyat's* expectations.

Tuan Speaker, establishing an ombudsman system offers several compelling advantages, namely:

Independent Investigation

The ombudsman has the authority to conduct independent investigations in response to complaint from individuals. This authority extends to any act or omission by public officers, employees, offices or agencies that appears to be unlawful, unjust, inappropriate, or inefficient, the ombudsman's primary jurisdiction encompasses cases that fall within the purview of the State Public Service. While exercising this jurisdiction, the Ombudsman retains the power to assume the investigation of such cases from any government investigative agency at any given time.

Enforcing Compliance and Expeditious Completion of Legal Obligation

The Ombudsman is empowered to issue directives to compel compliance and expedite the fulfilment of legal obligations by the government officials and agencies. This authority helps to ensure that public servants are held accountable for their actions and that citizens receive the service they deserve promptly.

Recommending Corrective Actions and Disciplinary Measures

In response to complaints or upon its own initiative the Ombudsman can issue corrective recommendations to address instances of wrongdoing or inefficiency. Additionally, the Ombudsman can recommend disciplinary measures, such as removal, suspension, demotion, or prosecution against errant public officials.

Promoting Transparency and Accountability

The Ombudsman's power to access documents and request information from the government entities promotes transparency and accountability within the public sector. This access allows the Ombudsman to identify and address potential issues and ensure that public fund and resources are use responsibly.

Facilitating Collaboration with Government Agencies

The Ombudsman can collaborate with various Government agencies to gather information, conduct investigations, and implement corrective measures. This collaboration fosters a spirit of cooperation and ensures that the Ombudsman has access to the resources necessary to fulfil its mandate effectively.

Issue Directives to Compel Compliance

In response to complaints or at its own discretion, the Ombudsman can issue directives to compel compliance and expeditious completion of legal obligations by any government officer, employee, subdivision, agency, or instrumentality, including government-owned or controlled corporations with original charter. These directives can also be used to halt, prevent, and rectify any misuse or improper conduct in the execution of responsibilities.

Recommended Corrective Actions and Disciplinary Measures

The Ombudsman can issue corrective recommendations to address instances of wrongdoing or inefficiency identified through complaints or investigations. These recommendations can instruct relevant officers to administer suitable consequences to public officers or employees who are culpable for wrongdoing or failure to fulfil their duties. The Ombudsman can also suggest disciplinary measures such as removal, suspension, demotion, monetary penalty, censure, or prosecution. The Ombudsman has the authority to enforce adherence to its recommendations or, alternatively, to exercise the disciplinary authority under Section 12 of the Bill. However, disciplinary action may be taken against an officer who knowingly and without cause refuses to comply with an order issued by the Ombudsman.

Issue Directives to Access Documents and Information

The Ombudsman can issue directives to the concerned officer, subject to the limitations specified in its rules of procedure, to provide copies of documents pertaining to contracts or transactions involving the use of allocation of public funds or properties. Additionally, the Ombudsman can request that any irregularities be reported to the Ombudsman on Audit so that suitable measures can be taken.

Solicit assistance and information from Government agencies

The Ombudsman can solicit assistance and information from any government agency required to carry out its duties. This includes the right to request access to relevant records and documents.

Disseminate Information in a Prudent and Impartial Manner

The Ombudsman can disseminate information pertaining to the subjects examined in its investigations in a prudent manner, balancing the need for transparency with the protection of privacy and confidentiality. The Ombudsman may determine in accordance with its rules and regulations which cases may not be made public. Any publicity released by the Ombudsman must be impartial, accurate, and equitable.

Ascertain And Address Underlying Factors Contributing to Inefficiencies

The Ombudsman can investigate and analyze the underlying factors contributing to the Government's inefficiency, bureaucracy, ineptitude, fraudulent activities, and corruption. Based on these findings, the Ombudsman can propose remedies to eradicate these issues and ensure the maintenance of elevated ethical and operational benchmarks.

Exercise Jurisdiction Over Testimony and Inspections

The Ombudsman has the authority to exercise jurisdiction over testimony in investigations and inquiries. This includes the power to administer oaths and inspect and gain access to records.

Impose Penalties for Contempt

The Ombudsman can impose penalties for contempt in adherence to the Bill, employing the identical procedure and penalties stipulated therein.

Delegate Authority and Prioritise grievances.

The Ombudsman can delegate to the Deputies, their authorized investigators, or representatives such authority or responsibility as shall guarantee the efficient execution or performance of the powers, functions, and duties stipulated under the Bill. The Ombudsman can also

conduct a preliminary inquiry and commence the appropriate course of action to retrieve illicitly acquired and/ or unexplained wealth.

Additionally, the Ombudsman shall accord precedence to grievances lodged against high-level officials.

Tuan Speaker, The Sarawak Ombudsman Bill is modelled on the Swedish Parliamentary Ombudsman System. In Sweden an Ombudsman may initiate legal proceedings against an official who, in disregarding the obligations of his office or his mandate, has committed an offence. If our ombudsman is clothed with this power, Sarawak Ombudsman's effectiveness can be further enhanced. Maybe, the YB Menteri can throw some light on the absence of this power in the Bill.

Under Section 15 (4) of the Bill, the Chief Ombudsman shall not investigate any matter against TYT, Member of the Administration, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of DUN, Members of DUN, Judiciary including the Syariah Court and Native Court, Royal Malaysia Police, MACC or any other Federal public service agency and State Public Service Commission. This gives the impression to the general public in particular Member for Padungan that they are untouchables and are precluded from investigation by the Ombudsman. The general public should know that other legal provisions are still applicable to them such as the MACC Act if they commit corruption and abuse of power and many other legal provisions in other laws in particular the Penal Code and many other legislations.

Under Section 42 of the Bill, a copy of the report made by the Chief Ombudsman and laid before the DUN by the Minister, should also be subject to debate by the backbenchers and not by the Special Select Committee alone.

Tuan Speaker, the Ombudsman is committed to fulfilling its mandate with utmost seriousness, sincerity, and dedication, prioritizing the interests of those who have been affected by maladministration or defective administration. This includes addressing grievances arising from abuse of power, abuse of discretion, arbitrariness, undue delay, inappropriateness, procedural deviation, injustice, and unfair or impartial adjudication.

Tuan Speaker, with that I hereby give my full support to the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Ba'kelalan.

YB Encik Baru Bian: Tuan Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the debate on this Bill.

I believe that this Ombudsman Bill is the first to be tabled in the State Assemblies of Malaysia. The Federal Government was aiming to table the Ombudsman Malaysia Bill in Parliament last month, but we have not heard of any updates on it. There is no sign of it in the Bills listing in the Parliament website to date.

Tuan Speaker, I had always been attracted to the idea of having an Ombudsman system in Malaysia. My final year Diploma in Law Project Paper at ITM was in fact on this very subject "*An Ombudsman System*" for Malaysia. That was 1985, 38 years ago. And today, I am delighted that eventually I see this very idea materialize in my time as an ADUN of my own State, Sarawak. Therefore, let me at this juncture congratulate my friend, the Honourable Member for Bukit Sari for tabling this Ombudsman Bill, a historic chapter for our august House for being the first to do so in Malaysia.

Origins

Tuan Speaker, the Ombudsman is a time-tested institution as you said earlier which evolved in the Scandinavian countries. It was aimed at giving the common people a tribunal to which they

can readily ventilate their grievances against the Government. It was said that King Charles XII of Sweden is generally credited with initiating the office of the Ombudsman. An official with the title of Hogsta Ombudsman (Supreme Royal Ombudsman) was appointed in 1713. He was assigned to "*keep an eye on royal officials*" and supervise observance of the laws. Sometimes, he was even commissioned to represent the King in some official functions. In 1809, the system was formally introduced into the country's constitution where an Ombudsman was appointed by the Swedish Parliament making the office independent from the King. Ombudsman comes from the Norwegian word "*Umbodhsmadhr*", meaning Administration Man or King's Representative**.**

The Dictionary generally defines Ombudsman as "*a government official who investigates complaints against the government or its functionaries*". On the basis of his functions, the Ombudsman has also been described as a *"public defender*", "*a grievance man*", "*a watchman over the law's watchmen*", "*voice of the citizen*" and "*citizen counselor*". Essentially, the Ombudsman protects the citizens against injustices committed by civil officials.

Therefore, Tuan Speaker, establishing a statutory Ombudsman's office in Sarawak to be called "*Sarawak Ombudsman*" is a positive step towards ensuring better government, more efficient and transparent public agencies, and improved protection of the rights of the common person. The current office of Ombudsman, under the Integrity and Ombudsman Unit, Chief Minister's Department, set up in 2018 was a good beginning and precedent, but moving the unit away from the Premier's office and giving it a statutory standing offers a better perception of independence and impartiality, which are crucial features of any Ombudsman bodies. The public is increasingly aware of the rights of citizens, and thus expects and demands a capable, accountable, and fair administration. Having an impartial body to hear public complaints will go a long way towards building trust in the administration.

The Bill

Tuan Speaker, Clause 4 of the Bill states the main purpose for the establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman ie., *"to provide for proper administration and to provide measures against any maladministration by the public service agency in the State*". And the definition of "*maladministration*" under Clause 2 is wide ranging enough, which means *"inefficient, bad, or improper administration*" which includes:

(a) Unreasonable conduct, including delay, discourtesy and lack of consideration for a person affected by any action;

(b) Abuse of any power (including any discretionary power) or authority including any action or omission which:

  (i) is unreasonable, unjust, oppressive or improperly discriminatory or is in accordance with a practice which is or may be unreasonable, unjust, oppressive, or improperly discriminatory;
  (ii) is based wholly or partly on a mistake of law or fact; or
  (iii) appears to have been contrary to law; or
  (iv) unreasonable, unjust, oppressive, wrong, or improperly discriminatory procedures by the public agency for purpose connected therewith.

Tuan Speaker, I must say that I am very happy with this exhaustive definition of, "*maladministration*" which becomes the scope of citizens' complaints against any, "*public service agency*" in the State. And the "*public service agency*" is defined under Section 2 of the Bill to mean, *"any Government agencies, public authorities, statutory bodies, local authorities and any public service agency that carries public services functions under the State or any office the emolument of which are wholly or in part derived from the revenues of State including its officers, employees, servants, representatives, and agents".*

Tuan Speaker, this definition is again encompassing basically all the State Government's agencies and semi-State Government agencies in Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, what defines an effective Ombudsman is determined by its faithfulness to some international accepted core values in carrying out its duties, for example it being independent, objective, and fair.

Clauses 11 and 12 of the Bill provides for the Powers and Functions of the Ombudsman. They are again well defined and exhaustive. After reading the details of these powers and functions of the Ombudsman, I can confidently say that these core values I referred to earlier are fully incorporated accordingly. For example, unlike the present Federal Government's Public Complaints Bureau, which was established under the Prime Minister's Department, whose reports are not even tabled in Parliament. But our Sarawak Ombudsman's reports shall annually be submitted to the Dewan Undangan Negeri for debate as provided for under Clause 12(1)(f), and Clauses 42 and 44 of the Bill. And further under clause 42(3) of the Bill, *"a Special Select Committee may be appointed upon a motion made under Standing Order of the DUN to consider any matter relating to the report raised in the DUN".* And under Clause 43(1)(a) subject to Clause 43(2), make public the said reports, *"the results of any enquiry carried out including any findings, recommendations and opinions".*

Tuan Speaker, under Clause 12(2), the Ombudsman can initiate any action, review, and analyze any issues relating to maladministration in the public interest either on their own initiative or on the basis of public complaints. Under Clause 12(1)(i), the Ombudsman has the power to monitor the implementation of any complaint resolution actions recommended to the public service agency and under Clause 12(1)(d), to determine and specify the time frame within the measure or action recommended under Clause 12(1)(c) to be implemented by the public service agency who shall report to the Ombudsman upon implementation of the said measures and action and further to report to the State Secretary for his appropriate action if the recommendation under Clause 12(1)(c) is not implemented by the public service agency. Failing which, I believe the Ombudsman can invoke Clause 32 where an offence could deem to have been committed, therefore upon conviction the relevant person be liable to a fine not exceeding RM30,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both.

In other words, Tuan Speaker, the Sarawak Ombudsman is unlike the Public Complaints Bureau which is deemed a "*toothless tiger*" but one with real power and authority (see Clause 11 and 12 in detail). In addition, it has the statutory function to advise the Government on strategies, direction, and measures to be adopted for public service agency, "*to promote principles and practices of good governance, transparency, integrity, accountability, and effective or efficient public service delivery system".* Clause 12(1)(f).

Of course, Tuan Speaker, to achieve such a noble vision, the appointment of members to the Sarawak Ombudsman must be from people of utmost integrity and experience. Clause 6 of the Bill provides for the qualifications of the appointment of Ombudsman who must *"have substantial experience or expertise in one or more of the following fields and has significant standing and credibility in the fields of law, professional accountancy, public administration relating to the administration of public services or any other expertise or experience which is highly relevant to the effective performance of the functions of the Sarawak Ombudsman".* Very well envisioned Tuan Speaker, but the crux of the matter is the "*actual appointment*" who these Ombudsmen would be. That, I'll leave to the wisdom of the Yang di-Pertua Negeri who has the power to appoint the Members of the Sarawak Ombudsman.

I will not go into the other provisions of the Bill Tuan Speaker, especially Part III (Complaint, Investigation etc) and Part IV on the Offences and Penalties which are equally enlightening but suffice for me to state in my conclusion that this is a Bill that all must support. Ombudsman had been found to have flourished and played a significant role in democracies for more than 50 years all around the world. Countries that had introduced the system have confirmed how it has further influenced the overall public administration of these countries.

For my part Tuan Speaker, I have no doubt the Sarawak will truly benefit as a result of the passing of this historic Bill, only if we adhere closely to the well-drafted provisions of this Bill. Tuan Speaker, I sincerely record my support. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Opar.

YB Encik Billy anak Sujang: Test. Tuan Speaker, congratulations on your reappointment as the DUN Speaker for the next two years. Terima kasih, Tuan Speaker kerana memberi peluang kepada saya untuk membahaskan Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman, 2023 yang telah dibentangkan oleh Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Timbalan Premier Sarawak, yang juga Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua, Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan, dan juga Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari.

Pertamanya saya ingin merakamkan setinggi-tinggi tahniah kepada Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Premier Sarawak kerana telah berjaya mengemudi Parti GPS dengan baik dan telah berjaya memenangi Plihan raya Kecil N.67 Jepak dengan majoriti yang amat besar pada 4 November yang lalu.

Tuan Speaker, Ombudsman mengikut tafsiran Oxford English Dictionary bermaksud, "*an official appointed to investigate complaints by individual against maladministration by public authorities*". Ombudsman ini merupakan satu badan yang bebas ataupun *independent body* yang mengamalkan *impartiality* dalam menyelesaikan kes aduan terhadap Agensi-agensi Kerajaan. Ia juga merupakan platform untuk orang awam menyalurkan aduan terhadap sistem penyampaian perkhidmatan awam dan memastikan Kerajaan berfungsi secara cekap dan berkesan ke arah demokrasi yang berakauntabiliti. Mengikut sumber daripada International Ombudsman Institute, sebanyak 115 negara daripada 195 negara di dunia telah mempunyai institusi Ombudsman dan Sarawak merupakan sebuah wilayah yang bakal menjadi wilayah pertama di Malaysia yang akan mempunyai ombudsmannya sendiri sekiranya Rang Undang-undang ini diluluskan oleh rakan-rakan seperjuangan Yang Berhormat dalam Dewan yang mulia ini kelak. Semua ini adalah cetusan idea daripada YAB Premier semasa ucapan penggulungan di Persidangan Dewan Undangan Negeri Ke-19 pada 24 Mei 2023 yang lalu.

Pembaharuan dalam pengurusan aduan awam adalah penting untuk menuju ke arah sistem penyampaian perkhidmatan awam yang lebih cekap dan efektif serta Kerajaan yang lebih responsif dan adil terhadap rakyatnya. Selaras dengan perkembangan Revolusi Perindustrian 4.0, Ombudsman haruslah menerbitkan panduan pengguna dalam bentuk video tutorial yang boleh diakses secara dalam talian dan menerusi saluran *YouTube* dan sebagainya oleh mana-mana pihak. Dan video berkenaan hendaklah merangkumi modul untuk kegunaan orang awam dan modul khusus untuk rujukan penyelia dan pegawai penyiasat aduan yang boleh diakses secara dalam talian ataupun secara *online* pada bila-bila masa dan di mana sahaja, asalkan mempunyai sambungan internet.

Tuan Speaker, proses dan prosedur pengurusan aduan awam dalam Agensi Kerajaan hendaklah lebih mesra rakyat dan setaraf dengan pendekatan dan standard di peringkat antarabangsa. Adalah disarankan supaya jumlah aduan yang diterima oleh agensi awam dijadikan sebagai satu elemen pengukur prestasi kementerian dan jabatan. Oleh yang demikian, Sarawak Ombudsman seharusnya berfungsi sebagai sebuah jabatan ataupun sebuah agensi yang *vibrant* dan sentiasa aktif melaksanakan fungsi serta mempunyai proses tadbir urus tersendiri bagi pengurusan aduan awam yang adil, cekap, dan berkesan. Sarawak Ombudsman harus berfungsi sebagai satu platform di peringkat yang lebih tinggi untuk orang awam menyalurkan aduan terhadap sistem penyampaian perkhidmatan awam serta lain-lain aduan berkenaan dengan *maladministration*. Institusi tersebut hendaklah bersifat bebas dan *impartial* dalam menyelesaikan kes aduan terhadap Agensi Kerajaan. Sarawak Ombudsman juga diharapkan akan dapat meningkatkan prestasi sistem penyampaian perkhidmatan awam ke arah dimensi baharu dan pendekatan pengurusan aduan yang lebih bersepadu. Selain itu, Sarawak Ombudsman juga

haruslah melihat indikator berkaitan *ease of doing business* bagi memahami kesan aduan awam kepada sektor ekonomi dan juga perkhidmatan awam.

Untuk memastikan kejayaan dalam transformasi pengurusan aduan awam melalui Sarawak Ombudsman ini, perkara-perkara berikut harus diberi pertimbangan serta perhatian yang serius:

(a) penyeragaman terma maklum balas dalam pengurusan aduan awam;
(b) penyeragaman lokasi dan reka bentuk pautan maklum balas dalam laman web agensi Kerajaan;
(c) meringkaskan borang maklum balas dalam laman web agensi Kerajaan;
(d) analisis kes aduan sebagai teras pengurusan aduan awam bagi menambah baik perkhidmatan; dan
(e) memperkasa fungsi pegawai penyelaras aduan di kementerian dan agensi Kerajaan;
(f) Pelaporan Data Aduan Secara Infografik;
(g) Hala Tuju Baharu Modul Latihan Pengguna Sistem Pengurusan Aduan Awam juga harus disediakan; dan
(h) Pembangunan Aplikasi Mobil Rakyat Respon yang boleh diakses dimana-mana sahaja.

Tuan Speaker, mengambil iktibar dari pada Biro Pengaduan Awam di Pusat Governans, Integriti dan Anti Rasuah Nasional (GIACC), Jabatan Perdana Menteri telah menerima sebanyak 9,685 maklum balas daripada orang awam pada tahun 2018. Daripada jumlah ini, sebanyak 66% atau 6,387 maklum balas merupakan aduan manakala 34% atau 3,296 maklum balas adalah bukan aduan. Dan daripada 6,387 aduan yang diterima, sebanyak 61% atau 3,869 aduan adalah terhadap Kementerian dan agensi Persekutuan manakala 39% atau 2,518 aduan adalah terhadap agensi Kerajaan Negeri. Daripada 6,387 aduan yang diterima pada tahun 2018 ini, sebanyak 90.9% atau 5,805 aduan telah diselesaikan, manakala, baki 582 aduan ataupun 9.1% masih dalam tindakan penyelesaian oleh agensi Kerajaan. Daripada jumlah keseluruhan aduan yang telah selesai sebanyak 76% atau 2,967 aduan merupakan aduan bagi kategori mudah dan sederhana yang telah diselesaikan dalam tempoh 15 hari bekerja.

Bagi tahun 2018, kategori kegagalan mengikut prosedur yang ditetapkan merekodkan penerimaan aduan tertinggi iaitu sebanyak 1,364 aduan atau 21.2%. kategori aduan kedua tertinggi ialah kualiti perkhidmatan yang tidak memuaskan termasuk kaunter dan telefon iaitu sebanyak 1,107 aduan atau 17.2%. kategori kegagalan penguatkuasaan pula merupakan kategori ketiga tertinggi bilangan aduan yang diterima iaitu sebanyak 1,014 aduan atau 15.7%. jumlah aduan untuk tiga kategori tertinggi ini adalah sebanyak 3,485 aduan atau 54.2% daripada keseluruhan kategori aduan. Ini membuktikan bahawa kita sangat memerlukan Ombudsman dalam memastikan keberkesanan penyiasatan dan juga penyelesaian aduan awam yang diterima khususnya untuk meyakinkan rakyat yang memerlukan perkhidmatan kita.

Hasil daripada laporan tersebut, Kerajaan Persekutuan telah bersetuju secara prinsipnya dengan penubuhan institusi baharu iaitu Ombudsman Malaysia bagi menggantikan Biro Pengaduan Awam dalam pengurusan aduan awam selaras dengan perakuan Jawatankuasa Reformasi Institusi (IRC) dalam laporannya yang menyatakan:

(a) Creation of an Ombudsman: the existing Public Complaints Bureau should be replaced with an independent Ombudsman to investigate maladministration by the executive. The Ombudsman must be required to submit his report to the Select Committee. That is in this case, this a DUN.
(b) Law to establish Ombudsman: establishing an independent office of the Ombudsman and empowering it to investigate complaints, summon witnesses, examine documents, and evidence, will require new legislation.

Walau bagaimanapun, sehingga hari ini belum ada keputusan berhubung dengan Ombudsman Malaysia. Sebab itulah pada hari ini, kita bermula di Sarawak.

Kerajaan Sarawak telah mengambil keputusan untuk mewujudkan Sarawak Ombudsman sebagai satu *milestone* yang penting dalam usaha menambah baik tadbir urus dan sistem penyampaian perkhidmatan awam supaya lebih cekap dan berkesan (*effective and efficient*) ke arah sistem demokrasi yang berakauntabiliti serta mendapat kepercayaan rakyat. Sarawak Ombudsman merupakan satu badan bebas (*independent body*) yang menjadi platform untuk orang awam menyalurkan aduan (*grievances*) terhadap sistem penyampaian perkhidmatan awam serta mengamalkan *"impartiality"* dalam menyelesaikan kes aduan salah tadbiran ataupun *maladministration*.

Tuan Speaker, untuk memastikan keberkesanan perlaksanaan Sarawak Ombudsman ini, Kerajaan haruslah mengadakan beberapa perkara seperti berikut:

(a) seminar untuk memperkasakan peranan pegawai aduan khususnya mengenai kaedah siasatan dan menganalisis kes aduan sebagai teras pengurusan aduan awam;

(b) menerbitkan video tutorial bagi para pengguna sebagai inisiatif baru Sarawak Ombudsman kearah kaedah pengajaran dan pembelajaran secara dalam talian (*e-learning*) untuk orang awam dan juga penyelia dan pegawai penyiasat aduan;

(c) mewujudkan aplikasi Respon Rakyat secara dalam talian bagi memudahkan orang awam untuk mengemukakan aduan ataupun maklum balas kepada semua kementerian, agensi Kerajaan baik Kerajaan Persekutuan ataupun Kerajaan Negeri, Pejabat Setiausaha Kerajaan Negeri dan utiliti dengan pantas dan mudah melalui borang aduan dalam laman sesawang, melaui e-mel, telefon, SMS, *WhatsApp*, faks, atau hadir sendiri ke Pejabat Ombudsman;

(d) mengadakan Kaunter Aduan Bergerak ataupun KAB melalui program turun padang bagi tujuan menyampaikan perkhidmatan kepada orang awam di lapangan atau kawasan setempat selain mendapat maklum balas secara langsung daripada orang ramai terhadap perkhidmatan awam. Kaunter Aduan Bergerak kebiasaannya diadakan di tempat-tempat tumpuan ramai dengan kerjasama agensi kerajaan dalam sesuatu program rasmi ataupun tidak rasmi;

(e) pembangunan kapasiti menerusi program Latihan dan juga bengkel;

(f) perkongsian amalan terbaik ataupun *best practice* dalam melaksanakan fungsi dan tanggungjawab Ombdusman secara lebih cekap dan berkesan bagi kes-kes rayuan; dan

(g) pelaksanaan audit secara berperingkat dan hasil audit ini akan digunakan untuk melaksanakan penambahbaikan.

There is no point to have all the power under this Bill if the Ombudsman is not competent to deliver the service. Daripada hujah-hujah di atas, saya yakin Sarawak Ombudsman ini akan menjadi penanda aras kepada kecekapan penyampaian perkhidmatan, mengurangkan *red tape* dalam pelaksanaan projek-projek rakyat seterusnya meningkatkan integriti dalam kalangan anggota perkhidmatan awam untuk memastikan tidak berlaku ketirisan dalam pengurusan dana dan juga aset-aset kerajaan.

Terima kasih sekali lagi kepada YAB Premier atas cetusan idea untuk mewujudkan Sarawak Ombudsman dan terima kasih juga kepada Timbalan Premier yang juga ADUN N. 82 Bukit Sari yang telah membentangkan Rang Undang-undang Sarawak Ombudsman 2023 ini. Sarawak merupakan wilayah pertama di Negara ini yang akan mempunyai Ombudsman untuk memastikan setiap aduan disiasat dan diselesaikan demi memberi perkhidmatan terbaik kepada rakyat Sarawak selari dengan slogan, "*Sarawak First, Jaga Sarawak, Intu Sarawak*".

Dengan ini, saya menyokong Rang Undang-undang Ombudsman Sarawak, 2023. Sekian, terima kasih.

Timbalan Speaker: Terima kasih, Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Opar. Seterusnya, kita mempersilakan Yang Berhormat Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri bagi Lingga.

YB Puan Dayang Noorazah bte Awang Sohor: Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Salam sejahtera dan Salam Sarawak Maju Makmur.

Terlebih dahulu saya ingin mengucapkan ribuan terima kasih kepada Tuan Speaker kerana memberi peluang kepada saya untuk mengambil bahagian dalam Perbahasan Atas Bacaan Kali Yang Kedua bagi Rang Undang-undang Sarawak Ombudsman, 2023, yang dibentangkan oleh Yang Berhormat Timbalan Premier merangkap Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar, dan Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan serta merangkap Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari.

Saya juga ingin mengucapkan terima kasih dan tahniah kepada Kerajaan GPS atas usaha mewujudkan Rang Undang-undang Sarawak Ombudsman yang buat pertama kalinya bakal dilaksanakan di Sarawak bahkan di Malaysia.

Tuan Speaker, pada kesempatan ini saya ingin berkongsi, apakah maksud Ombudsman mengikut Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. Ombudsman adalah pegawai atau badan rasmi ataupun separa rasmi yang bertanggungjawab menerima dan menyiasat aduan daripada mana-mana pihak berkaitan dengan perkhidmatan sesebuah organisasi ataupun agensi Kerajaan.

Seperti yang kita tahu, penubuhan Ombudsman bukanlah satu yang asing di seluruh dunia. Negara Sweden merupakan *the founder of Ombudsman* yang mana Sweden telah mewujudkan Ombudsman ini sejak tahun 1809 hingga ke hari ini. Mengikut artikel *Wikipedia*, sehingga 2005, termasuk peringkat kebangsaan dan sub-nasional, sejumlah 129 pejabat Ombudsman telah ditubuhkan di seluruh dunia. Mempraktikkan perkhidmatan Ombudsman adalah salah satu langkah yang wajar *because the Ombudsmen play a crucial role in promoting accountability and ensuring that individuals have a channel to voice their concerns or complaints when dealing with an organization or the Government's entity*.

Tuan Speaker, melalui pelaksanaan Rang Undang-undang Sarawak Ombudsman, jelas sekali Kerajaan GPS menggalakkan tadbir urus berpaksikan rakyat (*citizen-centric governance*) dan menggalakkan akauntabiliti Kerajaan yang lebih besar. Seperti yang termaktub dalam Rang Undang-undang Sarawak Ombudsman Bahagian 2, Klausa 12 (1) telah menerangkan sebanyak 12 perkara berkenaan fungsi Sarawak Ombudsman.

Dan saya juga sangat menyokong prosedur untuk membuat aduan haruslah secara bertulis seperti yang telah dijelaskan pada Bahagian 2, Klausa 16 (1) dan (2). Ini adalah kerana aduan secara bertulis daripada pengadu kepada *Ombudsman Authority* adalah lebih *efficient and complaint records can be kept organized*.

Tuan Speaker, Kerajaan Sarawak sangat menggalakkan *Green Techology* untuk dipraktikkan dalam apa jenis perkhidmatan. Maka itu, saya mencadangkan agar perkhidmatan Ombudsman seperti perkongsian maklumat dan *submission of complaint* dapat di akses dan dibuat secara *online* seperti mana yang telah dilaksanakan oleh New South Wales Ombudsman. Ini adalah kerana, melalui *online*, secara tidak langsung akan mendedahkan *to expose* usaha Kerajaan Sarawak dalam menangani *maladministration in public agency* terutama golongan belia mudah sahaja untuk mereka menerokai semua maklumat di hujung jari menggunakan *handphone* sahaja. Selain itu, saya juga mencadangkan agar pihak Kerajaan Negeri dapat mempertimbangkan untuk menempatkan Pejabat Sarawak Ombudsman Authority sama ada di setiap Zon ataupun Bahagian, *so that the Sarawak Ombudsman services are accessible to the public throughout the State*.

Tuan Speaker, di dalam Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman *Part IV on Offences and Penalties* telah menjelaskan perkara yang harus dititikberatkan kepada semua pihak dalam penyediaan maklumat yang sahih serta benar *to the Sarawak Ombudsman Authority*.

Failed to comply with the Sarawak Ombudsman Ordinance significant action shall be taken including liable to fine and imprisonment. Therefore, I suggest Sarawak Ombudsman public awareness campaign can be done throughout the State especially among the communities who are in the coastal and inland areas so that the communities can be educated on the importance to act upon the Sarawak Ombudsman Ordinance.

Saya sangat menitikberatkan perkara ini supaya masyarakat di luar sana terutamanya golongan belia tidak mengambil remeh setiap aduan yang dibuat kepada *Sarawak Ombudsman Authority* kerana pada era ini cabaran menangani isu *false information can be easily spread out and misinterpre*t. Itulah yang perlu kita titikberatkan supaya *false information and misconduct* tidak disalahgunakan.

After I followed all the details on this Bill, Sarawak Ombudsman will be the best platform to both public communities and government in ensuring maladministration among public service can be ceased. In my opinion, the Sarawak Ombudsman shall increase the mandate and powers of Ombudsman authority to monitor public services quality in Sarawak. Despite the struggles shall be faced by Ombudsman authority, I am confident that Sarawak under GPS Government are moving in the right direction.

Tuan Speaker, therefore, I hereby, fully support the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Seterusnya, Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Daro. Silakan.

YB Encik Safiee bin Haji Ahmad: Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Ta'ala Wabarakatuh. Salam Sejahtera dan Salam Sarawak Maju Makmur.

Terima kasih, Tuan Speaker, kerana telah memberi peluang kepada saya untuk turut mengambil bahagian dalam perbahasan Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 yang telah dibentangkan oleh Yang Berhormat Timbalan Premier, merangkap Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua; Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan; dan juga ADUN N.82 Bukit Sari.

Tuan Speaker, pembentangan Rang Undang-Undang ini membuktikan kesungguhan Kerajaan Sarawak di bawah kepimpinan Yang Amat Berhormat Premier yang berpandangan jauh dan proaktif bagi memastikan perkhidmatan awam Sarawak mempunyai integriti yang tinggi di samping menyemai dan mendidik masyarakat nilai integriti serta memacu pertumbuhan sosio ekonomi dan mencapai aspirasi Sarawak maju menjelang tahun 2030.

Tuan Speaker, adalah jelas dalam zaman moden ini, semua negara yang mengamalkan sistem demokrasi, pihak pentadbiran negara diberi kuasa yang luas untuk melaksanakan dasar-dasar yang telah ditetapkan oleh Kerajaan. Keadaan ini mewujudkan banyak jentera Kerajaan mempunyai dan menikmati kuasa budi bicara yang sangat luas. Oleh itu, ada kemungkinan kesempatan berlakunya salah guna kuasa oleh pihak pentadbiran seperti *maladministration* dan rasuah. Keadaan ini menyebabkan timbulnya permintaan untuk mewujudkan sebuah institusi yang efektif yang berperanan untuk mengawal pihak pentadbiran seperti agensi Ombudsman selaras dengan standard antarabangsa, tadbir urus yang baik dan hak asasi manusia. Ini menunjukkan komitmen Kerajaan untuk menegakkan nilai demokratik dalam pemerintahan yang baik.

Memperkenalkan Rang Undang-Undang Ombudsman ini bukan sahaja menjadikan Sarawak sebagai sebuah wilayah yang pertama memperkenalkannya di Malaysia ini, malah menjadikan negara Sweden dan Finland sebagai *benchmark* amat bertepatan sekali. Sweden sebagai sebuah negara yang pertama mewujudkan Ombudsman pada tahun 1809 lagi. Manakala Finland sebagai sebuah negara kedua menubuhkan Ombudsman pada tahun 1919 sudah pasti mempunyai pengalaman dan *the best practices* yang boleh dijadikan panduan dan model yang terbaik. Sehingga

kini lebih kurang 90 buah negara telah menubuhkan Ombudsman yang mengikut model Ombudsman di Sweden.

Tegasnya, tugas Ombudsman ialah untuk memastikan mereka yang mempunyai kuasa menggunakannya dengan penuh tanggungjawab dan tidak bercanggah dengan hak-hak asasi rakyat. Ia juga dilihat sangat perlu untuk membantu menangani masalah birokrasi. Oleh itu, jika ia dilaksanakan dengan baik meskipun kritikan terhadap tindakan Kerajaan sentiasa meningkat sepanjang masa, namun dengan adanya Ombudsman telah memberi sinar keyakinan bukan sahaja kepada rakyat terhadap perkhidmatan awam malah kepada para pelabur khususnya dari luar negara.

Secara tidak langsung dapatlah dilihat Ombudsman ini sebagai memberi amaran dan peringatan kepada jabatan, kementerian dan organisasi untuk meningkatkan perkhidmatan dan menerima segala teguran untuk penambahbaikan, menjaga kebajikan anggota masyarakat daripada dianiaya dan pegawai pentadbiran dan pengurus tidak bebas menyalahgunakan kuasa dan kedudukan, kecekapan pihak pentadbiran dan pengurusan akan meningkat dan lebih telus serta remedi kepada ketidakadilan. Ombudsman selaku badan separa kehakiman berperanan sebagai *check and balance* dalam perkhidmatan agensi Kerajaan dan akhirnya mewujudkan *good governance*. Matlamat dan dasar pembangunan Sarawak juga akan dapat dicapai dengan cemerlang, mungkin lebih awal dari jangkaan tahun 2030.

Tuan Speaker, dalam melaksanakan Rang Undang-Undang ini rakyat perlu diberi penjelasan dan pengetahuan tentang tujuan dan bidang kuasanya supaya ianya tidak disalahgunakan oleh mana-mana pihak yang tidak bertanggungjawab. Sepertimana yang kita sedia maklum, Rang Undang-Undang ini hanya terpakai kepada Kerajaan Negeri sahaja yang terdiri daripada Perkhidmatan Awam Negeri, Pihak Berkuasa Tempatan, Badan-Badan Berkanun dan Government Link Company ataupun GLC. Manakala Perkhidmatan Awam dan agensi-agensi Persekutuan adalah tidak tertakluk kepada Rang Undang-Undang ini. Jika perkara ini tidak diperjelaskan sewajarnya maka ianya boleh menimbulkan kekeliruan di kalangan rakyat kerana kebanyakan perkhidmatan Kerajaan kepada rakyat juga disediakan oleh Kerajaan Persekutuan.

Oleh itu, saya juga ingin mencadangkan agar Rang Undang-Undang Ombudsman yang baik ini turut diterima pakai oleh Kerajaan Persekutuan supaya tindakan yang seragam dapat diselaraskan dalam memperkasakan integriti dan meningkatkan kualiti sistem penyampaian perkhidmatan kepada rakyat. Begitu juga dengan beberapa inisiatif-inisiatif yang berkaitan yang telah dilaksanakan sebelum ini seperti perkhidmatan Talikhidmat, Biro Pengaduan Awam dan lain-lain lagi turut diselaraskan supaya tidak berlaku pertindihan fungsi sehingga menjejaskan keberkesanan dan kecekapan usaha ini.

Selain itu, satu jawatankuasa tetap di peringkat Dewan Undangan Negeri perlu ditubuhkan seperti juga Jawatankuasa Kira-Kira Wang Awam (PAC) bagi meneliti segala laporan yang telah dikemukakan dan jawatankuasa ini nanti juga boleh bertindak memanggil jabatan atau agensi dan pihak yang berkenaan untuk mendapatkan penjelasan bagi kes-kes tertentu yang tidak mematuhi Rang Undang-Undang ini dan melaporkan atau menjelaskan semula kepada Dewan yang mulia ini.

Tuan Speaker, secara kesimpulannya, memperkenalkan Rang Undang-Undang Ombudsman ini adalah penting untuk memastikan ketelusan, akauntabiliti dan keadilan dalam operasi Kerajaan. Usaha ini sudah pasti menyumbang kepada penerimaan Kerajaan yang responsif dan bertanggungjawab yang menjaga dan melayani kepentingan terbaik rakyat.

Dengan itu, Tuan Speaker, saya amat menyokong Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 ini. Sekian, terima kasih.

Timbalan Speaker: Terima kasih, Yang Berhormat bagi Daro. Seterusnya, Yang Berhormat bagi Tamin. Silakan.

YB Ir. Christopher Gira @ Gira anak Sambang: Tuan Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the debate on the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 presented by our Honourable Sarawak Deputy Premier, YB Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan in this august House on 20th November 2023.

Tuan Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate our Sarawak Premier, YAB Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg in introducing the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 and Sarawak is the first in Malaysia to introduce Ombudsman Bill into action.

Sarawak has done it again in the introduction of this Ombudsman Bill is the proof of the seriousness of our Sarawak Government to instil accountability and justice in our governance.

The concept of an ombudsman, which is a government official appointed to investigate complaints against public authorities and institutions, originated in Sweden in 1809. The word ombudsman is a Swedish and means representative or agent.

The Swedish Parliament was the first to appoint an ombudsman in 1809 to investigate complaints against public officials. The ombudsman proved to be highly effective and has been adopted in many countries worldwide.

Tuan Speaker, taking into Malaysia perspective, the Sarawak Government, led by Sarawak Premier, has taken a significant step towards ensuring public accountability.

Sarawak Government has established the Unit Integriti dan Ombudsman Sarawak (UNIONS) directly under the Premier's Department, emphasising the importance of transparency and combating the corruption.

With the UNIONS in place, the Government can investigate any allegations of misconduct or corruption and hold civil servants and officials accountable for their own actions.

Tuan Speaker, Malaysia continued its slide in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) measured by global watchdog Transparency International (TI), managing only 47 out of 100 possible points, and this is its performance in a decade.

Despite, an increase in the ranking to 61 out of 108 countries compared to 62 previously, Malaysia's score continued to fall after reaching its height of 23 points in 2019.

It is not a good sign as it shows that we are moving to the wrong direction. We have dropped from six points in the last three years, which is statistically significant. We are even below countries such as Namibia and Rwanda.

We have to turn around this downward trend.

The reasons listed for the low score include:

(a) The lack of political in fighting institutional corruption in the Government;
(b) Huge COVID-19 pandemic stimulus packages that were ruled out without Parliamentary debate and scrutiny;
(c) Appointing unqualified politicians to be head of Government-Linked Companies;
(d) And; the reluctance to firmly address cost overruns on some of the mega projects such as the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) project and others.

So, regarding the reason why corruption occurs, the three patterns emerged from the data and that is:

(a) Power;
(b) Opportunity; and
(c) Moral Values.

So, Tuan Speaker, based on the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), the introduction of the Ombudsman Bill is one step forward by the Sarawak Government to eradicate corruption and maladministration.

Make no mistakes, we need the foreign investments, and they will look at all the factors including the data of the Corruption Perception Index before they making decision to invest in Malaysia.

There are many other options we can place to keep our public sector honest, transparent and accountability.

And to elaborate on the Government and GLC positions, top Government and GLC administrative leaders should not hold the position too long and renewal of employment contract to be on short tenure only. These measures are to avoid abuse of power and also give opportunity for younger officers who are talented and energetic to take over the position.

My main concern of this Ombudsman Bill will be the role of an ombudsman and the challenges he or she will be facing.

Some of the main challenges include limited powers, resistance to investigate efforts from institutions, resource constraints and lack of cooperation from complainants.

Another area for improvement in the journey towards transparency and good governance is the prevention of victimisation towards the person disclosing information or the whistle blower's identity.

Disclosing wrongdoing can lead to problems to the discloser including retaliation, harassment, and job loss.

But I believe, despite these challenges, ombudspersons can help to create a more and equitable society with the support of this Ombudsman Bill 2023.

Tuan Speaker, good governance is not only for promoting accountability and transparency but also for fostering economic growth and development.

So, ensuring good governance is not only a matter of principle but also a practical and necessary step towards building a thriving economy and a better society for all towards a developed Sarawak by 2030.

Ultimately, creating a culture of integrity and accountability requires a commitment from all levels of an organization from leadership to individuals.

Surely, the people of Sarawak have great expectations from implementing the Ombudsman Ordinance and any rules and regulations associated with good governance, integrity, and transparency.

Tuan Speaker, ultimately the passing of the Ombudsman Ordinance demonstrates that Sarawak is committed to building a brighter future for all its people, and that is a message that should be supported and embraced.

With that being said, I am in full support of the Ombudsman Bill 2023. Thank you very much.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Balingian. Honourable Member for Balingian? Honourable Member for Meluan. Honourable Member for Murum.

YB Encik Kennedy Chukpai Ugon: Terima kasih, Tuan Speaker. Selamat petang dan Salam Sarawak Maju Makmur.

Terima kasih, Tuan Speaker, kerana memberi peluang kepada saya untuk turut serta dalam membahaskan Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 yang telah dibentangkan oleh Timbalan Premier; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua; Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari, yang begitu komprehensif.

Rang Undang-Undang yang dibentangkan ini adalah untuk enakmen Dewan Undangan Negeri di bawah kuasa Negeri yang diperuntukkan dalam Perkara 74(2) Perlembagaan Persekutuan untuk menyediakan langkah-langkah menentang penyelewengan oleh agensi Perkhidmatan Awam Negeri yang menjadi perkara subjek dalam Senarai Negeri dalam Jadual Kesembilan Perlembagaan Persekutuan.

Tuan Speaker, antara tujuan dan objektif Rang Undang-Undang ini adalah untuk menubuhkan Pejabat Ombudsman yang dikenali sebagai *Sarawak Ombudsman* dan mewujudkan peruntukan bagi pelantikan, fungsi dan kuasa ombudsman untuk mempertingkat dan menyemai dalam agensi Perkhidmatan Awam, prinsip dan amalan tadbir urus yang baik, berintegriti dan berakauntabiliti.

Tuan Speaker, Ombudsman adalah satu badan bebas *(independent body*) yang mengamalkan *impartiality* dalam menyelesaikan kes aduan terhadap agensi Kerajaan. Ombudsman juga merupakan platform untuk orang awam menyalurkan aduan (*grievances*) terhadap sistem penyampaian Perkhidmatan Awam dan memastikan Kerajaan berfungsi secara cekap dan berkesan (*effective and efficient*) ke arah demokrasi yang berakauntabiliti.

Standard antarabangsa mengenai ombudsman yang diguna pakai oleh *International Ombudsman Institute* menetapkan bahawa Ombudsman adalah institusi yang bebas (i*ndependent*) daripada pengaruh kuasa eksekutif (*executive)*, perundangan (*legislative*) dan kehakiman (*judiciary)*.

Tuan Speaker, penubuhan *Ombudsman Sarawak* adalah amat penting ke arah sistem penyampaian Perkhidmatan Awam yang lebih cekap dan efektif serta Kerajaan yang lebih responsif dan adil terhadap rakyat selaras dengan visi Perkhidmatan Awam Sarawak ke arah *World Class Civil Service*.

Penubuhan Ombudsman Sarawak juga dapat memastikan sistem transformasi penyampaian awam Kerajaan berfungsi secara cekap dan berkesan ke arah demokrasi yang berakauntabiliti demi mencapai Sarawak negara maju dan berintegriti tinggi menjelang tahun 2030.

Tuan Speaker, penubuhan *Sarawak Ombudsman* tentu sekali akan memberi kepercayaan rakyat kepada sistem pentadbiran Kerajaan yang lebih telus dan bertanggungjawab dan sekaligus akan dapat meningkatkan keyakinan pelabur dalam dan luar negara ke Sarawak.

Syabas dan tahniah kepada Kerajaan Sarawak di bawah kepimpinan Yang Amat Berhormat Premier Sarawak kerana berjaya membentangkan Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 yang amat penting ini dan tepat pada masanya. Sekali lagi, Sarawak melakar sejarah tanah air kita dengan penubuhan ombudsman ini yang pertama di Malaysia.

Inilah bukti Kerajaan Sarawak terbuka menerima kritikan yang membina khususnya dalam penyampaian perkhidmatan yang terbaik kepada rakyat dan berusaha bersungguh-sungguh untuk menjadi negara maju dari sudut pentadbiran Kerajaan dan amalan tadbir urus yang telus, berintegriti dan berakauntabiliti, selaras dengan manifesto pilihan raya yang lepas.

Saya menyeru agar rakan-rakan Yang Berhormat di Dewan yang mulia ini tanpa mengira fahaman politik menyokong *Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023* demi penyampaian perkhidmatan yang lebih efisien dan telus oleh agensi Perkhidmatan Awam dan Kerajaan kepada rakyat Sarawak.

Dengan hujah-hujah ini, saya memohon menyokong *Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023* untuk diluluskan di Dewan yang mulia ini. Sarawak Maju Makmur, God Bless Sarawak. Sekian, terima kasih.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Meradong.

YB Datuk Ding Kuong Hiing: Tuan Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to debate on this Bill which is to establish the Sarawak Ombudsman. I would like also to thank and congratulate YB Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah Ali Hasan, Honourable Member for N.82 Bukit Sari which also Deputy Premier; Second Minister for Urban Development and Natural Resources; and Minister for International Trade, Industry and Investment, who has tabled this Bill to the Dewan today and which I believe is the first of its kind in Malaysia.

Tuan Speaker, introduction of the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023, is a timely and much-needed step towards ensuring proper administration and providing effective measures against maladministration by State Public Service agencies. The establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman Office will play a crucial role in upholding the principles of accountability, transparency, and good governance within the Sarawak State Government.

The Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023, is the combination of extensive consultations and deliberations, guided by our shared aspiration for a Government that serves its people with integrity and efficiency. It is a testament to our commitment to uphold the rule of law and ensuring that every citizen has access to fair and impartial redress. The primary function of the Sarawak Ombudsman will be to receive, investigate, and resolve complaints relating to maladministration in the Public Service. This includes instances where citizens have been unfairly treated, where decisions have been made without due process, or where actions have been taken that are inconsistent with the law or established policies.

The Ombudsman will have the authority to initiate investigations on its own initiative, even in the absence of a formal complaint, if it deems that such action is necessary in the public interest. This proactive approach will ensure that we are not merely reacting to complaints but actively seeking out and addressing systemic issues that may be affecting our people.

The Ombudsman's findings and recommendations will be made public, providing transparency and accountability in the resolution of complaints. This will not only deter future instances of maladministration but also serve as a learning opportunity for State Public Service agencies, enabling them to improve their practices and better serve the public. The establishment of the Sarawak Ombudsman will send a clear message to our citizens that their rights and concerns matter. It will provide a channel for them to seek redress when they feel wronged by the public service, and it will ensure that their complaints are heard and addressed fairly and impartially.

The Sarawak Ombudsman will not only safeguard the rights of our citizens but will also contribute to the overall improvement of public governance. By promoting the principles of good governance, integrity, and accountability, the Ombudsman will help to foster a public service that is efficient, effective, and responsive to the needs of the people.

I urge all members of this august House to support the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. This Bill represents a significant step forward in our pursuit of a more just, equitable and transparent society. Together, we can create a Sarawak where every citizen feels respected, valued and empowered.

Tuan Speaker, with that, I fully support the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 to be materialised.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Repok.

YB Dato' Sri Huang Tiong Sii: Tuan Speaker, saya mengucapkan terima kasih kerana telah memberi peluang kepada saya untuk membahas Rang Undang-Undang Ombudsman Sarawak, 2023, dengan izin, Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 yang telah dibentangkan oleh Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan pada Persidangan Hari Pertama Mesyuarat Kedua bagi Penggal Kedua Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak yang Ke-19 di dalam Dewan yang mulia ini.

Tuan Speaker, perkataan Ombudsman berasal daripada Sweden. Ombudsman merupakan pegawai Kerajaan yang dilantik bagi melakukan pemeriksaan terhadap aktiviti-aktiviti Kerajaan dan memantau sebarang penyiasatan terhadap aduan salah laku pegawai Kerajaan atau agensi kerajaan.

Secara amnya, Ombudsman merupakan sebahagian daripada sistem undang-undang pentadbiran untuk memantau kerja-kerja eksekutif bagi memastikan ketelusan, keadilan dan kecekapan sesebuah sistem tadbir urus.

Tuan Speaker, Sweden merupakan negara pertama yang mewujudkan Ombudsman. Negeri-negara maju seperti Finland, Denmark dan New Zealand telah mengikut jejak langkah Sweden bagi melaksanakan Ombudsman dalam sistem tadbir urus masing-masing.

Tujuan utama pelaksanaan sistem Ombudsman dalam sesebuah sistem Kerajaan adalah:

(a) Mempertingkat kualiti perkhidmatan awam berdasarkan prinsip keadilan, keterbukaan, akauntabiliti dan kecekapan;
(b) Melindungi individu daripada sebarang perbuatan penyelewengan, ketidakadilan, diskriminasi dan penyalahgunaan kuasa oleh pihak berkuasa.

Secara amnya, sistem Ombudsman memainkan peranan yang penting bagi mempromosikan dan menggalakkan kecekapan sistem tadbir urus serta merapatkan jurang antara Kerajaan dan rakyat.

Tuan Speaker, kita amatlah bersyukur kerana di bawah kepimpinan Premier Sarawak, Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, Negeri Sarawak terus membangun secara mampan dan menjurus ke arah kestabilan ekonomi, kesejahteraan dan kemakmuran.

Pelaksanaan Undang-Undang Ombudsman Sarawak, 2023 akan mempertingkat lagi ketelusan, kecekapan dan akauntabiliti dalam sistem tadbir urus Sarawak. Yang lebih penting, ia akan meningkatkan lagi keyakinan rakyat Sarawak kepada sistem tadbir urus Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, sekiranya Sarawak berjaya melaksanakan Undang-Undang Ombudsman Sarawak, 2023, undang-undang ini akan menjadikan Sarawak negeri pertama dan perintis penggubalan Undang-Undang Ombudsman di Malaysia.

Bukan itu sahaja, pelaksanaan Undang-Undang Ombudsman akan menerajui sistem tadbir urus Sarawak ke arah yang lebih telus, adil dan cekap. Maka, saya yakin Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman, 2023 akan menerima sokongan padu daripada anak-anak Sarawak.

Akhir sekali, dengan sukacitanya, saya menyokong penuh Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman, 2023. Sekian, terima kasih.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Kota Sentosa.

YB Encik Yap Yau Sin: Tuan Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to debate on this Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. This Bill is the first of its kind in Malaysia and shows that the Sarawak GPS

Government is serious and committed about public transparency, accountability and maladministration by the State's public servants and government agencies, public authorities, statutory bodies, local councils that are tasked with implementation and delivery of public projects and services. This law is crucial step towards creating a trustworthy and efficient government.

The concept of an Ombudsman is not new and its origin can be traced as an independent body to investigate and resolve complaints made against public authorities. With this law, Sarawakians can look forward as an independent ombudsman entity governed exclusively by law to investigate complaints of maladministration in the public sector. The ombudsman reports directly to the Sarawak Legislative Assembly and this means no one has the right to influence the ombudsman in the performance of its functions and tasks fairly and legally.

Tuan Speaker, this law provides a channel for people to submit legitimate complaints against public servants and public entities to the ombudsman who will conduct fair and unbiased investigations. Ombudsman can investigate, expose and help correct illegal behaviour on the part of public servants. This will curb abuse of power, misconduct and dereliction of duties by the little napoleons in public service by enhancing good governance which is essential for promoting accountability and transparency. By promoting integrity, transparency and accountability through fair and independent investigation of wrong doings by public servants and public agencies through an independent ombudsman will ensure that allegations or complaints on misconduct, abuse of power and dereliction of duties and responsibilities are addressed promptly and that voices of those who speak up are heard and valued instead of being victimized.

Tuan Speaker, currently, the public perception is that.

"Bila longkang tersumbat, salah YB",
"Bila rumput tidak dipotong, salah YB",
"Bila jalan berlubang, salah YB",
"Bila banjir kilat berlaku, salah YB",
"Bila projek lewat, salah YB",
"Kalau projek belum mula, salah YB",
"Apa-apa yang tidak betul dalam kawasan, semua salah YB".

YB boleh dan akan membuat aduan bagi pihak rakyat kepada agensi dan jabatan kerajaan berkenaan mengenai longkang tersumbat kerana lama tidak dibersihkan, rumput tidak dipotong mengikut jadual, banjir kilat dan jalan berlubang, tetapi rakyat kena faham YB tidak mempunyai kuasa untuk memberi arahan kepada mana-mana jabatan dan agensi kerajaan.

This means, ordinary YBs like myself have no control or authority over the public agencies like City and Municipal Council, Public Works Department (JKR), Drainage & Irrigation Department (DID) and public servants in these agencies tasked with delivering public services promptly and efficiently.

As such this law is timely and if implemented and enforced properly will help tremendously in enhancing performance, responsibilities and duties for efficient delivery of public services to the public, which the public is rightfully entitled to in the first instance. So don't blame the YB but lodge complaints to the ombudsman if public agencies and public servants frequently do not respond to complaints made to them it can be through *talikhidmat* or if they do not resolve the issues complained in *talikhidmat* or if they reply with inaccurate responses in *talikhidmat*. If necessary, even the YB *kawasan* will also be using the services of ombudsman.

Tuan Speaker, when public institutions operate in a fair, efficient and transparent manner, it will create an environment that is conducive to investment and business growth. This in turn can lead to job creation, increased productivity and overall economic development of Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, contrary to the negative remarks on the Bill by Member from Padungan, for example Section 35 on the power of arrest, this provision is necessary as the removal of this power

will negate the power of investigation on any party who refuses to cooperate with the ombudsman. The removal of this power of arrest will render the ombudsman as a tiger without teeth. In any event, this power of arrest can only be exercised if there is reasonable suspicion of that party committing a sizeable offence and I am sure the Member of Padungan understand what constitute a sizeable offence. The check and balance is already clearly stated in the provision itself and as such should be maintained.

Tuan Speaker, as to the proposal on appointment of the Chief Ombudsman on the advice of the Premier in Section 5 again by the Member of Padungan, this would affect the independence of the office of the ombudsman. It would result in the ombudsman being beholden to the Premier and that would affect the accountability and credibility of the office of ombudsman.

Tuan Speaker, the primary purpose and main objective and focus of the Ombudsman Bill is to prevent maladministration of public agencies where the ombudsman report directly to this august House. This bill is not a stand-alone bill, this Bill supplements other laws like the MACC Act.

Tuan Speaker, in conclusion, I fully support the passing of this Sarawak Ombudsman Bill into law as it demonstrates again the GPS is committed towards an efficient, competent and accountable public administration and also building a brighter future for all its people and that should be celebrated and embraced by all. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Ahli Yang Berhormat for Batu Kitang.

YB Dato Ir Lo Khere Chiang: Tuan Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to debate on the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023.

First and foremost, allow me to congratulate you sir, on your re-appointment as the Speaker of this august House for the ninth term and your legacy as the longest serving speaker in this country.

I am pleased to express my full support for the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. This Bill is a crucial step towards enhancing transparency, accountability, and good governance in our beloved Sarawak.

I wish to congratulate Yang Amat Berhormat Premier, for sending a team to Sweden to study the world's oldest Ombudsman law of over 200 years. This is Yang Amat Berhormat Premier's brainchild, and it shows his commitment to learning from the best practices around the world before implementing them in Sarawak. And when it is 200 years old, we have to be right, how can we go wrong.

The Ombudsman Bill will act as a guardian of public trust, ensuring that our Government operates with integrity and upholds the highest ethical standards. And Ahli Yang Berhormat for Padungan mentioned about, you know, the Members of this august House being above the law and I would like to quote my experience as Chairman of the council. Tuan Speaker, I may be a politician heading a council but when I am overboard when I ask for things beyond what I should be asking for, there is the financial regulations, there is the councils ordinance where the Chief Executive of where I work will tell me *"YB you can't do this. The law says you can't"* So, we are not above the law, the laws that protects the public in general. And we are elected by the people and we work for the people and so if we are above the law and if we do something wrong the people makes the choice at the end of the day.

I am sure the Ahli Yang Berhormat for Padungan knows about this, understand it as well. And we talk about enforcement, I remember when I was the Chairman of the council, when we got out to enforce, we don't go out alone. We bring the police along, Tuan Speaker. We bring the police along, the police will know the law and what is right, when it is the right time to arrest and how do they arrest. They are the professionals in their field. So, there is no problem here.

The Ombudsman Bill will act as a guardian of public trust, ensuring that our Government operates with integrity and upholds the highest ethical standards. The Ombudsman's office reports to Sarawak DUN which will ensure that it is accountable to the people of Sarawak whereas, as I speak, I recalled MACC reports to the Prime Minister of Malaysia, whereas we, the Ombudsman, report to this DUN. Sarawak under the premier has started on the right step in the right direction. An efficient and honest civil service and responsible governance will instill investors' confidence in Sarawak. Our political strength and stability is an additional plus point for investors.

The Bill's provisions for transparency and accountability are particularly noteworthy. The Ombudsman's annual reports, Ahli Yang Berhormat Padungan mentioned about no reports. There is a report I believe and the Ombudsman Annual Report will be tabled in this DUN, in this very DUN and will provide the public with valuable insights into the state of administration in Sarawak. This transparency will promote public participation and encourage responsible governance. The establishment of an independent Ombudsman will provide a vital mechanism for investigating complaints of administrative wrongdoing and misconduct and the Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat I'm sure will also use it because the Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat comes from the people, we are elected by the people we are working for the people. This will empower our citizens, ensuring that their voices are heard, and their concerns addressed.

Tuan Speaker, six years ago, we had a budget of RM6 billion, then we had RM10 billion last year. This year, our Premier just announced RM12 billion. Congratulations to our Premier who demonstrates his wise leadership at this critical issue and his commitment to protecting the rights of our citizens.

Our economy is improving due to the smart strategy deployed by Yang Amat Berhormat Premier. He has the foresight to protect our money from being wrongly used by people in office. Our Premier and leaders work hard, and because we work very hard, we have all the wealth today and we are creating more wealth in the years to come. We do not want this wealth to be squandered in the future. Making money is not easy but spending it is very, very easy. That's where the Ombudsman comes in.

Tuan Speaker, I beg to support the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 tabled by the Honourable Member for N.82, Bukit Sari. Let us work together to ensure that Sarawak is a beacon of transparency, accountability, and good governance. Thank you, Tuan Speaker.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Member for Tupong.

YB Encik Fazzrudin bin Haji Abdul Rahman: Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh. Terima kasih, Tuan Speaker kerana memberi peluang kepada saya untuk membahaskan *Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023* yang telah dibentangkan oleh Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Bukit Sari dan juga Timbalan Premier.

Ini merupakan satu pembentangan *Bil* yang begitu bersejarah sekali dan kalau boleh saya mulakan dulu dengan berkongsi tentang *the evolution of global* ataupun evolusi dunia. Evolusi ini berlaku dalam semua bidang tak kira bidang kewangan, perindustrian, *telecommunication*, perubatan dan pelbagai lagi.

Menjadi seorang pemimpin sesebuah negara ataupun negeri itu perlu peka kepada evolusi dan juga mempunyai visi yang jauh agar dapat memanfaatkan evolusi dunia terhadap negara dan negeri tersebut. Jika tidak, maka sesebuah negara atau negeri itu akan ketinggalan, dan impaknya adalah kepada rakyatnya.

Contohnya, jika kita tidak merancang dan beralih kepada tenaga yang boleh diperbaharui, syarikat-syarikat antarabangsa mungkin tidak akan melabur ke negara kita dan akhirnya peluang pekerjaan baru dan ekonomi akan merudum. Satu lagi contoh jika kita tidak berkembang dari segi teknologi selari dengan teknologi dunia, perhubungan kita dengan dunia luar akan terputus dan kita

tidak akan dapat menggunakan kelengkapan-kelengkapan moden masa kini. Contohnya satu ketika dahulu perhubungan telekomunikasi adalah melalui GSM. Sekarang ia beralih daripada GSM kepada 2G, kepada 3G, kepada 4G dan sekarang 5G. That is an example of evolution Tuan Speaker.

Dalam sektor pendidikan pula jika kita tidak *evolve* anak-anak kita tidak akan mendapat tempat pekerjaan dalam dunia masa kini. Jadi sekarang Sarawak sedang melalui proses evolusi yang begitu cepat sekali. Hal ini bermula apabila Yang Amat Berhormat Ahli daripada Gedong sekarang ini, ketika itu Ahli Yang Berhormat daripada Satok mengambil alih tampuk kepimpinan Sarawak sehinggakan proses dan tindakan evolusi ini digubal dan digariskan secara sistematik dalam PCDS 2030. PCDS 2030 inilah yang bakal memastikan kita tidak ketinggalan. Tidak hanya menggunakan GSM walhal orang lain telah menggunakan 5G. Untuk memastikan kita tidak ketinggalan di belakang. Penggerak utama PCDS 2030 ini tidak lain dan tidak bukan adalah sektor awam Sarawak. Banyak projek yang telah diluluskan dan sedang dalam perancangan untuk dilaksanakan dan kita bakal melihat banyak lagi projek-projek yang bakal dirancang untuk memastikan kita mencapai objektif PCDS 2030 tadi.

Oleh itu, untuk memastikan segala yang kita rancangkan dapat dilaksanakan dengan efisien, maka kita harus sentiasa memperbaik dan menambah baik proses kerajaan yang sedia ada. Pengenalan *Bill Ombudsman* ini adalah bukti komitmen Kerajaan kita untuk pertamanya meningkatkan lagi mutu perkhidmatan kakitangan awam kita. Perkhidmatan dari segi prosesnya, transparensinya, respon terhadap aduan atau respon terhadap krisis. Sekarang ini kalau kita lihat kita mempunyai Biro Pengaduan Awam yang berfungsi untuk aduan rakyat dapat disalurkan ke situ dan aduan tersebut akan dipanjangkan ke agensi-agensi berkaitan. Tetapi melalui Rang Undang-Undang ini proses yang sama dapat kita laksanakan iaitu aduan akan disalurkan melalui pejabat Ombudsman dan tertakluk seksyen-seksyen dalam Rang Undang Undang. Dalam masa yang sama, tindakan dapat diambil kepada mana-mana pegawai kerajaan yang didapati bersalah tidak melaksanakan tugas mereka dengan penuh integriti.

Ini yang paling pentingnya, *the most important objective* adalah untuk memastikan *delivery* kepada rakyat sentiasa efisien. Ini juga bukti betapa komited, terbuka dan seriusnya Kerajaan melihat mahupun menerima aduan, dan bersifat kritikal kerana GPS sentiasa menekankan kepada keutamaan kepada rakyat dan keutamaan kepada Sarawak.

Dengan wujudnya Badan Ombudsman kita ini pula akan melapor terus kepada Dewan Undangan Negeri dan bukannya di bawah Menteri ataupun Kementerian untuk memastikan kebebasan badan ini untuk melaksanakan tanggungjawab mereka tanpa dipengaruhi oleh mana-mana pihak. Habisan tinggi *udah* Dewan Undangan Negeri ini dan saya *confused* apabila Ahli Yang Berhormat daripada Padungan melabelkan Rang Undang-Undang ini sebagai *half-baked*. Mun *udah* paling tinggi Dewan Undangan Negeri saya *sik tauk nok backed* penuhnya sampai tahap *nei* pada pandangan Yang Berhormat Padungan. Ini akan memantapkan lagi sistem perkhidmatan awam kita, *which is that is the most important objective of this Bill* dan akhirnya akan memberi tarikan dan kesan yang baik kepada pelabur-pelabur luar yang ingin melabur di Sarawak dan akhirnya akan memberi manfaat kepada rakyat Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, saya yakin dengan lulusnya Rang Undang-Undang Ombudsman ini, ia akan memberi manfaat yang begitu baik sekali *and lastly*, Tuan Speaker, *as I wouldn't want this last statement to influence you in giving me extra or favourable treatment, I would like to congratulate you, your good self for the extension of your tenure as the Speaker of this august House.* Your excellence skill and achievements and experience justify the extension. Sekian, terima kasih. Saya mohon menyokong.

Tuan Speaker: Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Bukit Begunan.

YB Datuk Mong anak Dagang: Thank you, Tuan Speaker. I believe I will be the last one. Thank you for giving the opportunity to participate in the debate on Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 tabled by Yang Berhormat Deputy Premier and Member for N.82 Bukit Sari.

Tuan Speaker, I am not going into detail of the Bill but I would prefer to make general comments and observations in support of the Bill.

Foremost, I wish to congratulate and thanks Yang Berhormat Deputy Premier and Member for N.82 Bukit Sari for tabling the Bill this morning. Tuan Speaker, the State Government under the leadership of Yang Amat Berhormat Premier is taking bold step making Sarawak to be the first in Malaysia to introduce important piece of legislation known as Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023.

Tuan Speaker, according to the International Ombudsman Institute, there are now around 140 countries in the world that have established office of ombudsman and majority of those are in developed countries. Therefore, I believe Ombudsman is an important institution not only to serve check and balance but to improve the delivery system in terms of problem solving in respect of the various government institution and agencies.

In some countries, Ombudsman was established when the public trust in the Government and the Public Institutions is very low which could be due to many reason including people rising expectation, this people are more aware of their surrounding and their right.

An Ombudsman is designated to be a neutral and impartial a dispute practitioner. Thus, its establishment to strategic stand would be able to assist to rejuvenate and improve the Government delivery system, so people would have confidence in dealing with the realise public agencies.

Tuan Speaker, I have to give credits when it is due. Almost put in the recorded that the State Government and each agency in public institution for many years had enjoy strong public trust and confidence. But despite this let's not seat on our laurels, but to further improve, strengthen, and consolidate effort towards efficient delivery system. And for example, in my Constituency all the State Government Agencies in Sri Aman had taken proactive action to complaints meet of the members of the republic, this involves the Sri Aman District, Pantu District, and Lingga District.

However, their trust and confidence could be lost if we adopted like a die so attitude towards citizen complaint. Having said that Tuan Speaker, I strongly believe that the main of objective for introducing Sarawak Ombudsman Bill is to further enhance the public trust and strengthen the function which areas of Government agencies in the State. This Ombudsman Bill will deal with the entire public sector, its engagement with the public sector is also possible particular show when they involve service provided by the Private sector.

In secondly, Tuan Speaker, its stated in Clause (6) of the Bill, Members of the Ombudsman will be people of varied background, qualification and the experiences. With their varied background and experiences, hopefully, the Ombudsman will come out with more holistic and systematic approach to solve public complaints and grouses.

Lastly in third, Tuan Speaker, Ombudsman played crucial role in their open Government reform process, will improve trust transparency as well accountability in the public sector. Tuan Speaker, a strong credible public sector would go a long way to attract foreign investment into the State. Foreign investor would not come and invest in our country where the Government practices would come and invest in our country where Government practices high degree of integrity, transparency, and accountability.

So, with that short comment, Tuan Speaker, I beg to support the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, under Standing Order 9(1), I determined this this sitting goes beyond 6.30 p.m. Honourable Member for Satok.

YB Dato Ibrahim bin Baki: Bismillahirrahmaanirrahim. Assalamualaikum Warahmattullahi Wabarakatuh. Salam sejatera dan Salam *segulai sejalai.*

Tuan Speaker, terima kasih atas kesempatan diberikan kepada saya untuk terlibat sama dalam sesi perbahasan Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman, 2023 di Dewan yang mulia ini.

Pertama kalinya, saya ingin memanjat setinggi-tinggi kesyukuran ke hadrat Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala dengan limpah kurniaNya, kita dapat berkumpul dan bersidang di Dewan yang mulia ini. Saya ingin merakamkan juga setinggi tahniah dan syabas kepada Yang Berhormat Deputy Premier, Ahli Yang Berhormat Bukit Sari kerana telah berjaya membentangkan Rang Undang-Undang Ombudsman, 2023 awal hari ini.

Tuan Speaker, masyarakat dunia kini meletakkan kepentingan kepada nilai integriti dalam individu khususnya apabila individu tersebut adalah seorang yang diamanahkan untuk melindungi hak serta kepentingan awam.

Saya amat menyambut baik inisiatif oleh Kerajaan Sarawak bagi mewujudkan sebuah agensi bagi memastikan mereka yang mempunyai kuasa untuk terus komited dalam melaksanakan tanggungjawab mereka selaras dengan konsep-konsep akauntabiliti dan prinsip tatakelola.

Ini memperlihatkan komitmen serta keprihatinan Kerajaan Sarawak dalam menyelesaikan masalah yang berkaitan dengan isu salah tadbir atau maladministration. Sebagai sebuah Kerajaan yang bertanggungjawab, prihatin, serta peka kepada permasalahan struktur atau structural problems dan kesan masalah ini kepada masyarakat kita seharusnya memikirkan solusi untuk isu salah tadbir dan berazam untuk menoktahkan isu tersebut.

Seperti yang kita sedia maklum, Sarawak di bawah pimpinan Yang Amat Berhormat Premier memberi penekanan kepada Pembangunan Infrastruktur dan Kemudahan. Ini bertujuan untuk melengkapkan keperluan asas seperti bekalan air dan elektrik di seluruh pelosok Sarawak serta menambah baik perhubungan antara tempat di negeri ini melalui pelaksanaan pelbagai projek seperti jalan raya, jambatan, pusat pentadbiran, sekolah, hospital, dan sebagainya.

Tidak dapat dinafikan, dalam proses pelaksanaan projek terdapat pelbagai masalah yang sering timbul seperti kelewatan yang berbangkit daripada kurang komitmen dari pihak pelaksana serta sifat sambil lewa yang mungkin menjejaskan pelaksanaan sekaligus penyampaian khidmat Kerajaan kepada rakyat. Kita seharusnya ada mekanisma untuk bertindak atas isu-isu seperti ini, sebagaimana peruntukan dalam Rang Undang-Undang Sarawak Ombudsman ini, iaitu ada sebuah agensi khas yang diberikan kuasa untuk mengekang budaya kurang sihat dan kebocoran dalam pentadbiran.

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak Government has always been committed in this quest to combat issues of corruption and graft. In 2015, we were the first State to signed Integrity Pledge which show strong political will and commitment to ensure sincerity and honesty in running the Government for the people. Since then, we have renewed the pledge after the State’s election for the new cabinet along with efforts to keep civil servants in check through the placement of certified integrity officers in governments agencies and departments. With the passage of the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, we will continue to make history to be the first State to have a dedicated agency to keep us the Government honest as well as those who are entrusted by the public. I will be the first to admit though that this will not be a cure all for social and systemic ill’s that enables maladministration, malpractice and corruption.

However, it is a big step towards ensuring transparency, accountability and upholding public trust. Trust is important as while we, the Government needs the public to trust us with the policies that would serve them, the public too need reasons for them to trust that we would discharge our powers faithfully and not abuse it willy-nilly with better public perception of Government, it will only benefit the people in terms of policy explanations, improve service delivery as well as improving our image in the eyes of the world. This is important for us to attract investment in Sarawak which is crucial towards our economic development, job creation, and elevating the household income.

I can anticipate, various interpretations of this Bill that the Government wants to introduce. There are even as expected, small minority would oppose for the sake of opposing. The Sarawak Government respect the concept separation of powers and the importance for the Sarawak Ombudsman to be independent for it to fulfill its objectives and functions. The appointment for position of Chief Ombudsman will be made by the Sarawak Governor and he will report to the State Legislature on the findings of the agency, as different from like SPRM or MACC, even though the appointment is suggested by the Prime Minister to the Agong, however the MACC team do not report to Parliament, as in this case in Ombudsman Bill, the Chief Ombudsman Officer will report to this august House.

Now, responding to Honourable Member of Padungan, who perhaps, perhaps, perhaps, not clear *laa* and conclusion I tell you that there is no room to navigate negotiate or circumvent the *"long arms of the law"* and there will be no political influence that can be exerted on the body that will interfere with their investigation. There shall not be any insinuations that the *"Government is investigating itself"* as the Government Ombudsman is meant to be one of many safeguards to keep those in check. Perhaps, the Honourable Member Padungan can suggest to your good friend in Penang Government, Chief Minister of Penang.

Well, in conclusion, short one, in 2021, GPS pledged in its election manifesto that we would improve service delivery based on integrity and good governance. I am proud to say that we have fulfilled that promise. What we pledge and say we uphold, do and implement. We walk the talk. Unlike someone lah, who conveniently delete their manifesto when it suits them. The Sarawak Government is the first in the country to introduce this measure in our commitment towards a clean government with integrity. We are modest but never short of big ideas and today, we are leading the fight against maladministration, malpractice and corruption. With that, I beg to support the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023. Thank you very much.

Tuan Speaker: Any other Member wishes to speak? Honourable Member for Engkilili.

YB Encik Johnichal Rayong anak Ngipa: Terima Kasih, Tuan Speaker kerana telah memberikan saya ruang untuk berbahas berkenaan dengan Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023.

Syabas dan terima kasih juga kepada Yang Berhormat Datuk Amar Timbalan Premier dan juga ADUN Bukit Saban N.28, N.82.

YB Encik Johnichal Rayong anak Ngipa: Sorry maaf, Bukit Sari.

Tuan Speaker: That's right Honourable Member.

YB Encik Johnichal Rayong anak Ngipa: Sudah ngantok.

Tuan Speaker: I wish to remind, Members should not refer to Ministers by name. You did the right thing.

YB Encik Johnichal Rayong anak Ngipa: Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Honourable Deputy Premier and Member for Bukit Sari, no name being mentioned. You are right. Proceed.

YB Encik Johnichal Rayong anak Ngipa: Thank you, Tuan Speaker. My bestfriend.

Tuan Speaker, *Bill* ini amatlah sesuai sekali dan kena pada masanya untuk diluluskan oleh kesemua 82 ADUN Sarawak, tidak kira blok Kerajaan ataupun blok Pembangkang. Saya nampaknya blok Kerajaanlah sekarang. Kerusi sudah bertukar ha. Sudah beralih.

Untuk membangunkan Sarawak dan rakyatnya, *Ombudsman Bill* ini amatlah penting dalam memberi keyakinan dan kepercayaan rakyat kepada *public service agency* atau organisasi pentadbiran awam dan juga Kerajaan kita. Dicadangkan juga untuk pelantikan pegawai Ombudsman ini, Yang Berhormat Menteri bertanggungjawab haruslah melantik *Chief Ombudsman* dan pegawai-pegawai beliau haruslah yang mempunyai latar belakang dan rekod yang berintegriti tinggi dan yang boleh dipercayai kerana tugas-tugas mereka amatlah mencabar dari berbagai sudut.

Unit Ombudsman ini juga haruslah mempunyai standard yang tinggi, berintegriti dan bebas. Dicadangkan Unit ini juga harus mempunyai cawangan unit-unit di setiap pejabat di setiap kawasan ADUN bagi menjayakan *Bill* ini nanti sebagai *check and balance*. Pegawai-pegawai ini juga amatlah penting sekali dalam menjayakan objektif, kerana mereka haruslah memainkan peranan yang penting yang akan bertindak nanti untuk berfungsi menerima aduan, menyiasat dan mengambil tindakan, seterusnya, dalam memastikan rasuah, salah guna kuasa dan kedudukan dalam public service agency. Tuan Speaker, *Bill* ini amatlah penting kerana ia juga akan memberi keyakinan rakyat terhadap sistem pemerintahan kita. Di samping itu juga, hal ini dapat memberi keyakinan para pelaburan khasnya di luar bandar, dan di luar negara untuk melabur di Sarawak. Bagi merealisasikan Negeri kita menjadi sebuah negeri aman, damai dan maju di bawah Yang Amat Berhormat Premier kita, ringkas saja, sokong seratus peratus. Dengan ini, saya menyokong penuh *Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023*. Sekian, terima kasih.

Tuan Speaker: Any other Honourable Member who wishes to speak? Ada Ahli Yang Berhormat nak berucap before I call upon Honourable Deputy Premier and Member for Bukit Sari to wind up. We have a short break. Dewan resume at 6.55 p.m.

(Mesyuarat ditangguhkan pada pukul 6.34 p.m.)

Mesyuarat dimulakan pada pukul 7.04 p.m.)

Tuan Speaker: I shall now call upon the Deputy Premier and Member for Bukit Sari to do the winding up.

Timbalan Premier; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua; Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari (YB Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan): Tuan Speaker, terlebih dahulu saya ingin mengucapkan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan dan terima kasih kepada Ahli-ahli yang berhormat telah mengambil bahagian dalam perbahasan dan sekaligus menyokong Rang Undang-Undang ini yang melibatkan 23 orang Ahli Yang Berhormat daripada:

1. Beting Maro;
2. Bukit Asek;
3. Tellian;
4. Katibas;
5. Balleh;
6. Padungan;
7. Tanjong Batu;
8. Kabong;
9. Ba'Kelalan;
10. Opar;
11. Lingga;
12. Daro;

13. Tamin;
14. Murum;
15. Maradong;
16. Repok;
17. Kota Sentosa;
18. Batu Kitang;
19. Tupong;
20. Bukit Semuja;
21. Ngemah; dan
22. Engkilili;

Saya amat menghargai segala cadangan dan idea-idea bernas yang telah dikemukakan semasa perbahasan yang sudah tentunya akan dapat membantu Kerajaan Negeri dalam melaksanakan dan menguatkuasakan *Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023.*

With regard to the issue raised by Ahli Yang Berhormat for Padungan on whether the Government Link Companies (GLCs) are subject to investigation and security of Ombudsman, I wish to state that: the definition of *"Public Service Agency"* under Clause 2 of the Bill is all encompassing, wherein all the GLCs including SFS Inc. come under the limb of (1) Government agency; (2) Public Service Agency that carries public services function under the State; and (3) any office including its officer, employees, servants, representatives and agents where emolument derived from the State revenue whether wholly or partly. Therefore, GLCs are not left out from the application of this law.

On the appointment of the Ombudsman by the TYT it is to ensure the impartiality and independency of the Ombudsman as opposed to the proposal by the Honourable Member for Padungan. However, I wish to point out that Article 10 of the State Constitution provides that Yang di-Pertua Negeri shall act in accordance with the advice of the Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri or of a member thereof acting under the general authority of the *Majlis*.

On the issue raised with regards to Clause 34(2) and 35, on the right to remain silent and power of arrest, I wish to clarify that the procedures in clauses 34 and 35 are meant for investigation of offences under the Ordinance. It is not investigation of complaint. These clauses are similar to the provision in the Criminal Procedure Code especially Section 112 for the principle against self-incrimination. This principal is of universal application practised all over the world.

On the issue of the exclusion under the Second Schedule of the Bill, references are made to Ombudsman Laws in Sweden, Norway, New Zealand, British Columbia, Canada, Hong Kong, Australia, New South Wales, Philippines among others wherein they also do not subject the Kings, Member of Parliament, etc, under the jurisdiction of their ombudsman. Further they are not public servants as they are other laws that governs them such as MACC Act, Penal Code etc.

Ahli Yang Berhormat for Ba'Kelalan has given his full support on this Bill, like the others and Ahli Yang Berhormat for Ba'Kelalan had commended the drafting of the Bill as a well-crafted not like the *"alang-alang"* lawyer which is also my friend, Honourable Member for Padungan do not really understand the whole intent and purpose of this Bill.

Tuan Speaker, the report of the activities of Ombudsman and all the investigation will be fully published and to be laid in the Dewan Undangan Negeri including any finding, recommendation and opinion of the Ombudsman. Also, a Special Select Committee may be appointed upon a motion made under Standing Order to consider any matter arising from the report. Unlike Public Account Committee (PAC), the report made by the Ombudsman has legal force.

Tuan Speaker, "*itu sajalah yang saya dapat ucapkan dan saya sekali lagi mengucapkan terima kasih atas pandangan dan idea yang begitu bernas yang diberikan oleh Ahli-Ahli Yang Berhormat.*

Bill ini akan menegakkan lagi pendirian kita untuk memastikan negeri ini akan bergerak maju ke depan dengan sistem pentadbiran yang berintegriti dan komitmen yang tinggi dalam melaksanakan tugas dan tanggungjawab mereka demi untuk kepentingan rakyat pada keseluruhannya".

Thanks to all Honourable Members for your participation in expressing constructive views and suggestions while debating this Bill which will be taken into consideration in the implementation of this new legislation. Thank you.

Tuan Speaker: Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, the question before the Dewan is that the Motion standing in the Order Paper in the name of the Deputy Premier and Honourable Member for Bukit Sari be referred to the Committee of the Whole House. As many as of the opinion say *"Yes".*

Government: Yes… (Resounding *"Yes"*)

Tuan Speaker: As many as are of the contrary opinion say *"No"*. The *"Yes"* have it. The Motion is passed and referred to the Committee of the Whole House.

The Dewan shall now resume into the Committee of the Whole House to consider the Bill which stands committed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE STAGE

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

[Tuan Pengerusi mempengerusikan Mesyuarat]

Tuan Pengerusi: The Dewan shall now consider the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023.

Clauses 1 to 54

Tuan Pengerusi: The question is that Clauses 1 to 54 are ordered to stand part of the Bill. As many as of the opinion say *"Yes".*

Government: Yes… (Resounding *"Yes"*)

Tuan Pengerusi: As many as are of the contrary opinion say *"No"*. The *"Yes"* have it. Clauses 1 to 54 are ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Schedule

Tuan Pengerusi: The question is that the Schedule ordered to stand part of the Bill. As many as of the opinion say *"Yes".*

Government: Yes… (Resounding *"Yes"*)

Tuan Pengerusi: As many as are of the contrary opinion say *"No"*. The *"Yes"* have it. The Schedule are ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Enacting Clauses, Schedule and Title

Tuan Pengerusi: The Dewan shall now resume.

HOUSE RESUMED

[Tuan Speaker mempengerusikan Mesyuarat]

Timbalan Premier; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua; Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari (YB Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan): Tuan Speaker, I wish to report that the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 has been considered by the Committee of the Whole House and I agreed to without amendment.

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN –
BACAAN KALI YANG KETIGA

SARAWAK OMBUDSMAN BILL, 2023

Timbalan Premier; Menteri Sumber Asli dan Pembangunan Bandar Kedua; Menteri Perdagangan Antarabangsa, Industri dan Pelaburan; dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri N.82 Bukit Sari (YB Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah bin Ali Hasan): Tuan Speaker, I beg to move that Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 be now read the third time and do pass.

Tuan Speaker: Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, the question before the Dewan is that the Sarawak Ombudsman Bill, 2023 be read at third time and do pass. As many as the opinion say "*Yes*".

Government: Yes… (Resounding "*Yes*")

Tuan Speaker: As many as are of the contrary opinion say "*No*". The *"Yes"* have it. The Bill is read a third time and passed.

Bill is read a third time and passed

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN –
BACAAN KALI YANG KEDUA

ENVIRONMENT (REDUCTION OF GREENHOUSE GASES EMISSION) BILL, 2023

Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan); dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri DUN N.7 Samariang (YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah binti Sayeed Aman Ghazali): Tuan Speaker, I beg to move that the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 to be read a second time.

This Bill is designed to safeguard Sarawak's environment by implementing strategies to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases. The goal is to achieve net zero carbon emissions in the State by 2050.

Tuan Speaker, for the information of this august House, as approved by the Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri on the 14th September 2023, a delegation led by myself along with the Sarawak State Attorney General and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Environmental Sustainability and the Controller of the Environmental Quality Sarawak went on a benchmarking visit to Scotland to gain a fuller understanding of the United Kingdom model of devolution of powers with the government structure similar to a Federation like ours.

From this benchmarking visit, the delegation concludes that both central Government at Westminster and the regional government in Edinburgh can, within their respective legislative competence takes measures to reduce emissions of greenhouse gas. Initiate and approve schemes to capture and store carbon dioxide and undertake programs for industries, agriculture and other economic sectors to transition to clean renewable energy or reduce energy consumption.

The delegation also met and sought legal advise from experts on climate change law. We have actually also met professors in carbon capture storage at the University of Edinburgh and had discussion at the Edinburgh Climate Change Institute. The Government, through the State Attorney

General Chambers and; the Ministry of Energy and Environment Sustainability have also made extensive comparative studies on relevant Climate Change legislation like the Energy Act 2016 of United Kingdom, Climate Change Act 2022 of Southern Australia, the Australian National Registry of Ambition Unit Act 2011, European Climate Laws and Regulations Enacted by the European Parliament and EU Commission and Singapore's Carbon Pricing Act 2001.

Based upon the outcome of our visit and the comprehensive studies carried out on Climate Change Legislation in other jurisdictions this Bill is now being prepared for presentation to this august House.

Tuan Speaker, Malaysia has committed to reducing Green Gas House Emissions intensity by 45% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. Additionally, the nations aim for carbon neutrality by 2050 as per the Paris agreement 2015. Likewise, Sarawak is dedicated to address climate change by lowering greenhouse gas emissions and adopting strategies aligned with the global target achieving net zero emissions by 2050. These efforts fall under the State's Post COVID-19 Development Strategy 2030, PCDS 2030 focusing on environmental sustainability.

It is acknowledged that under international law, Malaysia as a sovereign nation has to be a party to treaties such as the Paris Agreement, and the Federal Government has the duty to fulfil obligations and the treaties entered into by Malaysia.

However, how such treaty obligations are to be fulfilled, should be governed by the laws of our country, in particular by the supreme law, which is the Federal Constitution.

Tuan Speaker, for the information of this august House, Parliament has not in pursuance of Article 76, passed any law to implement obligations entered into by Malaysia under the Paris Agreement and the State Government has not been informed nor consulted with regard to any Bill been introduced in Parliament to bring into force any provisions of the Paris Agreement in the Federation.

Therefore, the Sarawak Government is taking the initiative to introduce this Bill, aiming to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, promote carbon capture and storage, and mitigate climate change effects to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Environment is a multifaceted and multidimensional concept and includes matters such as climate change, reduction of greenhouse gases emission, capture and storage of carbon dioxide, all of which have effect on the environment.

The subject of environment is not explicitly listed in any of the legislative schedule in the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution. As a result, the subject of environment falls under the residual legislative power of the State Legislature, as outlined in Article 77. Residual matters are matters, over which the State may make laws.

Tuan Speaker, I wish to draw the attention of this august House to the Court of Appeal judgement case of *Ketua Pengarah Jabatan Alam Sekitar* & Ors v. Kajing Tubek relating to the EIA Report for The Bakun Dam project. The Court of Appeal decided that, where environment touches upon or affect a matter under the State List, State Law shall apply to that matter.

Forest, land and water are subject matters in the State List in the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution by virtue of Article 74(2). Hence, only this august House has the constitutional authority to pass laws relating to forests and land. This legislative power covers all matters related to forests and land that are within the boundaries of Sarawak up to the continental shelf of Sarawak.

Additionally, this legislative power also covers our right to regulate activities or projects like afforestation and reforestation in our forests to mitigate the effect of climate change and the use of

State Land for carbon storage as well as any financial benefits derived from such projects or activities.

Tuan Speaker, this Bill provides for measures and steps to reduce emission of greenhouse gases. The measures provided for in this Bill are:

(a) To provide the registration of businesses in scheduled economic sectors listed in the First Schedule, requiring them to submit annual carbon emission reports following international reporting standards;
(b) This is very crucial, to set carbon emission thresholds and where any registered business entity is unable or unwilling to bring their carbon emissions down to the emission threshold levels, a carbon levy, at a rate to be determined by Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri, would be imposed;
(c) To control flaring and venting of petroleum and greenhouse gases by the oil and gas sectors;
(d) To promote forest carbon activities, carbon capture and storage projects, validated according to Carbon Standard Rules for issuing Sarawak carbon credit units;
(e) To comply with international standards for measuring CO_2 potentials for each type of Greenhouse Gases based on the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Assessment Report as agreed upon by the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
(f) To ensure verification of Carbon Credit Units for Sarawak projects issued by the Carbon Standard Administrator which shall be registered in the Sarawak Carbon Registry, administered by the registrar appointed by the Minister;
(g) To register verified Carbon Credit Units in the Sarawak Carbon Registry for trading in voluntary or Emission Trading Markets locally or overseas;
(h) To record data on carbon emission reduction in Sarawak and Carbon Credit Units issued which will be furnished to the relevant Federal agency for inclusion in the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for reporting to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with corresponding adjustments where carbon credit units issued for carbon projects or activities in Sarawak are traded or sold overseas; and
(i) To determine the carbon pricing for Sarawak Carbon Credit Units through the Rules under Clause of 57 of the Bill.

The meaning and legal effect of each of the Clauses in the Bill are found in the explanatory statement thereto. the meaning and the explanation can be found in this blue bill.

This Bill institutes a robust system for project verification and validation by appointed-by-appointed Carbon Standard Administrators.This system ensures integrity and credibility for all issued carbon credits from Sarawak augmenting their value and acceptance in compliance and voluntary markets. It also opens a venue for the Government to earn revenue through trading and selling these carbon credits. Upon passing this Bill, the Government plans to establish an Advisory Panel focused on climate change, carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCS) carbon credit and pricing, emission thresholds, energy transition strategies, aiming for net zero by 2050 and other pertinent matters.

Tuan Speaker, I wish to reiterate that the carbon emission reduction and carbon credit issue for projects in Sarawak will be reported to the Federal Government to be included in the Nationally Determine Contribution of Malaysia for submission to the UNFCCC. This Bill might result in financial implications for the state which we currently cannot accurately determine. Once the Bill is passed, the Ministry will collaborate with the State Financial Secretary's office to outline the financial requirements for effectively implementing and administering this Ordinance. Subsidiary legislation would have to be passed by Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri for the effective implementation of this new law. And in this regard, the Ministry would be guided by the State Attorney General's Chambers on the nature and term of such subsidiary legislation which will cover matters such as carbon pricing, rate of carbon levy, carbon emission thresholds and scope of emission report, among others.

Tuan Speaker, the introduction of this Bill is a clear manifestation of the Sarawak Government Firm commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Strategies, actions, plans and incentives towards reduction or abatement of greenhouse gases emission in the State are clearly embodied in this Bill which is within the legislative competence of this august House to enact.

Tuan Speaker, as previously mentioned, our august House is leading the way by introducing legislation concerning climate change before any other Parliament or State Legislature in Malaysia. We are the first. This demonstrates the GPS Government commitment under the esteemed leadership of Yang Amat Berhormat Premier setting an example for the nation in adopting strategies for transitioning to clean renewable energy and sustainable development. This Bill also mirrors Yang Amat Berhormat Premier leadership by implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emission adding Malaysia's Gold of achieving net zero emission by 2050. The Bill will also pave the way for Sarawak to have its own complete regulatory framework and this is very important on clean and renewable energy and underlining our status as one of the global clean energy leaders. With these, perhaps, perhaps Sarawak will be on par with other develop nations such as Australia, with their own new Hydrogen and Renewable Energy Act 2023.

Finally, and most importantly, this Bill provides opportunities for Sarawakians to take part in projects and activities which will mitigate the effects of global warming and to earn carbon credits for their efforts. In the end it will benefits Sarawakian. These activities will also enable the state to have a new source of revenue which would enhance the State's capacity towards developing the State in an economically sustainable manner. So, Tuan Speaker, I hereby urge all Members of this august House to support this Bill. I beg to move. Thank you.

YB Datuk Dr Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Junaidi: Tuan Speaker, I beg to second.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you. Now I call upon Honourable Members of this august House to debate on the second reading of the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Before the debate, I would like to say if you could limit your speeches 15 minutes as per Standing Order 31(8), I rule that the 15 minutes the maximum for each. Otherwise, if you don't want to have first camping tonight try to do it below 10. That's just an advice. Thank you. Any other Honourable Member wishes to speak please? Okay, I got the list here. Can I call upon Ahli Yang Berhormat for Tebedu. Please, thank you.

YB Dr. Simon Sinang @ Sinang anak Bada: Tuan Speaker, thank you very much for the opportunity given to me to participate in the debate of the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023.

Tuan Speaker, first of all I would like to congratulate the Deputy Minister in the Premier Department (Law, MA63 and State-Federal Relations) and a Member for DUN N.7 Semariang for introducing this historical bill, the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023.

Tuan Speaker, climate change has become a global concern over the last decades. On the 12th December 2015, Paris Agreement which is a legally binding treaty on climate change was signed by 196 parties during the United Nation Climate Change Conference in Paris, France.

The goal is to hold the increase in Global average temperature to well below 2 degrees celcius above the preindustrial level and pursue efforts to limit the temperature to 1.5 degree celcius above the pre industrial levels. The United Nations on climate change has indicated that by crossing the 1.5 degree celsius threshold, we are risking of unleashing a far more severe and frequent droughts, heatwaves and rainfall. Drought brings negative impacts to our economy because of agricultural losses, forest fires and health issues. Heatwaves and prolonged hot weathers cause heat strokes and hyperthermia that lead to death to humans and livestock. Heavy rainfall will damage our crops, soil erosion and flooding. All of us know the damaging and devastating effects of flooding to our lives, our environment and our economies.

Green House Gas issues through industrial activities such as agriculture, oil and gas industries, factories and transportation lead to thinning of ozone layers has resulted in Global Warming and Climate Change. As a result, the sea level raises up due to continuous melting of ice both at the Artic and the Antarctic circle.

To reduce the emission of Green House Gas, another 187 countries all over the world sign the Kyoto Protocol 1997 adopted on the 11th December 1997 to operationalised the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change, to have a Clean Development Mechanism and International Emission Trading was formulated where countries with Extra Carbon Credit are allowed to sell their Carbon Credit.

Tuan Speaker, Malaysia, as we all know is a signatory to both the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol 1997. When we are part of the signatory, we have no other choice but to enforce it, implement it and operationalise it.

The introduction of this Bill, by the Deputy Minister on the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 and a Member for DUN N.7 Semariang is correct and so timely and should be supported by all Members of this august House.

The Bill which has seven parts and 57 clauses are well and clearly defined and is a very comprehensive Bill. This is a very serious effort by the GPS Government together with the world communities to operationalise the Kyoto Protocol with the aim and target to achieve a net zero carbon emission by 2050 with the various strategies, action plans and incentives toward reduction or abatement of Green House Gases.

Tuan Speaker, heavy polluters and emitters are Power Generation activities Refining Petrochemical production and industrial manufacturing contributes to about 70% of all global energy related emissions. Based on the information, Asia Pacific Alone industrial emissions reached around 4 billion tonnes as at 2019. In Malaysia, the energy sector contributed about 80% of the total country's emission and this is about 80% of our total country's emission and equivalent to 259 million tonnes of emissions.

As the population grows, demand for these sectors will grow proportionally and exponentially. These will further contribute to an increase in carbon emissons.

Hence, it is extremely important for the whole world to have Carbon Storage Facilities to reduce carbon emissions into the atmosphere to avoid our children, our future generations to walk around putting on mask and goggle to avoid inhaling toxic air which can affect their health.

Under the Climate Change Paris Agreement, it is very important for us in Malaysia and Sarawak in particular to take part in these global initiatives to achieve Zero Greenhouse Gases Emissions by 2050.

Tuan Speaker, the introduction of this Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emissions) Bill, 2023 is a game changer to our State economy. I repeat *"A Game Changer"* to our State economy. While we join the world to reduce greenhouse gases emission, under the Bill that has been introduced by the Deputy Minister the carbon credit unit trading and the carbon levy will definitely contributes to our State annual income. With this additional income to the State Consolidated Fund, we can have surplus budget as per mentioned by Yang Amat Berhormat Premier this morning to further accelerate the development of infrastructure, to do research and development, to implement socio-economic programmes and to invest in human capital and entrepreneurship development in our beloved State, Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, when we have this surplus budget, we can and we hope that we will contribute more for our Sarawak Sovereign Wealth Future Fund. This will fulfill the dream of providing free tertiary education under the long-term goal announced by our YAB Premier dream, our dream. Tuan

Speaker, this is a very clear evidence, under the able GPS Government lead by YAB Premier, Minister For New Economy has propelled the state towards a High Income Economy Status. This is a Government that is very farsighted and visionary. This is a Government that care for the future of the State and her people. And this is the Government who puts Sarawak First and the interest of the people first. Tuan Speaker, with all these reasons, rationale and justifications, I beg to support this Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, the Honourable Member for Tebedu. I have in my list; after this would be Tupong, Murum, Yang Berhormat bagi Pending and then, I think Tanjong Datu. Ya, Tanjong Datu, Tupong, Murum, Pending and Tanjong Batu. Is that right? I have in my list so far. The last one will be Kota Sentosa. Oh, Ba'Kelalan. Oh, that's the list that I have now. Some more? You're going to camp tonight? Alright, I think you have to press, then, the list will come. Thank you. Now, may I call upon the Yang Berhormat bagi Tanjong Datu.

YB Encik Azizul Annuar bin Pehin Sri Haji Adenan: Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh. Salam sejahtera, Salam Sarawak Makmur. Tuan Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to debate on the introduction of our new Bill, namely the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023.

I would like to start with commending the Ministry, particularly the Ministry of Energy & Environmental Sustainability for the hard work & research done to this date despite being a relatively new ministry which started in early 2022.

Tuan Speaker, whether we like it or not, we are often the causes of environmental degradation. We are also the victims of the many unfortunate things that can happen right before us so let us find the steps in the right direction in our effort to create awareness on environmental issues, locally and globally.

This Bill is particularly significant because we are the first in the country to introduce such a Bill and with that, I would like to highly commend our Yang Amat Berhormat Premier, the Honourable Member for Gedong for his remarkable insight and vision.

Tuan Speaker, based on an article published by the World Meteorological Organization, as recent as 15th November 2023, *"The abundance of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere once again reached a new record last year and there is no end in sight to the rising trend, and the Global averaged concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO2), were a full 50% above the pre-industrial era for the first time and they continued to grow in 2023."* From the same article, it was quoted that *"The current level of greenhouse gas concentrations puts us on the pathway of an increase in temperatures; accompanied by more extreme weather, including intense heat and rainfall, ice melt, sea level rise and ocean heat and acidification. The socio-economic and environmental costs will soar. Therefore, we must reduce the consumption of fossil fuels as a matter of urgency."*

The introduction of this Bill is timely and it's what we need to play our part to reduce our emissions particularly in the state as we move towards a net carbon zero future. The explanatory statement from this Bill clearly states that the objective is to provide for capture and storage of greenhouse gases as a measure to reduce emissions and as a deterrent a carbon levy would be imposed on entities belonging to the economic sector based on the threshold set by the cabinet.

Tuan Speaker, I would like to particularly focus on Carbon Levy. As global temperatures continue to rise and ice caps continue to diminish, one thing is starting to become visibly clear that COP26 is not working in the way we had hoped, so we need to seek alternative means to monitor and reduce our carbon emissions. And among the advantages of carbon levy policies is that is has several attributes or qualities that make them generally more efficient, or less costly than other potential policies to reduce emissions. Its coverage includes all economy sectors and it depends on the quality of emission produced.

It is a useful market-based approach to addressing global warming. Furthermore, among the policy goals that it might achieve includes:

(a) Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission; and
(b) Attracting investment in energy efficiency and clean technology.

Tuan Speaker, carbon pricing encourages more conservation than conventional regulations. It creates a new revenue stream that can be used in a number of ways and can significantly affect the economic costs and political feasibility of the said policy. In addition, the revenue generated can be invested in clean energy initiatives, as well as dividends to public or other public priorities. It protects the interests of future generations like myself and will accelerate to a greener, healthier planet.

However, it also good to note that there are also many argruments surrouding the implementation of such a policy and whether the administration work and costs will be outweighed by the benefits needed to be taken into consideration.

Certain quarters may argue that a carbon pricing policy or levy will have a *"distortionary"* effect on the free market and could encourage the reduction of gross domestic product growth in a country. Some would also believe that the implementation of such policy can cause a *"leakage"* effect i.e. businesses will relocate their productions and businesses overseas in countries where a carbon tax or a carbon levy is not enforced.

Secondly, on the determining the price. However, I believe those in favour of carbon tax policy or carbon levy policy may not see this issue as particularly difficult and I'm sure the current state administration should be able to find common ground and agree to a price when taking into consideration the social cost of carbon and its implementation.

Thirdly, on distributing the revenue many have argued against a carbon levy policy or carbon pricing policy on the basis that it is *"regressive"* i.e it hits lower-income families the hardest and additionally, the burden may not be evenly regionally distributed, as some areas of a state may be more energy intensive than other parts of the State. Some believe that rather having a carbon pricing of carbon levy policy that it would be beneficial to give benefits to the firms producing sustainable commodities rather than impose a santion on the ones that are not. These benefits can take the form of tax breaks or regulations or incentive on pricing to ensure that they are kept affordable.

In conclusion, Tuan Speaker, as I have mentioned earlier, carbon pricing encourages more conservation than conventional regulations. It is a program that has been a proven tool to cutting emissions and can generate large revenue that can be invested into further reduction emissions. Furthermore, it also good to note that rather than being a stand alone approach, carbon pricing can be more effective as a part of a comprehensive regulatory strategy and lastly, it should direct revenues to all sectors of economy as a part of overall efforts to decarbonise the economy and most importantly to increase public awareness of the significance of carbon pricing in addressing GHG emissions.

With that, Tuan Speaker, I beg to support this Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Yang Berhormat Tanjong Datu. Next, I would like to call Yang Berhormat Tupong, please.

YB Encik Fazzrudin bin Haji Abdul Rahman: Bismillahirrahmaanirrahim. Assalamualaikum Warahmattullahi Wabarakatuh. Thank you, Tuan Speaker for allowing me to debate on the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023.

Tuan Speaker, today marks a very historic day for Sarawak and this august House. As I sit and listen to the reading of the Bills by Member of N.7 Samariang and also Deputy Minister in the Premiers Department, I feel proud to be a part of history in passing the Bills which will give great positive effects towards Sarawak, Malaysia and the whole world. I would also like to remind this august House that point no 10 of the GPS last PRN manifesto is *"strengthen efforts to protect and conserve the environment"* and with the introduction and insya-Allah by the passing of the Bills proved our structured and dedicated effort to fulfil our manifesto for the benefit of the *rakyat.*

It is with utmost conviction and dedication that I lend my wholehearted support to the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. This legislative proposal signifies far more than a mere set of rules; it embodies Sarawak's profound dedication to addressing the critical issue of climate change, ensuring a secure future, and nurturing a sustainable environment for the prosperity of generations to come. Malaysia is a party to the Paris agreement and has committed to reduce its economy wide carbon intensity and also inspires to achieve nett zero in Green House Gas Emission by 2050. Our actions here in this august House is as loud as the words of Malaysia aspiration.

As we convene in this august House, we can no longer turn a blind eye to the pressing issue of climate change. The world, including our land here in Sarawak, reels under the devastating impact of extreme weather events, from catastrophic floods to record-breaking droughts and heatwaves. The toll on lives and livelihoods is evident and the urgency to act cannot be overstated. Never before we have seen an inconsistent climate. Gone are the days of rainy season only at the end of the year or droughts only in June. Even the total rainfall in 1 week now is equivalent to a year total rainfall in years before now.

Tuan Speaker, events like the recent wars and the persistent grip of the COVID-19 pandemic have caused global economic hardships and energy shortages. Yet, in the face of these challenges, we cannot afford to delay climate action. Our commitment to addressing climate change remains resolute.

Our compass is the Post-COVID Development Strategy 2030, a comprehensive blueprint that charts our course toward achieving developed society status by 2030.

The visions by Yang Amat Berhormat Premier of Sarawak, including the commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, signify our dedication to steering Sarawak towards environmentally sustainable future. These initiatives have garnered strong support from various sectors of society, underscoring the collective desire to prioritize climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Sarawak is already making commendable strides in the green transition journey. We are augmenting renewable energy sources, fostering innovative partnerships in the green energy sector, incentivizing energy-efficient technologies, actively promoting green transportation options, and exploring noble green growth. However, to bolster these efforts and expedite our path to net-zero emissions, an effective carbon levy strategy is crucial.

Tuan Speaker, the proposed of this Bill, sets out a prudent framework for our carbon compliance regime. It outlines a progressive approach, balancing environmental imperatives with economic considerations. Carbon levy accompanied by transitory allowances for industries facing global competition, demonstrates our commitment to ensuring a fair and sustainable transition for all sectors. On this note also, I would like to urge the Federal Government to take into consideration the amount of our levy when their formulating the carbon tax. We do not want to burden industries which in turn will transfer the cost to the *rakyat*. For example, for simplistic analogy purposes, if our levy is RM5 and the Federal Government intends to impose or collect a tax of RM12, *maka kurangkan lah tax tersebut kepada* RM7 so that the cost transfer to the industries is still a total of RM12.

Furthermore, the Bill introduces the carbon credits framework, fostering collaboration and incentivizing emissions reduction projects globally. It aligns with international standards and provides an alternative pathway for companies to contribute to our climate goals while upholding stringent environmental integrity.

It is paramount to underscore that while the carbon credits framework offers a complementary approach, our primary focus remains on domestic efforts to reduce emissions.

Moreover, the inclusion of carbon standard administrator, will oversee the certification, verification, and registration of carbon credit units, ensures the comprehensiveness and efficiency of this greenhouse gas emission reduction strategy. This is important as we need to have a strong system which can stand up to international scrutiny. Only then we can have good and accurate value accepted internationally. Thus, it will be an additional source of income for Sarawak.

This Bill sets the stage for a structured approach to reward carbon reduction initiatives and incentivize environmentally friendly practices. By embracing these mechanisms, we aim to encourage a greener economy, foster innovation, and work collectively towards a sustainable future.

I am confident that all of us here will support this legislation, underscoring our commitment to environmental stewardship and a resilient, eco-conscious future for our State.

As a conclusion through my brief explanations, I fully support the Motion. *Terima kasih.*

Timbalan Speaker: Terima kasih Yang Berhormat Tupong. Next, will be Yang Berhormat Murum please. Yang Berhormat Murum.

YB Encik Kennedy Chukpai Ugon: Thank you Tuan Speaker. Thank you for the honour and the opportunity given to debate on Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 tabled by Yang Berhormat Timbalan Menteri di Pejabat Premier (Undang-Undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan); dan Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri DUN N.7 Samariang for the second reading.

Tuan Speaker, the Bill that we address today is part of actions that fall under the scope of climate change mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk management. Laws and policies can apply across different sectors or focus on one, such as agriculture, land use, transport, energy, waste, environment, tourism, industry, buildings, water and health.

The framework of this Bill, share some of the following characteristics laid out the strategic direction for state climate change policy, long-term and pathways for change, set out institutional arrangements for climate governance at the state level, are multi-sectoral in scope, and involve mechanisms for transparency and accountability.

Tuan Speaker, world leaders first expressly recognized that climate change needed to be tackled with institutions, rules, and procedures at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has subsequently established, with the primary goal of promoting international action to stabilize green house gas emissions.

The convening of the UNFCCC parties has led to several milestones, most notably the Paris Agreement in 2015. The Agreement covers mitigation, adaptation and financial burden sharing and relies on pledges so called Nationally Determines Contributions (NDCs).

NDCs made by each UNFCCC party to achieve its goal of limiting global warming to well below 2℃, above pre-industrial levels. NDCs summaries how governments plan to meet their commitments made under the UNFCCC. However, alone they are not enough to ensure that domestic action will take place.

In most cases NDCs are not legally binding, so countries failing to abide by their pledges cannot be obliged to change tack. Further, they usually offer an overview of intended actions, but they are not granular enough to provide details on how efforts to meet targets will be implemented in practice. Nor do they necessarily represent the intentions of the key stakeholders such as citizens, the private sector and non-governmental political bodies, who are frequently not consulted on their content.

The binding nature of State legislation coupled with the political accountability that tends to underscore decisions made by executive branches of government, make climate laws and policies well placed to fill these gaps in NDCs.

Tuan Speaker, carbon management does not just look at the problem of carbon emissions added to the atmosphere each year, it supports the development of technologies and approaches to address the legacy emissions and hard to abate industrial emissions.

Even if we completely reduce new generation of CO2 emissions to zero, carbon management will support the removal of the build up of historic CO2 emissions and usage of fossil fuels.

Within organizations, carbon management goes beyond technology to include policies, training and techniques that reduce CO2 emissions strategically. With a managerial approach to the problem of CO2 emissions, the industry players can avoid a disorderly and confusing process to alter their systems.

Climate change will fundamentally shape the course of business over the next few decades, so it is important to stay alert regarding the use of natural gas, greenhouse gas emissions, energy costs and climate change overall. Every carbon management system starts with collecting the data on CO2 emissions. Consider this data a starting point to slice down the numbers towards zero and work towards net reduction.

Tuan Speaker, the industry players have to play a central role in helping to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere, because a large amount of emissions occur during the production and distribution of goods and services, which individuals cannot change.

The industry players are also responsible for the way products are designed. By designing products and services which effectively encourage emissions reducing behaviours, businesses can manage carbon to cut back on emissions inefficiencies.

Carbon emissions can be strategically reduced by a company with the help of carbon offsets. These offsets may come in the form of verified project that uses natural forests, soils or the ocean to sink existing CO_2 emissions.

If you can help people avoid carbon emissions they would normally produce, you can effectively cut down on the total CO_2 emissions for a period of time. This could be achieved by investing in renewable energy projects such as power plants and further carbon management research.

Greenly helps the industry players to conduct carbon footprint assessments and develop carbon management strategies to draw down emissions.

Tuan Speaker, Carbon management is the process of measuring and reducing carbon dioxide (CO_2) and other greenhouse gas emissions related to your operations, including your supply chain.

The biggest benefits of carbon management are lower operating costs, meet customer demands, improve brand perception, respond to investor pressure and comply with regulations. carbon taxes or carbon levy can play a key role in achieving State journey under the 2015 Paris

Agreement. Despite provide opportunity to increase the State revenue, it also plays a role to meet the net zero emission by 2050.

Tuan Speaker, we cannot safeguard the future of humanity without the right laws and strong enforcement. Yes, many people want to do the right thing. Many will do the right thing. But even these people need to be guided by laws and regulations. Equally, many people will not do the right thing - including those with the wealth and power to do great damage to the planet. History, and even the present, show this quite clearly. The law is the force for good that can shape and correct this behaviour.

This Bill is not just a law that can save us from climate disaster, but it will make our lives better. It will guide us to a world of more equity and justice. A world of enough to go round. A world of green jobs. A world of better human health. A world of trust in the Government and our institutions. A world in which we preserve the wonder and diversity of nature. Fundamentally, a world of peace, security, and prosperity. A world that safeguards the welfare of the people. Don't wait any longer, take the first step towards reducing carbon emission and finding the solution that best fits your business needs.

As a conclusion through my brief explanations, I beg to support the Motion for the passage of this Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Ahli Yang Berhormat Murum. I have the next one, Ahli Yang Berhormat Pending, followed by Ahli Yang Berhormat Tanjong Batu, Kota Sentosa, Ba'Kelalan, Pelagus, is that right? Ya. Pelagus, Kota Sentosa, Daro, Bukit Assek, Tellian. You need to press, then I can see it, alright. So, may I call upon Honourable Member for Pending, please.

YB Puan Violet Yong Wui Wui: Thank you, Tuan Speaker for allowing me to participate in the debate of the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023.

As we all know the Land Code (Amendments) Ordinance, 2022 and Forests (Amendments) Ordinance, 2022 were passed by the Sarawak State Assembly in 2022. Among others, these amendments were introduced to regulate the development of carbon markets in Sarawak. And today, the tabling of this Bill also drives towards that intent. However, my recent engagements with Civil Society Organisations like Sahabat Alam Malaysia and SAVE Rivers have shown me that there is a need for Sarawak to have a more critical perspective in evaluating the risks of carbon markets through carbon credit trading and activities.

In this Bill, under Part III Carbon Credit Units, Section 11, the Carbon Standard Administrator shall be an international organization for certification and verification of verified carbon standards. The forest carbon activities in Sarawak will be verified under the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) by Verra, the world's leading carbon standard for the rapidly growing US$2 Billion (approximately RM9.4 billion) voluntary offsets market, or other recognised tradable verified carbon units (VCUs).

However, a nine-month joint investigation by The Guardian and two other independent journalism organisations into Verra, has found out that more than 90 percent of rainforest carbon offsets by Verra, are worthless and do not represent genuine carbon reductions. Two months ago, another analysis by Corporate Accountability and the Guardian found that the majority of offset projects that have sold the most carbon credits are *"likely junk".*

In light of these findings that question the VCS of Verra's, there is a need to be a careful evaluation of the rush to develop carbon markets in Sarawak. Tuan Speaker, what guarantee is there that forest carbon activities in Sarawak do not end up worthless and their carbon credits, junks?

Tuan Speaker, I understand that Sara Carbon Sdn. Bhd, a subsidiary of Samling, is the first to receive a permit to conduct a forest carbon study on a concession area of 55,822 hectares in Marudi. My question is how many forest carbon licenses and forest carbon study permits have been issued

to date and will be issued in 2024? To whom have these licenses and study permits been issued? Where are their locations? What is their status, scope, and timelines? Were local communities consulted before the issuance of these licenses and permits?

It is unclear how the standards like Verra can ensure governance transparency and the protection of Native Customary Rights (NCR), since poor governance transparency and the failure to fully recognise the NCR, as how the native communities exercise them, are systemic issues that have not been properly resolved in the state. How does the state intend to address the implications of carbon markets on the NCR?

Under Section 70A of the Forests Ordinance 2015, a forest carbon license holder is bestowed with full legal and beneficial title to the carbon stock or the greenhouse gas stock associated with a Forest Carbon Activity as well as any carbon credit units issued by a Carbon Standard, in respect of the Emission Reductions achieved by a Forest Carbon Activity.

Tuan Speaker, more specifically, if forest carbon activities take place on NCR lands, how will the disputes of native communities be addressed if they do not consent to the inclusion of their territories into the forest carbon license area? Will native communities be prohibited from exercising their rights and conducting traditional livelihood activities such as hunting and gathering within such areas, if a forest carbon license is issued over their customary territories?

It is crucial to note that the communities must first be consulted and free to give their consent as per their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) rights under the UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous People) which is also in the UNFCCC Cancun safeguards to ensure all forest-related carbon activities do not harm the environment and people. Even Verra standards recognized and seemingly aligned itself to the Cancun safeguards. I am very concerned that without strong statutory protections on the NCR, the development of carbon markets could only lead to a new form of NCR violation and land grabbing, but now in the name of climate action.

Tuan Speaker, criticism of carbon markets are increasing in both academic research and investigative journalism and all have shown that the carbon markets are largely a futile effort to reduce carbon emissions. Instead of focusing on carbon markets, the Sarawak State Government should focus on developing policies and laws that will further strengthen the NCR. The strengthening of indigenous customary land rights has long been recognized as an effective strategy to address climate change impacts. Indigenous people have been recognized as the World's Best Guardian of the Rainforest by a UNION Report in 2021 and the forest is naturally an effective carbon sink that absorbs carbon dioxide. There is wisdom in making sure the World's Best Guardian of the Rainforest can continue to guard the forest without fear of losing their homes. The 2022 IPCC Climate report states that a strong tenure right is an effective climate change solution.

There are also great economic benefits of protecting indigenous and community lands. For example, researchers estimate that total economic benefits from indigenous lands over a 20 year period are RM254 to RM560 billion for Bolivia, RM2462.28 to RM5484.82 billion for Brazil. The total costs to Government in securing these indigenous lands for 20 years are at most only 1% of the total benefits derived. And did you know that the costs of carbon capture and storage (CCS) for natural gas plants is 7 to 42 times more expensive than securing indigenous lands. Carbon markets may sound like a grand solution and economically attractive but this cannot be done at the expense of the marginalized group that is proven to be key players in our fight against climate change.

Tuan Speaker, my last question is then, does the state have plans to put in place policies and statutory provisions that can fully recognize indigenous practices such as community forestry management and agroecology?

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that the State Government will seriously take note to the issues which I have just raised by taking an in-depth study as we not wish that the rights of our indigenous community to be sacrificed for the mere sake of so called financial gain. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Ahli Yang Berhormat Pending. I would like to ask Yang Berhormat Batu Kitang are you still willing to speak? You will be after Pelagus because I jot down your name but did not number you. Next, may I call upon Yang Berhormat Tanjong Batu.

YB Encik Johnny Pang Leong Ming: Thank you, Tuan Speaker. I am once again honoured to stand before this august House today to deliberate on a matter of profound significance - the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. This Bill represents a monumental step towards realizing our shared vision for a sustainable and environmentally responsible Sarawak, particularly in our industrious town of Bintulu, renowned for its vibrant oil and gas industry.

Tuan Speaker, in the spirit of our resilient and forward-thinking State, this Bill seeks to establish Sarawak as a beacon of environmental stewardship, not only within Malaysia but on a global stage. By pledging to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, Sarawak is boldly asserting its commitment to the Paris Agreement and the global fight against climate change. The Bill's principal objectives are clear and robust. It mandates business entities, especially those in pivotal sectors, to align with emission reduction targets set by our Sarawak State cabinet. This initiative is not just regulatory; it's a call for collective action towards a greener future. For businesses unable or unwilling to meet these targets, a carbon levy, as determined by MMKN, will be imposed, ensuring accountability and progress.

Tuan Speaker, let us consider the example of Bintulu, a town whose prosperity has been significantly shaped by the oil and gas sector. This Bill will encourage industries in Bintulu to innovate and embrace cleaner technologies, reducing their carbon footprint while continuing to be a cornerstone of our economy. It's not just a regulatory framework but a pathway to sustainable growth.

The Bill also introduces a credible system for the verification and validation of carbon credit units. This measure will enable Sarawak to partake actively in the carbon credit market, creating a new economic frontier for our State. It aligns with our broader strategy to diversify our economy, moving towards sustainable practices that can coexist with our rich natural heritage.

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak's jurisdiction over environmental matters, as per the Federal Constitution, empowers us to take decisive action in regulating greenhouse gas emissions. This authority enables us to implement this Bill effectively, ensuring that our commitment to environmental stewardship is not just a statement of intent but a framework for tangible action.

The strategies outlined in the Bill, including the imposition of a carbon levy and the promotion of forest carbon projects, are not merely regulatory measures. They are opportunities for innovation, for business entities to rethink their operations and contribute positively to our environmental goals.

Tuan Speaker, the establishment of an Advisory Panel and the delegation of powers to MMKN to make rules on various environmental matters underlines our commitment to a dynamic and responsive governance approach. This flexibility is crucial, as the landscape of environmental regulation and carbon markets is ever evolving.

The relevance of this Bill to Bintulu cannot be overstated. As a hub of industry and commerce, Bintulu stands at the forefront of our journey towards sustainability. The emphasis on carbon capture and storage projects and the fostering of forest carbon projects, will have a direct and positive impact on Bintulu's landscape, both environmentally and economically.

In closing Tuan Speaker, this Bill is a blueprint for the future of Sarawak, a future where economic growth and environmental responsibility go hand in hand. It is a commitment to our children and the generations to come that Sarawak will not only prosper but will do so in harmony with the natural world that has so richly blessed us.

With that, I would like to record my full support to the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Ahli Yang Berhormat for Tanjong Batu. Next will be Ahli Yang Berhormat for Kota Sentosa, please.

YB Encik Yap Yau Sin: Thank you, Tuan Speaker. Thank you, for the opportunity to debate the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. This Bill seeks to protect our environment by reduction of greenhouse gases into our atmosphere with strategies and incentives towards net zero carbon emission by transition towards clean renewable energy by way of legislation. Given the commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, policy makers are pressured to take action on climate change and this pressing need for action also creates a sense of urgency for the Sarawak GPS Government and hence this new legislation which is reflective of Sarawak's commitment to net zero emission based on science, technology, engineering, and big data.

Tuan Speaker, the Bill regulates the collection of data as investing time and resources into baselining actual emissions from each source provides clarity on the actual sources of emissions as emissions tend to be highly concentrated in a small number of industries, namely palm oil, power utilities and oil and gas. With the data, Sarawak can will be better able to formulate a plan of action on how to decarbonise and regulate on the formula for collection of levies as an additional revenue source for our future development.

Tuan Speaker, climate change stands as one of the most daunting challenges of this era. However, for Sarawak, climate change can be a time of great opportunities for Sarawak as we have the natural endowments that can potentially propel Sarawak to become a world leader in certain sectors as we have land, sunlight, rivers, forests, water and depleted oil and gas reservoirs. These are the new sources for the production of clean energy. Sarawak sits in a geographical location that can easily facilitate the trading of energy and we must capitalize on these new opportunities as a new revenue source through the right policies and legislation.

Tuan Speaker, the remarks of the Member from Pending on junk carbon credit units are based on international studies that have nothing whatsoever to do with the Sarawak Government. This is because those so-called junk carbon credit units were never regulated by Sarawak laws. It is because of the irresponsible actions of certain stakeholders that the Sarawak Government seeks to regulate the issuance of carbon credit units generated in Sarawak. I suggest the Member from Pending read Section 21 of the Bill which provides for the validation and verification of projects towards reduction of greenhouse gases from projects in Sarawak based on international standards.

Tuan Speaker, incentives matter if we want to attract capital. Industry specific policies and action plans are required to transition entire economically critical supply chains and it is important that these policies are market based, incorporating both carrot and stick to incentivise new investments into clean energy which provides for a market-based rate of return to investors. The legislation on the issuance of carbon credit units based on international carbon standards for carbon capture, permanent storage of CO_2 and for including solar and wind power in Sarawak are indeed good strategic moves as the power, I beg your pardon. The word should be including solar and hydro power in Sarawak are indeed good strategic moves as the power and authority to issue carbon credit units lies with the Sarawak Government.

However, what is indeed really farsighted and visionary is Sections 16, 17, 18 and 19 of this Bill. Section 16 provides for the Sarawak Government's rights to such number of carbon credit units and such carbon credit units shall not be traded or sold in any emission trading scheme or carbon markets outside Malaysia. Section 17 empowers the Sarawak Government to impose levies on any dealings of carbon credit units issued for activities or projects for reduction or abatement or capture and storage of CO_2 undertaken in Sarawak. Section 18 imposes a requirement of approval from the Sarawak Government. So, you don't have to worry about junk carbon credit units. My dear friend

from, Honourable Member for Pending before it can be traded and Section 19 provides that any sale of carbon credit units originating in Sarawak shall be subject to payment of carbon levy. These provisions are indeed pre-emptive to preserve our rights to regulate on the issuance of carbon credit units and entitlement to revenue generated from carbon trading. So, Sarawak Government is committed that none of the carbon credit units issued by us are going to be junk.

Tuan Speaker, kudos to our Yang Amat Berhormat Premier, Member from Gedong for your foresight through this new law which will ensure that Sarawak will not be shortchanged for its efforts for reduction of greenhouse gas emission in Sarawak, resulting from the issuance of carbon credit units and ensuring that the trading of these carbon credit units become a new and additional revenue source to our State. So, that is why our Yang Amat Berhormat Premier keeps on talking about revenue reengineering. That's mean we are going to look for income from other sources rather than traditional sources. Kudos to Yang Amat Berhormat Premier.

Tuan Speaker, in conclusion, I fully support the passing of this Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 as it demonstrates that GPS continues to fight for Sarawak interest and protect the rights of Sarawak by ensuring that Sarawak is not shortchanged from revenue from carbon credit units generated through reduction of greenhouse gases emission activities in Sarawak. I beg to support this Bill. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Ahli Yang Berhormat for Kota Sentosa. Next, I would like to call Ahli Yang Berhormat for Ba'Kelalan, please.

YB Encik Baru Bian: Tuan Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to given to me to take part in the debate on this Bill. Another historic moment for this august House. So, therefore I would like to register my appreciation and thanks to the Honourable Member for Samariang, Deputy Minister for tabling this Bill today.

Tuan Speaker, all of us feel blessed to live in Sarawak which enjoys a fairly constant and uniform climate all year round, with a wet and dry season. However, Sarawak is not isolated from the rest of the world, and we are also experiencing with greater intensity and/or frequency, the effects of global warming and climate change. Statistics shows that the mean yearly temperature for Sarawak has risen from 25.9 Celsius in 1979 to 26.5 Celsius in 2022, and the mean yearly rainfall has risen from 3,050.8mm in 1979 to 4,313.1mm in 2022.

Tuan Speaker, the Paris agreement in 2015 set the Global Framework to limit Global Warming to below 2 degrees Celsius, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, above pre-industry levels, and mandates that countries commit to global carbon emission reduction by setting their national targets. As a party to the Paris agreement and having ratified the Paris agreement, Malaysia has committed to reducing its economy-wide carbon intensity against GDP of 45% in 2030 compared to 2005 levels. It is therefore apt that the objectives of the Bill are the adoption of strategies towards nett zero carbon emissions, low carbon solutions and the transition towards clean renewable energy.

Tuan Speaker, in most countries, the electricity sector and the oil and gas industry is identified as the major contributors to carbon emissions. It is therefore commendable that the Government is seeking to legislate the reduction of the emission of greenhouse gases by industry. Placing the onus on industry players to report their levels of greenhouse gas emissions and to submit their plans for the reduction of such emissions will force these players to face the reality of their role in the destruction of the environment and to take steps to reduce their emissions.

On the role of carbon credit units in the scheme, we should be aware of both sides of the debate on the effectiveness of carbon offsetting schemes. The role of carbon markets in addressing climate change has been widely criticised as being futile by scientists and civil society today. There is no science to the assumption that a unit of carbon dioxide released by the burning of fossil fuels can be readily offset by a unit of carbons stored in trees. These two carbons come from different carbon cycles.

The first cycle, involving processes such as respiration, decomposition and photosynthesis, is the daily, more well-known, active carbon cycle. This process is in equilibrium. It does not cause the climate crisis.

However, Tuan Speaker, the burning of fossil fuels, releases carbon from a different carbon cycle altogether. Hydrocarbons from fossil fuels are part of a much slower carbon cycle that operates on a scale of millions of years. It is the industrial burning of these hydrocarbons since 200 years ago that is causing climate change; because once burnt, these carbons can remain in the atmosphere for 1,000 years. No amount of forests can offset the continued release of fossil fuel carbons into the atmosphere. Therefore, the opponents of carbon offsetting insist that the only way to deal with the climate crisis is for us to stop burning fossil fuels.

Tuan Speaker, some experts are of the view that such schemes are dangerous because they will allow large scale polluters to continue releasing more carbons into the atmosphere, and even expansion of high-carbon activities. All they would need to do now is to purchase carbon credits from parties who put them on sale to supposedly offset their emissions.

Tuan Speaker, further, I am also concerned by the impact of carbon markets on native customary rights land (NCR) as already raised by the Honourable Member for Pending. If a forest carbon licence holder has the full legal and beneficial title to the carbon stocks associated with a forest carbon activity, what will happen if such licences are issued within NCR territories? Will they benefit from carbon offsets or will the bulk of the money go to middlemen and carbon market players? Will native communities be prevented from accessing their territories and be prohibited from hunting and gathering in their forests? Will this introduce a new form of NCR violation? We must make sure that there are comprehensive consultations with native, civil society and the legal communities, if this has not already been done.

Tuan Speaker, carbon offsetting is a new idea and concept, and we need to have experts who are able and willing to come in to help our native communities to benefit from carbon offset schemes if and when implemented. This is a great incentive for them to restore their degraded areas by replanting with trees which remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. I think there is great potential for this as a means to restore the jungles of Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, my final comment is on the extent of the jurisdiction of this Bill. The definition of *'atmosphere'* in Clause 2, which *"refers to the airspace above the land and Sarawak waters which is waters above the continental shelf off the coasts of Sarawak"*. Clause 4(a) refers to *"waters within the territory of the State"*. What is the extent of *"waters within the territories of the State"* and *"waters above the continental shelf off the coasts of Sarawak"*? Taking into consideration the debate on the applicability of the Territorial Sea Act 2012, and for the avoidance of doubt, perhaps it should be clearly stated that the Alteration of Boundaries (Sarawak) Order in Council 1954 should apply, as assured by the Honourable Deputy Minister in The Premier's Office last year during the tabling of the Land Code (Amendment) Bill, 2022.

Bearing in mind the net zero target for 2050, the Government must ensure that there is no misuse of offsetting by companies, to compensate for their inability to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by improving their processes and methods. I tend to agree with the view, Tuan Speaker, that carbon offsets can only be an additionality to conventional means of reducing carbon emissions, such as reducing the use of fossil fuels and carbon-emitting activities.

Tuan Speaker, carbon credit and offset involves many technical issues. Many do not understand the workings of it, and I stress that we will need to have competent and qualified personnel to administer and monitor the scheme so that we can achieve the goal of net zero emissions by 2050. It is a tall order but if we have the sincere intention to do our part in mitigating the effects of global warming, I believe that we will be able to attain our goals.

Tuan Speaker, notwithstanding my concerns expressed in this debate, I wish to record my support for the Bill. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Ba'Kelalan. Next, Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Pelagus, please.

YB Encik Wilson Nyabong anak Ijang: Thank you, Tuan Speaker for giving me the opportunity to participate in the debate on the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emissions) Bill, 2023 presented by our Deputy Minister in the Premier Office Law, MA63 and State-Federal relations, in the Honourable august House today.

I congratulate Tuan Speaker for being reappointed as the Sarawak State Legislative Assembly Speaker. I wish Tuan Speaker the best of health and continue to make tremendous contributions to our beloved Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, in moving forward it is indeed a bond for all of us to have a Premier who is bold, courageous and visionary. The environment reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission Bill, 2023 is related to what he has said and mention by him in tabling Sarawak Budget 2024 this morning, the Government has initiated the drafting of Energy Transition Policy in building a sustainable and green energy for Sarawak.

Energy is the backbone of economic development. Energy is also the driving force behind cultural progress and economic development for any nation in the world. Countries that have access to an abundant energy supply have become wealthy and powerful but not without endangering the Mother Earth and the future of human being.

Being said that, we all know the potential dangers posed by the climate change and the alarming impact to our earth. Under International Law, Malaysia is a sovereign nation has to be a party to treaties like the Paris Agreement 2015. The Federal Government has an obligation to implement measures on climate change and mitigation effect of global warming. This obligation is governed by Federal Constitution which set out the distribution of legislative and executive authorities between Federal and State. Our Premier and their Legal team with SAG did look into this legal aspect in crafting this Bill on of it is mentioned by our Deputy Minister just now. They went to Scotland. This is one of the ways before they start this Bill.

The subject of *"Environment"* key word is not in any of the legislative list in the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution. By virtue of Article 77. Environment is therefore regarded as a residue matter. The State Legislature has power to make laws with respect to *"Environment"*. Land, forest and water in the state list in Ninth Schedule. State law shall apply.

After I went through the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emissions) Bill, 2023, with a complete legal framework, it has five principal objectives.

(a) To protect Sarawak's environment by implementing strategies to reduce emission of greenhouse gases to attain net zero carbon emission by 2050;

(b) To require business entities belonging to economic sector in the first schedule meaning that any Federal especially Petronas to reduce carbon emission to the level prescribe by Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri;

(c) If not able to reduce a carbon emission, they have the power to pull out the levy at the rate determined by Sarawak cabinet imposed on them;

(d) Institute a credible carbon credit units which can be traded as been mentioned by other speakers, we have to get the professional people to do about this carbon credit unit; and

(e) To adopt and apply international standards and principles for reporting and measure Carbon dioxide potential for each type of Green House Gasses and for the verification and validation of carbon credit.

Based on the international report, the world keeps breaking records in 2023, with the hottest ever in July, August, September and October. Temperature records have been broken in many countries this year and climate scientists stated that 2023 is highly likely to become the hottest year on record. Rising carbon emissions and climate change are key factors behind the prediction and the anticipated return of the El Nino weather phenomenon is also playing a part.

Tuan Speaker, the report by the International Panel on Climate Change offers the most comprehensive understanding to date of ways in which the planet is changing. It says that global average temperature are estimated to rise 1.5 degrees Celsius. This number holds significance in global climate change. Under the 2015 Paris climate agreement, virtually every nation agreed to pursue efforts to hold global warning to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Beyond that point, scientists say it will be impacts catastrophic effect such as:

(a) Heat waves;
(b) Flooding;
(c) Drought;
(d) Crops failure; and
(e) Wildlife extinction.

Globally, we already felt that impact at present Climate change is speeding toward catastrophe. The next decade is critical. A new report says that it is still possible to hold global warming to relatively safe levels, but doing so will require global cooperation, billions of dollars and big changes will be needed.

Tuan Speaker, taking into the consideration of the above statement, I would like to praise our Sarawak Premier Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Abang Zohari Bin Tun Openg emphasizing that green efforts are crucial to steer Sarawak towards a more sustainable future for all and strengthen its resilience towards climate change and natural environment disasters. Under our Premier's leadership, Sarawak recognized that economic growth and environmental sustainability go hand in hand and are committed to ensuring that its development is sustainable and environmentally friendly. As such, our Premier emphasized that the nature positive initiatives of Sarawak are important not only for the environment but also for the long-term prosperity of our people. Expert defined a green economy as based on six main sectors:

(a) Renewable energy;
(b) Green buildings;
(c) Sustainable transport;
(d) Water management;
(e) Waste management; and
(f) Land management.

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak aims to reduce carbon emissions at least 45%, increase job opportunities, empower small and medium enterprises in the green energy economy, equipment for Sarawak with sustainable infrastructure and enhance the resilience of local communities by 2030.

These are the outcomes Sarawak wants to achieve in the next seven years under the Sarawak Climate Change Policy and Risk Management Strategies.

To achieve a net-zero emission future, innovation is crucial, and Sarawak will encourage the development of new technology and solutions that can reduce greenhouse gas and promote sustainable practices. This includes the adoption of carbon capture, utilizations and storage (CCUS) technology, which can help reduce emissions from key industries such as oil and gas.

With that, Tuan Speaker, Sarawak will work with stakeholders including the private sector, civil society and international partners to achieve its sustainability goals.

By leveraging experts and resources which can accelerate the transition to a low carbon future, Sarawak will create new economic opportunities and promote social development while at the same time protecting the environment.

Strategic Action plan for Emissions Reduction

Tuan Speaker, to achieve net zero carbon emission by 2050, the bill proposed the following measure:

(a) Economic sectors in first scheduled meaning with what I said just now like PETRONAS, to register with the controller so that it can monitor their emission level. They have to do the submission of annual emission report complying with an acceptable international standard of reporting.

(b) Controlling the flaring and venting the petroleum and GHG by oil and gas sector.

(c) Promoting forest carbon projects and activities, carbon capture and storage projects which would be validated according to Carbon Standard Rules for issuing carbon credit units.

(d) Register and verify carbon credit units in Sarawak for trading.

(e) Imposing carbon levy to the level prescribed by Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri (MMKN).

(f) To ensure the integrity and credibility of all issued carbon credit from Sarawak, thus enable Sarawak Government to earn additional revenue from trading and selling carbon credit units.

(g) The carbon credit system will be managed by a Registrar to be appointed by the Minister. The Registrar will keep all information of carbon credit.

Because of this, it is timely for Sarawak Government to introduce this Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emissions) Bill, 2023.

When this Bill is passed, the Government is mandated to establish an Advisory Panel to advise it on CCS, emission thresholds, determining carbon pricing, criteria for issuing carbon credit units and energy transition strategies to attain net zero by 2050 and other incidental issues.

Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri will have powers to make rules on a wide range of subject matters including carbon pricing, assessment of carbon levy, criteria for registration and trading of carbon credit, regulating the flaring and venting of petroleum or greenhouse gases. These matters are evolving and may be changed or updated at the upcoming 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) in Dubai in this coming December.

Carbon Levy

Included in this Bill is a Carbon levy. Carbon levy is imposed as a penalty on those whose emission level exceeds the threshold determined by Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan Negeri. Formula for assessing the levy is provided in Clause 24(2) of the Bill rate decided by MMKN.

Failing to pay the carbon levy will be charged with penalty of 8%. If the business entity fails to pay, the Government may call for cancellation of the carbon credit units.

Timbalan Speaker: You may conclude, Yang Berhormat.

YB Encik Wilson Nyabong anak Ijang: okay.

With that the being said, I strongly support the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emissions) Bill, 2023. Let us rise to the challenge and create a lasting impact for generations to come. Thank you, Tuan Speaker.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you Honourable Member for Pelagus. I would like to call upon, that in my list, Yang Berhormat bagi Batu Kitang, please. Yang Berhormat…

Environmental (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023

YB Dato Ir. Lo Khere Chiang: Tuan Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to debate on the Environmental (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. I rise today with an unwavering sense of conviction to express my ardent support for the Environmental (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. This groundbreaking legislation marks a pivotal moment in Sarawak's journey towards environmental stewardship and a sustainable future.

Emulating Scotland's Climate Action Leadership

I take pride in congratulating YAB Premier for sending a team to Scotland to benchmark Scotland's Climate Action Leadership.

Scotland has emerged as a global frontrunner in climate action, demonstrating that ambitious emissions reduction targets are not only achievable but essential. By carefully studying and adapting Scotland's successful strategies, Sarawak can accelerate our own progress towards a low-carbon economy.

Scotland's implementation of a carbon levy has proven to be a powerful tool in incentivizing polluters to reduce their emissions. The revenue generated from this levy has been wisely invested in renewable energy and other climate-friendly initiatives, propelling Scotland towards a cleaner, more sustainable economy. Sarawak must pass this Bill so as to have a State Law that protects our interest and assure our benefit as State Laws prevail over Federal Law if State Law exist.

Malaysia's Commitment to Climate Action

Tuan Speaker, Malaysia has long been a responsible member of the international community, actively participating in global efforts to combat climate change. And, Malaysians are among the first countries to ratify the Paris Agreement, pledging to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050.

The Environmental (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 aligns perfectly with our nation's commitment to environmental protection and sustainable development. This Bill sets ambitious yet achievable emissions reduction targets and outlines a comprehensive plan for achieving them.

Adherence to International Carbon Trading Protocols

Malaysia remains committed to upholding the principles and standards of international carbon trading protocols. This commitment is reflected in the Environmental (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023, which aligns with established global frameworks for emissions reduction.

And, by adhering to these protocols, we ensure that our efforts to combat climate change are harmonized with international standards, fostering collaboration and effectiveness in addressing global climate change.

Exercising Sarawak's Rights

Tuan Speaker, The Environmental (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 is not merely a legislative act; it is a resounding affirmation of Sarawak's rights. We have the right to a clean and healthy environment, and we have the right to develop our own economic future without compromising our environmental integrity.

This Bill empowers us to take control of our environmental destiny and secure a sustainable future for Sarawak and our people.

Pre-empting Federal Impositions

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak has a long history of autonomy and self-governance. We have the right to enact our own laws and regulations, and we will not allow the Federal Government to impose its will on us without our consent. Hence, this Bill is of utmost important.

The Environmental (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 is an example of our commitment to a sustainable environment. We are taking proactive steps to address climate change and protect our environment, and we will not wait for the Federal Government to dictate our actions.

Carbon Storage Levy: A Bold Step Forward

Sarawak's decision to introduce a carbon storage levy demonstrates its unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship. By taking the initiative to address greenhouse gas emissions from carbon storage activities, Sarawak sets an example for other regions grappling with the same challenges.

The carbon storage levy serves as a powerful tool for polluters to adopt cleaner technologies and reduce their carbon footprint. The revenue generated can be wisely invested in renewable energy projects, further propelling Sarawak towards a low-carbon future.

Conclusion: Sarawak, a Beacon of Environmental Leadership

Tuan Speaker, on the 25th of October 2022, our Yang Amat Berhormat Premier made up with the Second Minister of Trade and Industry of Singapore. The later of whom shows great interest to cooperate with Sarawak on carbon capture and carbon credits. This new form of business is challenging but Sarawak has the means to capitalize and profit from countries like Singapore who produces carbon dioxides and do not have the forest to absorb it. Congratulation to Yang Amat Berhormat Premier for his far sightedness and visionary leadership in initiating the tabling of this Bill today.

Tuan Speaker, this Bill stands as a testament to Sarawak's leadership in environmental stewardship and its unwavering commitment to a sustainable future. Sarawak is the first to table this Bill and we have assured ourselves a regular tree framework. With this Bill, we send a clear message to the Federal Government that we are taking decisive action to protect our planet, rip profit from levy's enforces of Sarawak and secure a brighter future for generations to come.

Tuan Speaker, I beg to support the Environmental (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 tabled by the Honourable Member for N.7 Samariang. Together, we can make Sarawak a model of environmental responsibility and a global leader in climate action. Thank you very much, Tuan Speaker.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Yang Berhormat bagi Batu Kitang. Next, I would like to call Yang Berhormat bagi Daro, please.

YB Encik Safiee bin Haji Ahmad: Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh, Salam sejahtera dan Salam Sarawak Maju Makmur.

Terima kasih Tuan Speaker kerana telah memberi peluang kepada saya untuk terlibat sama membahaskan Rang Undang-Undang, *Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gasses Emission)* Bill, 2023 yang telah dibentangkan oleh Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan) merangkap Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri DUN N.7 Samariang. Terlebih dahulu, saya merakamkan ucapan setinggi-tinggi tahniah dan syabas kepada Kerajaan Sarawak di bawah kepimpinan Yang Amat Berhormat Premier Sarawak yang menjadikan Sarawak sebagai sebuah Negeri pertama di Malaysia yang membentangkan Rang Undang-Undang Alam Sekitar (Pengurusan Pelepasan Rumah Hijau), 2023.

Tuan Speaker, today I stand before you to discuss a matter of utmost urgency and significance, the introduction of a groundbreaking Bill designed to tackle the present issue of greenhouse gas emissions within our State.

Climate change is no longer a future possibility, it is an existential threat demanding immediate and concerted action from all sectors of society. The changing climate is an existential problem for humanity but can bring about the necessary change. With social and political change, new technologies and management methods, and proper care, we can create an economy based on renewable resources and immaterialist patterns of behaviour that will support us all without destroying the planet. However, a sustainable society requires us to understand and plan for our impact on the planet, and to learn to manage that impact. That, in turn, requires systemic changes, the promotion of science, the development of sustainable technologies, and a willingness on the part of individuals to change their behaviour.

This new Bill represents a comprehensive strategy to address greenhouse gas emissions, protect our environment, and secure a sustainable future of generations to come. At the heart of this legislation lies the importance for industries to report their greenhouse gas emissions accurately. Transparency is like the solid ground that helps us stay accountable. When we make emission reporting is a must, it's like setting up a strong base to take care of the environment responsibly.

Tuan Speaker, through comprehensive reporting, industries will gain a clear understanding of their carbon footprint, enabling informed decisions and driving the adoption of sustainable practices. This Bill goes beyond mere reporting. It sets ambitious yet achievable targets for the reduction and decarbonization of emissions across various industries. This isn't just an environmental aspiration, it's a strategic imperative for our economic prosperity and public health.

By embracing innovation and investing in clean energy technologies, we can foster economic growth while reducing our carbon footprint, creating a win-win scenario for industry and the environment. Additionally, the Bill tackles the pressing problem of flaring and venting, which currently has no effective specific management and reduction plans. The Bill aims to address this oversight by implementing effective regulations to control and minimize these practices, prioritizing the health and safety for our communities and working towards reducing air pollution.

Tuan Speaker, in line with our commitment to accountability, the Bill introduces a carbon levy as a mechanism to ensure compliance with prescribed emissions thresholds. If industries don't meet these rules, they'll have to pay this levy. It's not meant to punish, but to encourage them to follow the rules like everyone else and make things fair for all businesses. This levy will fund environmental initiatives, ensuring that those who contribute more to emissions also contribute more to solutions.

We recognize that the transition to a low-carbon economy is a complex undertaking. However, it's a challenge we must embrace with determination and innovation. By providing incentives for green investments, promoting research and development in renewable energy, and fostering collaboration between public and private sectors, we can accelerate our journey towards a sustainable future.

The time for decisive action is now. Our moral obligation to protect our environment transcends political differences and individual interests. There is no one, simple way to deal with climate change. It requires many adjustments from civic pressure to enforce new policies, to lifestyle changes that encourage less wasteful lifestyles and new technologies to replace obsolete pollution producing systems and even support for the renewal of resources instead of their depletion.

We need to plan our green energy by improved energy efficient cars and buildings, the development of wind and solar energy, the conversion of organic waste into biofuels, forest protection measures, and the others.

This Bill is not merely about legislation, it's about securing a liveable planet for our children and grandchildren. A legacy of responsible stewardship and foresight. I urge each of us to support this pivotal legislation. Let us stand united in our commitment to combat climate change, preserve our environment, and build a future where economic prosperity harmonizes with environmental sustainability.

With that being said, Tuan Speaker, I believe that the passing of this Bill will not just establishes the far-sighted idea by YAB Premier, but as well as creating a more sustainable State that cares and willing to take part in tackling the main concern of every country across the globe, the climate change.

Tuan Speaker, I fully support of this Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you Honourable Member for Daro. I would like to call upon Ahli Yang Berhormat for Bukit Assek please.

YB Encik Chieng Jin Ek: Tuan Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity in participating the debate on Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023.

Today marks a pivotal moment for Sarawak towards a sustainable future. As all the Honourable Members gather at this august House, we stand on the cusp of monumental change, with the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 before us as an instrumental step towards safeguarding Sarawak's environment and fulfilling our global commitments to combat the climate change.

The objectives laid out in this Bill resonate deeply with our shared responsibility to protect our environment for future generations. Its core mission *"to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050"* is not merely an aspiration, but it is a commitment to action, a commitment to our planet, and a commitment to our people. Sarawak's approach is multifaceted, rooted in pragmatic strategies that aligned international best practices with our State's constitutional powers. The Bill empowers us to regulate emissions by mandating businesses to reduce their carbon footprint, overseen by a vigilant monitoring system. It calls for stringent reporting in accordance with globally accepted standards, ensuring transparency and accountability in our endeavours.

Tuan Speaker, by recognising the interdependence between industries and their environmental footprint, this Bill addresses emissions from sectors like oil and gas, introducing measures to control flaring and venting, paving the way for innovative projects like forest carbon initiatives and carbon capture and storage, essential steps in our quest for sustainability.

The introduction of a carbon levy serves as both a deterrent and an incentive, compelling entities to comply while offering the option to offset through carbon credits, incentivising proactive environmental stewardship. This is not just about penalising, but it is about creating a pathway for transformation, where economic entities are encouraged and supported in their transition towards sustainability.

Tuan Speaker, integral to this Bill is the establishment of a robust system for verifying and issuing carbon credits, ensuring their credibility in global markets. This isn't merely a regulatory measure, it's a testament to our commitment to integrity and excellence in our environmental initiatives.

Moreover, the Bill doesn't operate in isolation. It embraces the collaboration and expertise through the Advisory Panel, drawing collective wisdom to navigate complexities in setting emission thresholds, determining carbon pricing, and steering our energy transition strategies towards our net zero aspirations.

Tuan Speaker, we recognise that international commitments demand our attention, and this Bill is Sarawak's earnest response. While Malaysia ratified the Paris Agreement 2015, the absence of a legislative framework was evident. With the passage of this Bill, Sarawak under GPS Government takes the lead in addressing the climate change within Malaysia, setting a precedent for proactive climate action.

Our efforts won't be contained within Sarawak's borders only. Through projects that mitigate the climate change impacts, such as afforestation, reforestation, and carbon storage initiatives, Sarawak will contribute significantly to Malaysia's obligation towards achieving net zero emissions by 2050, By issuing carbon credits, Sarawak not only incentivises these projects but also contributes to our nation's Nationally Determined Contribution for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, solidifying our commitment to global environmental stewardship.

In conclusion, let's not just see this Bill solely as a legal document but as a beacon of hope, a roadmap towards a sustainable future. Let us embrace it as a catalyst for change, fostering innovation, collaboration, and also responsibility. With this legislation, we stand together, not just as lawmakers, but as custodians of our environment, paving the way for a greener, healthier, and more sustainable Sarawak.

With that, Tuan Speaker, I fully support Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Ahli Yang Berhormat Bukit Assek. We would like to call upon Ahli Yang Berhormat for Tellian, please.

YB Encik Royston bin Valentine: Terima kasih, Tuan Speaker. Salam Sejahtera dan Salam Sarawakku Sayang.

Tuan Speaker, tahniah terlebih dahulu kepada Yang Berhormat Samariang, Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan), Menteri bertanggungjawab yang membawa usul *"an ordinance for the protection of the environment in Sarawak, by reduction or abatement of emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, adoption of strategies towards net zero carbon emissions, low carbon solutions, and the transition towards clean renewable energy."*

Tuan Speaker, alam sekitar tidak termasuk dalam mana-mana senarai perundangan dalam Jadual Kesembilan Perlembagaan Persekutuan. Manakala, tanah, hutan dan air adalah perkara di bawah Senarai II (Senarai Negeri) dalam Jadual Kesembilan Perlembagaan Persekutuan.

Pelepasan gas rumah hijau daripada aktiviti di darat, hutan dan air atau apa-apa aktiviti manusia yang memberi kesan kepada alam sekitar hendaklah dikawal oleh undang-undang yang diluluskan oleh badan perundangan Sarawak. Maka pada malam ini, kita membahaskan rang undang-undang ini demi menjaga kelestarian alam Sarawak secara keseluruhan di samping memperoleh apa-apa jua keuntungan daripadanya untuk menambah pendapatan Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak telah menetapkan sasaran untuk mencapai pelepasan karbon sifar bersih menjelang 2050.

Selaras dengan itu, strategi, tindakan dan merancang insentif ke arah pengurangan atau pengurangan pelepasan gas rumah hijau untuk mencapai pelepasan karbon sifar bersih di Sarawak perlu disediakan juga melalui perundangan oleh Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak.

Bagi menangani isu pengurangan pelepasan gas rumah hijau, terdapat banyak penyelesaian dan projek yang memerlukan pertimbangan oleh pelbagai pihak.

Apa yang boleh dan sedang dilakukan oleh kita di pihak Kerajaan ketika ini adalah;

(a) Peralihan Kepada Sumber Tenaga Boleh Diperbaharui

Menggalakkan penggunaan sumber tenaga bersih dan boleh diperbaharui seperti solar, angin, dan hidro. Melabur dalam teknologi tenaga boleh diperbaharui membantu mengurangkan pergantungan kepada bahan api fosil yang menyumbang dengan ketara kepada pelepasan gas rumah hijau. Peralihan ini memerlukan pelaburan yang besar, kemajuan teknologi inovatif dan penggunaan yang meluas. Walaupun Kerajaan memainkan peranan yang penting dalam memacu perubahan ini, beban kewangan boleh menjadi sangat besar.

(b) Pemuliharaan dan Penghutanan Semula Hutan

Pelaksanaan langkah-langkah pemuliharaan hutan dan permulaan usaha penghutanan semula menyumbang kepada penjujukan karbon dioksida dari atmosfera bumi. Pokok berfungsi sebagai singki karbon, berkesan merampas karbon dioksida (CO_2) dan dengan itu mengurangkan kepekatan gas rumah hijau. Selain itu, menyokong teknik perhutanan lestari juga menyumbang kepada menangani masalah ini.

(c) Amalan Pertanian Lestari

Menggalakkan penggunaan amalan pertanian lestari, termasuk pertanian organik, *agroforestry*, dan penggiliran tanaman. Langkah-langkah ini berfungsi untuk mengurangkan penggunaan baja sintetik dan racun perosak, mengurangkan kemerosotan tanah, dan menambah proses penjujukan karbon dioksida dalam tanah.

(d) Promosi Pengangkutan Awam dan Mod Pengangkutan Aktif

Menggalakkan penggunaan sistem transit awam, berbasikal, dan berjalan menyumbang kepada pengurangan pelepasan gas rumah hijau yang berasal dari kereta persendirian, dengan penekanan khusus di kawasan bandar-bandar besar dan perindustrian seperti Kuching, Miri, Sibu dan Bintulu.

Sebagai contoh terbaik, Sarawak Autonomous Rapid Transit (ART) adalah sistem pengangkutan awam mesra alam yang terbaru yang dicadangkan di Sarawak. Ia direka untuk menyediakan mod pengangkutan yang cekap, boleh dipercayai dan mampan untuk penduduk dan pelawat Negeri ini. Sarawak ART bertujuan untuk menggunakan kenderaan elektrik autonomi (memandu sendiri) untuk beroperasi di lorong khusus, menyediakan perkhidmatan transit berkapasiti tinggi dan frekuensi tinggi. Sarawak ART dijangka meningkatkan mobiliti, mengurangkan kesesakan lalu lintas, dan menyumbang kepada persekitaran yang lebih bersih dan hijau.

(e) Pendidikan dan Kesedaran

Meningkatkan kesedaran orang ramai tentang akibat pelepasan gas rumah hijau dan kepentingan tindakan individu berpotensi untuk memupuk pengubahsuaian tingkah laku dan

memupuk sokongan yang lebih luas untuk langkah-langkah yang bertujuan untuk mengurangkan pelepasan *carbon dioxide.*

Adalah penting untuk mengakui bahawa pengurangan pelepasan gas rumah hijau bergantung kepada hubungan antara tindakan individu dan usahasama kerajaan, syarikat dan masyarakat dan ia akan menjadi lebih mudah dan sistematik di bawah kawal selia ordinan yang bakal diluluskan dalam persidangan DUN kali ini.

Tuan Speaker, di samping menjaga kelestarian alam dalam menghadapi perubahan iklim yang serba tidak menentu ketika ini, Rang Undang-Undang ini dibentangkan adalah untuk menjaga hak-hak Sarawak dari pelbagai sudut. Kita tidak mahu pisang berbuah dua kali, sebagai contoh Petroleum Development Act (PDA) 1974;

Akta Pembangunan Petroleum 1974 (PDA 1974) adalah Undang-Undang Malaysia yang mengawal selia penerokaan, eksploitasi, dan pembangunan sumber petroleum di Malaysia. Ia menubuhkan PETRONAS (Petroliam Nasional Berhad) sebagai perbadanan minyak negara dan memberikannya hak eksklusif untuk mengawal selia dan mengawal aktiviti petroleum di Negara ini.

PDA 1974 memberikan PETRONAS kawalan yang ketara ke atas aktiviti minyak dan gas, termasuk pendapatan yang dijana daripada sumber tersebut. Ini boleh menyebabkan kurangnya autonomi untuk Negeri Sarawak dalam menguruskan industri petroleumnya sendiri.

Dari aspek perkongsian hasil, PDA 1974 menetapkan mekanisme perkongsian hasil antara Kerajaan Persekutuan dan Negeri pengeluar minyak, termasuk Sarawak. Terdapat kebimbangan mengenai keadilan dan ketelusan mekanisme ini, Sarawak harus menerima bahagian yang setimpal daripada pendapatan yang dijana daripada sumbernya sendiri.

Melihat kepada ketidakadilan ini, Yang Amat Berhormat Premier telah mengambil tindakan drastik berkaitan perkara ini melalui tindakan undang-undang yang akhirnya menyebelahi Sarawak sekaligus ia telah menjadi salah satu sumber pendapatan Sarawak ketika ini.

Maka dengan sebab itu, pada hari ini kita membahaskan rang undang-undang yang sudah pasti akan menjadi *"terabai"* kepada kita untuk terus menjaga hak-hak Sarawak dan sekaligus kita akan sentiasa berada selangkah di hadapan dalam menggubal undang-undang yang menjadi kepentingan Sarawak secara keseluruhannya.

Tuan Speaker, memanfaatkan kuasa unit kredit karbon dan levi sudah pasti akan membuka jalan untuk masa depan Sarawak yang mampan selari dengan sasaran Sarawak menjadi wilayah termaju menjelang tahun 2030.

Dalam era ini, di mana perubahan iklim menimbulkan cabaran yang belum pernah terjadi sebelum ini, mekanisme ini memberi kita peluang yang unik untuk mengurangkan kesan pelepasan gas rumah hijau, memupuk pembangunan mampan, dan mewujudkan dunia yang lebih baik untuk generasi akan datang.

Carbon credit units mewakili ukuran piawaian pelepasan gas rumah hijau, biasanya diukur dalam tan metrik setara karbon dioksida (CO2e). *Carbon credit units* mempunyai kuasa untuk melepaskan pelbagai faedah, baik untuk alam sekitar mahupun ekonomi. Dengan mewujudkan pasaran untuk *carbon credit*, ia memberi insentif kepada perniagaan dan industri untuk mengamalkan amalan yang lebih bersih dan hijau. Ini memacu inovasi dan memacu pembangunan teknologi rendah karbon, akhirnya membawa kepada ekonomi yang lebih mampan.

Selain itu, pendapatan yang dijana melalui penjualan *carbon credit* boleh dilaburkan dalam projek tenaga boleh diperbaharui, inisiatif penebangan hutan dan program penyesuaian iklim. Ini bukan sahaja membantu memerangi perubahan iklim tetapi juga mewujudkan pekerjaan baru, memupuk pertumbuhan ekonomi dan meningkatkan keselamatan tenaga.

Levies on Carbon Credit Units

Tuan Speaker, levi ke atas unit kredit karbon merujuk kepada caj atau yuran yang dikenakan ke atas perdagangan dan penjualan *carbon credit*, mengenakan levi tersebut ke atas apa-apa urusan *carbon credit units* yang dikeluarkan untuk aktiviti atau projek bagi pengurangan, penangkapan dan penyimpanan CO2 yang dijalankan di Sarawak melalui ordinan ini bakal memberikan beberapa implikasi yang berpotensi memberikan kelebihan kepada kerajaan Sarawak:

(a) Penjanaan Pendapatan

Levi boleh menjana pendapatan untuk Kerajaan yang boleh digunakan untuk pelbagai tujuan, seperti membiayai inisiatif alam sekitar, menggalakkan pembangunan mampan, atau menyokong usaha mitigasi, penyesuaian perubahan iklim dan pelbagai lagi keperluan pembangunan lain.

(b) Dinamik Pasaran

Levi berpotensi mempengaruhi dinamik penawaran dan permintaan pasaran *carbon credit*. Levi yang lebih tinggi boleh mengurangkan permintaan untuk *Carbon Credit*, yang boleh memberi kesan kepada harga pasaran dan kecairan mereka. Ini seterusnya, boleh menjejaskan keberkesanan keseluruhan mekanisme perdagangan karbon dalam memacu usaha pengurangan pelepasan.

(c) Insentif dan Keberkesanan

Penggunaan levi boleh mempengaruhi insentif untuk perniagaan dan entiti untuk mengurangkan pelepasan mereka. Levi yang lebih tinggi boleh menggalakkan usaha pengurangan pelepasan yang lebih agresif, apabila kos pembelian *carbon credit* meningkat. Sebaliknya, levi yang lebih rendah dapat mengurangkan insentif pengurangan pelepasan, kerana kos pematuhan berkurangan. Penting untuk diperhatikan bahawa reka bentuk khusus dan pelaksanaan levi ke atas unit *carbon credit* boleh berbeza-beza bergantung pada bidang kuasa dan rangka kerja pengawalseliaan yang ada. Negara dan wilayah yang berbeza boleh menggunakan pendekatan yang berbeza untuk perdagangan *carbon credit* dan levi yang berkaitan.

Tuan Speaker, walaupun faedah *carbon credit units* dan levi tidak dapat dinafikan, kita juga harus mengakui cabaran yang akan datang. Salah satu cabaran utama ialah penubuhan sistem pengukuran dan pengesahan yang mantap untuk memastikan integriti *carbon credit*. Kita memerlukan metodologi yang telus dan standard untuk mengukur pengurangan pelepasan dengan tepat dan mengelakkan sebarang kelemahan.

Selain itu, ia penting bagi memastikan bebanan levi tidak menjejaskan komuniti rentan secara tidak seimbang. Pengagihan kos dan faedah yang adil dan saksama adalah penting untuk mengelakkan ketidaksamaan sosial.

Kuasa mengutamakan penyimpanan karbon juga memerlukan pendekatan menang-menang, isu yang berpotensi untuk membentuk bukan sahaja masa kini tetapi juga generasi masa datang. Cabaran dan peluang sekitar mengutamakan penyimpanan karbon dan memanfaatkan kuasa cukai penyimpanan karbon. Dalam dunia yang bergelut dengan ancaman perubahan iklim, adalah penting untuk kita mengambil tindakan berani dan tegas untuk mengurangkan kesan-kesannya.

Pengumpulan gas rumah hijau yang pesat di atmosfera kita telah mengakibatkan peningkatan suhu, peristiwa cuaca yang melampau, dan kemerosotan ekosistem kita. Akibatnya tidak dinafikan, menjejaskan kehidupan sekaligus mata pencarian.

Dengan mengutamakan penyimpanan karbon, kita boleh mencipta rangka kerja yang memberi insentif kepada industri untuk mengamalkan amalan yang lebih hijau dan melabur dalam teknologi

carbon capture. Ini bukan sahaja membantu mengurangkan pelepasan karbon tetapi juga merangsang pertumbuhan ekonomi dan mewujudkan peluang pekerjaan baru.

Untuk mencapai matlamat ini, Kerajaan mesti melaksanakan cukai *carbon storage* iaitu mekanisme yang meletakkan harga pelepasan karbon dan menggalakkan perniagaan untuk mengurangkan jejak karbon mereka. Dengan mengenakan cukai ini, kerajaan boleh menjana pendapatan yang boleh dilaburkan semula dalam projek tenaga yang boleh diperbaharui, penyelidikan dan pembangunan, dan inisiatif yang bertujuan memupuk ekonomi rendah karbon.

Tuan Speaker, kesimpulannya, walaupun cabarannya penting, janganlah kita melupakan peluang besar yang terletak dalam genggaman kita. Dengan mengutamakan *carbon storage* dan menerima cukai penyimpanan karbon, kita boleh merevolusikan pendekatan kita terhadap tenaga, ekonomi, dan alam sekitar.

Penggunaan teknologi penangkapan dan penyimpanan karbon memberikan peluang untuk inovasi dan keusahawanan. Dengan melabur dalam penyelidikan dan pembangunan, kerajaan boleh memupuk sektor teknologi bersih yang berkembang, mewujudkan pekerjaan dan merangsang pertumbuhan ekonomi.

Hasil yang dijana daripada cukai *carbon storage* boleh dilaburkan semula secara strategik, menyediakan insentif kewangan kepada perniagaan untuk mengamalkan amalan yang lebih bersih, mengurangkan pelepasan karbon mereka, dan memastikan masa depan yang mampan. Ini bukan sahaja memberi manfaat kepada alam sekitar tetapi juga meningkatkan reputasi dan daya saing perniagaan di dalam pasaran global yang pesat berubah.

Tuan Speaker, Tellian menyokong penuh Rang Undang-Undang ini. Sekian, terima kasih.

Timbalan Speaker: Terima kasih Yang Berhormat Tellian. I think we have three more speakers. The next one will be Yang Berhormat Katibas, followed by Yang Berhormat Ngemah and lastly, Yang Berhormat Batu Lintang. Yang Berhormat for Katibas.

YB Encik Lidam anak Assan: Tuan Speaker, thank you for allowing me to participate in the debate. Congratulation to YB Deputy Minister in Premier's Department, a Member for N.7 Samariang, for successfully tabling the Bill.

The concentration of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) has been rising since the time of the Industrial Revolution as a result of human activity. Urgent action by every single one of us is needed to mitigate and reduce the emission of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) in the atmosphere, and to adapt to the impact of climate change.

The Paris Agreement has set an ambitious target of limiting the rise in temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius, requiring a 45% reduction in global emissions from 2010 levels by 2030, with the ultimate goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. This aligns with the global target of achieving zero emissions by 2050. Sarawak is fully committed to address climate change by reducing Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions and adopting strategies aligned with the global target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

Nature-based solutions is close to our backyard to support the initiatives such as planting trees and decreasing deforestation, offer cost-effective ways to address climate change while also addressing biodiversity and land degradation. We can model this solution by surveying our native land and earmark some of carbon sink. By virtue of this is also we need to administer the land especially the native land so that we can administer the native right accordingly.

This Bill can assist Forestry Department to strengthen their efforts to curb indiscriminate chopping of our timber that emits Greenhouse Gases (GHG) from rural areas, they can use the Bill to impose levy. Strategies, action plans, and incentives are essential elements in reducing

Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions and achieving Sarawak's goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Green tech solutions, such as climate technology, aim to mitigate greenhouse, gas emissions through initiatives such as afforestation, carbon capture, and agri-tech.

Tuan Speaker, the introduction of the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) Emission) Bill, 2023 is timely for Sarawak, demonstrating the firm commitment of Sarawak Government to achieve its net-zero target by 2050, aligning with both Malaysia and the global targets. The Bill with introduction of carbon levy and offsets have been carefully planned to ensure that resources are retained and generated in Sarawak for conservation or green technologies, rather than solely punishing entities.

The noble intention of the Bill to safeguard the Sarawak's environment must be applauded as Sarawak is leading the way by being the first in Malaysia to introduce legislation concerning climate change and Greenhouse Gases (GHG) reduction, setting and important precedent for future legislation. This Bill, when passed, requires business entities in the scheduled economic sectors to register and report on Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions. It also requires them to decarbonise and reduce the emissions to a prescribed level.

Submission of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emission report from business sectors is not only being transparent, we will know our emission and have our own Greenhouse Gases (GHG) inventory. When we have our own Greenhouse Gases (GHG) Inventory, we will not only be able to strategize to achieve Sarawak's target of net zero by 2050, we will also provide data to Federal for inclusion in the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for submission to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Tuan Speaker, the introduction of this Bill is not merely a legislation to address climate change and protect Sarawak's Government, it is also a clear indication that *"Environment"* which includes climate change and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction is not explicitly listed in any of the legislature schedules in the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution, thus falls under the legislative power of the State Legislature. Thus, we must protect the rights of Sarawak and Sarawakian. Protecting the environment is not just the responsibility, it is a duty that we owe to our planet, to ourselves and to our future generation. We all have a power to make the difference and be the *"Earth Warrior"* despite our political differences.

As a conclusion through those brief explanations, I support the Motion for the passage of this Environmental Bill. Thank you, Tuan Speaker.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you, Ahli Yang Berhormat for Katibas. Next, will be Ahli Yang Berhormat for Ngemah.

YB Encik Anyi anak Jana: YB Datuk Amar Speaker, pertama sekali saya ingin merakamkan (*Interruption*)…

Timbalan Speaker: No. No *"Amar"* please for me. Otherwise, the Hansard will go haywire. Thank you.

YB Encik Anyi anak Jana: YB Datuk Speaker, pertama sekali saya ingin merakamkan ucapan terima kasih kepada Datuk Amar Speaker kerana memberi ruang …(*Interruption*)…

Timbalan Speaker: Again.

YB Encik Anyi anak Jana: …dan kesempatan kepada saya untuk membahaskan Rang Undang-Undang Alam Sekitar (Pengurangan Pelepasan Rumah Hijau), 2023 yang telah dibentangkan pada awal pagi tadi.

Tuan Speaker, perubahan iklim yang tidak menentu dan pemanasan global yang semakin ketara akan menyumbang kepada implikasi negatif kepada alam sekitar dan manusia sejagat sekiranya kita gagal untuk menanganinya mula dari sekarang.

Dengan kesempatan ini, saya sangat berbangga dan memuji Premier Sarawak, Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari bin Tun Abang Haji Openg kerana beliau merupakan *Pioneer* ataupun Pelopor dalam usaha memperkenalkan tenaga hijau bukan sahaja di Malaysia malah di pentas persada antarabangsa.

Penglibatan Premier kita di dalam usaha mengetengahkan Tenaga Hijau telah mendorong negara-negara maju luar seperti Korea Selatan, Singapura, Sweden, Norway, United Kingdom dan negara luar lain yang telah menjemput beliau sebagai Penceramah Utama dan kerap kali dipanggil sebagai *Advisor* ataupun Penasihat dalam pembentangan pelan untuk tenaga hijau di pelusuk seluruh dunia. This for me is the most high achievement and recognition globally not only for our Sarawak Premier but the whole of Sarawak. Thank you so much Premier Sarawak.

Tuan Speaker, berbalik kepada Rang Undang-Undang Alam Sekitar (Pengurangan Pelepasan Rumah Hijau) 2023, kelestarian alam sekitar adalah asas kepada rancangan 10 tahun Sarawak untuk menjadi sebahagian daripada peralihan global yang dipercepatkan kepada tenaga bersih.

Ini bagi mencapai pelepasan sifar bersih dan dalam proses membalikkan perubahan iklim yang tidak dapat diabaikan oleh dunia. Ketika COP26 iaitu *Conference of Parties* 26 di Glasgow, Malaysia komited untuk mengurangkan pelepasan rumah hijaunya sebanyak 45% daripada paras 2005 dan mencapai sifar bersih menjelang tahun 2050.

Usaha ini amat sejajar dengan gerakan dunia dalam merealisasikan Matlamat Pembangunan Mampan 2030 serta aspirasi Sarawak untuk menjadi negeri maju menjelang 2030 yang mengejar pertumbuhan ekonomi yang seimbang dengan pendekatan bertanggungjawab ke arah pemanfaatan alam semulajadi, sumber penyepaduan pelan penyesuaian dan mitigasi iklim.

Laporan yang telah disediakan oleh *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (IPCC) menyarankan supaya tindakan segera perlu dilakukan untuk menghadkan pemanasan global kepada 1.5`Celsius dengan mengurangkan pelepasan gas rumah hijau dan pencemaran udara. Suhu bumi dijangka meningkat kepada 2.7`Celcius menjelang akhir abad ini.

Tuan Speaker, matlamat utama alam sekitar adalah untuk mempunyai persekitaran yang baik, dengan kualiti tertinggi dan menghormati semua kehidupan.

Pada masa ini, semakin ramai pelabur lebih mementingkan kelestarian alam sekitar semasa membuat keputusan pelaburan.

Komitmen Kerajaan Negeri Sarawak terhadap Pembangunan Lestari untuk meningkatkan pertumbuhan dan kemajuan negeri ini telah mendapat perhatian seluruh dunia.

Ini dibuktikan dan disokong oleh agensi penarafan antarabangsa seperti *Standard and Poor's* dan *Moody's Investor Services*.

Tuan Speaker, sokongan ini sangat relevan sejajar dengan strategi Kerajaan Sarawak untuk menarik lebih banyak pelaburan berkualiti dengan tujuan membangunkan Sarawak dalam skala besar.

Malah Timbalan Menteri Kewangan Kedua Malaysia, YB Steven Sim turut mengakui bahawa Sarawak akan menjadi model di Malaysia dari segi tenaga hijau ketika negara bergerak ke dalam ekonomi abad ke-21.

Yang Berhormat Steven Sim turut mengakui Kerajaan Sarawak telah mengambil langkah pertama di dalam ekonomi hijau, ekonomi digital dan teknologi maju untuk melangkah ke ekonomi abad ke-21.

Beliau mengambil contoh dengan menyatakan Sarawak mampu mengeluarkan 100,000 tong bahan api bio sehari menggunakan mikro lumut. Hari ini, seluruh negara mengeluarkan gas 500,000 tong sehari dan hanya satu tapak di Sarawak mampu mengeluarkan 100,000 tong bahan api bio setiap hari.

Sarawak juga telah membuat langkah yang sangat tepat untuk memilih ekonomi hijau kerana menjelang 2027, industri penerbangan dunia akan menggunakan bahan api bio untuk terbang, langkah ke arah sifar pelepasan karbon.

Tuan Speaker, Sarawak berada di landasan yang betul untuk menjadi sebuah wilayah yang lebih kukuh secara lestari, terutama dengan mengamalkan prinsip Alam Sekitar, Sosial dan Tadbir Urus (ESG) iaitu *Environment, Social and Governance.*

Sebagai kesimpulan, saya dengan ini menyokong penuh supaya Rang Undang-Undang Alam Sekitar (Pengurangan Pelepasan Rumah Hijau), 2023 ini diluluskan oleh Dewan yang mulia ini. Sekian, terima kasih.

Timbalan Speaker: Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Batu Lintang, please. I want to ask Yang Berhormat for Balingian are you willing to speak, are you going to speak? Are you going to be the last one? Right.

YB Encik See Chee How: Thank you Tuan Speaker. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in the debate of this Bill, the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023.

I must applaud the State Government, the customarily hard working Honourable Deputy Minister, my good friend the Honourable Member for Samariang and her good legal team and particularly our *"Gaffer"* the Right Honourable Premier for this new legislature, as I understand that this is one of his most important brainchild for our State to achieve the noble goals of PCDS 2030 particularly a high income State economy which also prioritizes environmental conservation and sustainability.

At this time when climate change and global warming is being regarded as the single most crucial issue which will determine the very survival and existence of the Earth and humankind, and further, not only must the world achieve net zero carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emission by 2050, the net zero emission goal will have to be sustained long beyond 2050.

The transformation needed is massive and I am most grateful that Sarawak is at the forefront of our country in our commitment to manage Carbon Capture Storage and Usage with proper legislature, rules and regulations, in accordance with the highest and world class standards there is.

This present Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023, the amendments to the Land Code and Forest Ordinance over the last two sittings of this august House, together with the making of the Land (Carbon Storage) Rules, 2022 pursuant to Section 2(1)(3)(m) of the Land Code, and Forests (Forest Carbon Activity) Rules, 2022 pursuant to Section 113(1)(bb) of the Forests Ordinance 2015, both the two sets of comprehensive Rules which have already come into force on the 1st January 2023.

This body of legislatures, and no doubt more are to come, speaks volumes about the determination and conviction of Sarawak playing a pro-active role as one of the pioneering game-changers in this global action to combat global warming and climate change.

Coming to this Bill, the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023, I like the entitlement of the Bill appearing on page 4 of the Bill, putting emphasis on Sarawak's exclusive rights to environment, relating to lands, forests and water being matters under the State List and hence the legislative power of the State to enact laws.

Rightly so, we must put *"the elephant in the house*" in its place, yes, outside this august House and out of Sarawak.

The Right Honourable Premier had openly declared, on 23rd September 2023, stressing that the rights over carbon, as a commodity captured, stored, used and to be traded in Sarawak, belongs to the State and not the Federal Government.

In other words, our Right Honourable Premier conveyed to the Federal Government the message that the Federal Government may legislate laws, rules and regulations as regards carbon, including the parameters and regulate trading under the international protocol. But the federal government has no authority over Sarawak's rights to capture, store, use and trade its own carbon in Sarawak.

Citing Articles 91 and 95E and the provisions of the Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution, the Sarawak Land Code, the Forest Ordinance, the Sarawak Natural Resources and Environment Ordinance, these State legislatures relating to lands, forests and natural resources found within the territory of Sarawak all of which had predated the birth of Malaysia, and of course the Malaysia Agreement 1963. Referring to all those, our Right Honourable Premier had rightly declared that anything to do with lands is the rights of the State. Let me repeat these following quotable quotes from the Right Honourable Premier, for the record of this august House: *"It is not a shared rights as what had been claimed by certain quarters; and*, w*e must defend this rights and if we want to champion our rights, it should not be a half-hearted effort".*

I am obliged to declare my full support for our Right Honourable Premier, in his stance, vision and mission on this most important subject matter which goes to determine not only our environmental health and sustainability, but the wealth and economic well-being of the future of Sarawak and our children, grandchildren and future generations of Sarawakians.

And I urge all my Honourable colleagues, all Honourable Members of this august House to support this Bill as a show of our unequivocal support for our Right Honourable Premier, in his stance as was enunciated in his speech on 23rd September 2023 in the interests of Sarawak and for our future generations of Sarawakians.

On the Bill itself, I would like to point to one important point that is the Clause 2 the interpretation sections on the interpretation of atmosphere and I am suggesting that maybe we should interpret in this interpretation to say:

> *"atmosphere" <u>is a part of the lands of Sarawak</u> referring to the airspace above the land and Sarawak waters which <u>include</u> waters above the continental shelf off the coasts of Sarawak <u>within the boundaries of Sarawak as extended by the Sarawak (Alteration of Boundaries) Order in Council, 1954*</u>*

And the "*" should provide the same explanatory footnote note as that provided for the interpretation of "State Land" in the Land Code [Cap 81] that:

"For definition of boundaries see the Sarawak (Definition of Boundaries) Order in Council, 1958 (GNS 145/58) and see also the North Borneo and Sarawak (Alteration of Boundaries) Order in Council, 1962 (GNS 52/62). [Vol VI, p 1025]"

It is necessary to provide clarity to the definition of *"atmosphere"* as a part of the lands of Sarawak because it rightly is and ought to be.

"Land", by its interpretation in the Land Code appears short for the purpose of this Bill, hence, we may need to make provision to give interpretation to the word *"Lands".*

With that, we shall then be constitutionally and legally entitled to receive all proceeds from the taxes, fees and other sources of revenue including those intended and proposed to be collected, levied or raise within the State under this Bill, pursuant to and in accordance with Section 2 of Part III of the Tenth Schedule of the Federal Constitution.

With that observation, hopefully for consideration for the necessary amendment, I stand to support this Bill, the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Thank you, Tuan Speaker.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you Ahli Yang Berhormat for Batu Lintang. Next is Ahli Yang Berhormat for Balingian, please.

YB Encik Abdul Yakub bin Haji Arbi: Thank you Tuan Speaker. My greatest gratitude, Tuan Speaker for allowing me to participate in the debate on the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 in this august House which was tabled by YB Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan) merangkap ADUN N.7 Samariang.

This Bill is definitely a move that will bring forward Sarawak to a new arena of international business, where we can utilise the availability of our continental shelf to generate a new revenue for our beloved State. In our eagerness to tell the world of our intention to Contribute towards a cleaner environment, let us not forget that our continental shelf lies beneath a busy surface, the South China Sea.

We have seen that on numerous occasions that our Coastline had been encroached by foreigners so that beside a cleaner world and a better revenue for Sarawak, our approach should also consider enhancing the security of the facilities that we planned to build involving the continental shelf.

I beg for the Government to consider the possibility of joint ventures with companies from countries claiming rights to the South China Sea to be together with us in further enhancing our capabilities in addressing the world greenhouse gas emissions. By being together, I believed Sarawak could also contribute in easing the situation of overlapping claims by certain countries and at the same time, promoting a sense of belonging, while sharing peace and prosperity.

A peaceful and stable environment are definitely another important essence towards promoting businesses and thus, adding another advantage to Sarawak. I, dearly appreciate and support the Sarawak Government which are very serious about the net zero carbon emission by 2050. With that note, I beg to support the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: Thank you Ahli Yang Berhormat for Balingian. I think this Honourable Member who is going to speak, small but note worthy observation from the Chair, that is a very high standard debate shown by the Member, loaded in their speeches are materials and data research, I think it shows a deep sense of awareness, the need for Sarawak in the world to reduce green house and gasses emission, carbon foot print as well as protected environment. So, may I call upon the Deputy Minister to wind up the Speech.

Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan) (YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah binti Sayeed Aman Ghazali): Terlebih dahulu, saya ingin mengucapkan setinggi-tinggi penghargaan dan terima kasih kepada Ahli Yang Berhormat yang telah mengambil bahagian dalam perbahasan dan telah sanggup menunggu sampai malam *tok* di dalam Dewan yang indah ini. Thank you very much dan sekaligus menyokong Rang Undang-

Undang, dan saya ingin merakam terima kasih bagi Ahli Yang Berhormat bagi Tebedu, Tupong, Pending, Tanjong Batu, Kota Sentosa, Ba'Kelalan, Pelagus, Batu Kitang, Daro, Bukit Assek, Tellian, Katibas, Ngemah, Batu Lintang dan Balingian. Terima kasih Daun Keladi.

Saya juga ambil maklum dan menghargai segala cadangan dan idea-idea yang bernas yang telah dikemukakan semasa perbahasan ini yang sudah tentunya akan dapat membantu Kerajaan negeri dalam melaksanakan dan menguatkuasakan Rang Undang-Undang ini.

Tuan Speaker, I would like to answer the issue raised by Ahli Yang Berhormat for Pending in her debate speech who concentrated on the issues of carbon credit for forest carbon project. Surprisingly for a YB representing an urban constituency, she expresses concern on how carbon projects in the forest will affect the right and interest of native and indigenous communities.

For the information of Ahli Yang Berhormat for Pending and this august House, the Forest Carbon Activities Rules, 2022, regulate all carbon projects undertaken in our forest. In line with the clean development mechanism prescribed under the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, such activities relate to a forestation and reforestation that is the planting of trees and the rehabilitation of the graded forest.

Under the rules, Tuan Speaker, before a forest carbon project can be undertaken, the project proponent must, I repeat must submit a carbon study plan for approval of the Director of Forest, and that carbon study plan must where the rights and interest of native communities maybe affected by the carbon project include the methodology or measures including benefits sharing to be adopted to secure their consent and support. I think we have all these provisions in place.

Tuan Speaker, for the information of this august House, the Project Designed Document (PDD) submitted by Sara Carbon Sdn Bhd has yet to be approved. It's not approved yet, therefore the license for the project has yet to be issued. The PDD would be approved only when the right and interest of the indigenous people has been taken into account. So, we are very prudent and very cautious, and careful. On the issue of carbon credit, I wish to reiterate that the Bill provide robust system for verification and validation of project, whether it the nature of forest carbon project or carbon captured storage to ensure the integrity and credibility of a carbon credit system.

The appointment of carbon standards administrator shall be made by the NREB, taken into consideration the integrity and performance of international organizations to be appointed and taking into account the United Nations intends to appoint a supervisory body to monitor, to verify issue of carbon credit under Article 6(4) of The Paris Agreement. We will take guidance from the supervisory body in respect of the mechanism for the issuance of carbon credit.

Any international carbon standards have its own criteria, requirements, and comprehensive plan. The Forest Amendments and Land Code were enacted to carefully scrutinize and review all projects, activities to be submitted for consideration of carbon credit prior to carbon market. In addition, within the international carbon standards, audits are rigorously evaluated to ensure compliance and credibility. For example, forestry carbon activities for carbon credits from a location if you like to use the Sara Carbon Project will require permits to conduct any projects relevant to carbon credit projects. Subsequently, project design documents will be submitted for review and approval by the Sarawak Government prior to be given license. At this stage, we have already scrutinized the activities and projects at the level to understand such projects would provide benefits in terms of indigenous community and credit potentials.

Tuan Speaker, for the information of the august House, I wish to explain the terms Sarawak Waters, include all waters within territory of the State as defined in the Interpretation Ordinance, 2005. For the information of why Yang Berhormat Ba'Kelalan, the territory of Sarawak as defined in the State Ordinance, as defined in The Interpretation Ordinance, 2005, is as follows, I am sure you would know this, I read the definition of territory of Sarawak in the Ordinance, the territory of the State means all area within the territory of Sarawak immediately before Malaysia Day and includes

by virtue of Sarawak Alteration of Boundaries Order in Council 1954, the continental shelf in the seabed and its subsoil lies beneath the high sea the territorial waters of Sarawak in this premises the atmosphere of Sarawak covers the atmosphere of over all the territory of Sarawak. And I hope that will be clear, Ba'Kelalan. And the comments made by Honourable Member for Batu Lintang, we will consider and *kita akan* took into consideration.

In conclusion I would say this, our aim in the passing of this Bill is very clear. It is to reduce carbon emissions by at least 45%, increase green job opportunities, empowers small and medium enterprises and equipped Sarawak with sustainable infrastructure by 2030.

To achieve a net-zero emissions future, innovation is crucial. Sarawak will encourage the development of new technology and solutions that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote sustainable practices. We will work with stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society and international partners, to achieve our sustainability goals.

Tuan Speaker, in conclusion, the new Bill on greenhouse gas emission reduction is not just a legislative measure; it is a testament to our commitment to responsible development, environmental sustainability, and the well-being of our *rakyat* and our people. That's the most crucial aim.

Tuan Speaker, once again I would like to thank all members of this august House for their support and to pass this Bill. Thank you.

Timbalan Speaker: The question before the Dewan is that the Motion standing in the Order Paper in the name of the Honourable Deputy Minister in the Premier Department and Member for N.7 Samariang be referred to the Committee of the Whole House. As many as are of the opinion say *"Yes".*

Government: Yes… (Resounding *"Yes"*)

Timbalan Speaker: As many as are of the contrary opinion say *"No".* The *"Yes"* have it. The Motion is passed and referred to the Committee of the Whole House.

The Dewan shall now resolve into the Committee of the Whole House to consider the Bill which stands committed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE STAGE

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

[Tuan Pengerusi mempengerusikan Mesyuarat]

Tuan Pengerusi: The Dewan shall now consider the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023.

Clauses 1 to 57

Tuan Pengerusi: The question is that Clauses 1 to 57 are ordered to stand part of the Bill. As many as are of the opinion say *"Yes".*

Government: Yes… (Resounding *"Yes")*

Tuan Pengerusi: As many as are of the contrary opinion say *"No".* The *"Yes"* have it. Clauses 1 to 57 are ordered to stand part of the Bill.

The Schedule

Tuan Pengerusi: The question is that the Schedule be ordered to stand part of the Bill. As many as are of the opinion say *"Yes".*

Government: Yes… (Resounding *"Yes*")

Tuan Pengerusi: As many as are of the contrary opinion say *"No".* The "Yes" have it. The Schedule are ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Enacting Clauses, Schedule and Title

Tuan Pengerusi: The Dewan shall now resume.

HOUSE RESUMED

[Tuan Speaker mempengerusikan Mesyuarat]

Timbalan Speaker: Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan).

Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang, MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan) (YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah binti Sayeed Aman Ghazali): Tuan Speaker, I wish to report that the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 has been considered by the Committee of Whole House and agreed without amendment.

RANG UNDANG-UNDANG KERAJAAN-
BACAAN KALI YANG KETIGA

Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023

Timbalan Menteri di Jabatan Premier (Undang-Undang MA63 dan Hubungan Negeri-Persekutuan) (YB Datuk Hajah Sharifah Hasidah binti Sayeed Aman Ghazali): Tuan Speaker, I beg to move that the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 be now read a third time and do passed.

Timbalan Speaker: The question before the Dewan is that the Environment (Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emission) Bill, 2023 be read a third time and do pass. As many as are of the opinion say *"Yes".*

Government: Yes… (Resounding *"Yes"*)

Timbalan Speaker: As many as are of the contrary opinion say *"No".* The *"Yes"* have it. The Bill is read a third time and passed.

Bill is read a third time and passed

Timbalan Speaker: Ahli-ahli Yang Berhormat, the Sitting is now adjourned and House shall resume its Sitting at 9.00 a.m. tomorrow. Insya-Allah.

(Mesyuarat ditangguhkan pada pukul 10.26 malam)

LAPORAN / PENYATA KEWANGAN, *'COMMAND PAPERS'*, *'HANSARD'* DAN *'VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS'* YANG DIBENTANG PADA 20 NOVEMBER 2023

PREMIER SARAWAK

38/2023	Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara - Penyata Kewangan bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2021
39/2023	Akaun Pinjaman Pengangkutan, Komputer dan Alat Perkakas Isi Rumah bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022
40/2023	Akaun Tabung Skim Insurans Pelindungan Kemalangan Peribadi Secara Berkelompok bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022
41/2023	PTB Tabung Bantuan Bencana Alam Negeri Sarawak bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022
42/2023	PTB Kumpulan Wang Amanah Kerajaan: The Ketua Masyarakat (Ketua Kaum) Trust Fund bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022

MENTERI KEWANGAN DAN EKONOMI BARU

43/2023	Estimates of Revenue and Ordinary Expenditure for the Year 2024 **(Cmd. 9 of 2023)**
44/2023	Memorandum on the Estimates of Revenue and Ordinary Expenditure for the Year 2024 **(Cmd. 10 of 2023)**
45/2023	Estimates of Development Expenditure for the Year 2024 **(Cmd. 11 of 2023)**
46/2023	Memorandum on the Estimates of Development Expenditure for the Year 2024 **(Cmd. 12 of 2023)**
47/2023	Laporan Ketua Audit Negara Negeri Sarawak Tahun 2021 Siri 2: Auditan Khas Pengurusan Hutan dan Impak Kepada Alam Sekitar, Aktiviti Kementerian/ Agensi dan Pengauditan Pematuhan Kementerian/ Agensi Negeri

MENTERI SUMBER ASLI DAN PEMBANGUNAN BANDAR

48/2023	PTB Tabung Amanah Pembangunan Bandar bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022
49/2023	Penyata Kewangan Tabung Perolehan Tanah Khas bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022

MENTERI BELIA, SUKAN DAN PEMBANGUNAN USAHAWAN

50/2023	Penyata Kewangan Tabung Amanah Dewan Suarah Negeri Sarawak bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022

MENTERI PEMBANGUNAN WANITA, KANAK-KANAK DAN KESEJAHTERAAN KOMUNITI

51/2023	PTB Endowment Fund Sarawak (EFS) Trust Fund bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022
52/2023	PTB Post-Natal Assistance (BIB) Trust Fund bagi tahun berakhir 31 Disember 2022

MENTERI UTILITI DAN TELEKOMUNIKASI

53/2023	Sibu Water Board - Annual Report 2021
54/2023	Kuching Water Board - Annual Report 2021

DEWAN UNDANGAN NEGERI SARAWAK

55/2023	Penyata Rasmi Persidangan Mesyuarat Pertama bagi Penggal Kedua Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak Kesembilan Belas (15 - 24 Mei 2023)
56/2023	Undi-undi dan Perjalanan Mesyuarat (*Votes and Proceedings)* Mesyuarat Pertama bagi Penggal Kedua Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak Kesembilan Belas (15 - 24 Mei 2023)
57/2023	Pertanyaan-pertanyaan Bukan Lisan Mesyuarat Pertama bagi Penggal Kedua Dewan Undangan Negeri Sarawak Kesembilan Belas (15 - 24 Mei 2023)