



Norlin (third left) presents a vase made from recycled materials to Abang Johari (fourth left) as a token of appreciation, as Awang Tengah (second left), Uggah (third right) and others look on. — Photo by Muhammad Rais Sanusi

# Sarawak committed to preserving environment, assures Chief Minister

Joash Kong

**KUCHING:** The Sarawak government is committed to taking care of the environment for the sake of future generations, says Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg.

He says apart from various policies undertaken such as reforestation and seeking renewable energy sources like hydrogen, the government is also looking to other countries that utilise the latest technology to reduce carbon dioxide emission.

"Sarawak cares about the environment. Even though we have not reached a critical stage like some countries, we must be prepared and give a good environmental legacy for our future generations," he said in his speech for the launch of the state-level National Environment Day 2019 celebration at the State Legislative Assembly (DUN) here yesterday.

He said besides reforestation policy, Sarawak was also looking to follow other countries that have possessed the latest technology to reduce carbon dioxide emission, adding that this was the reason behind the state's decision to pursue hydrogen technology.

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The Chief Minister said while some people might feel that it was 'too early' for Sarawak to pursue such endeavours, he firmly believed that Sarawakians had the expertise to do so.

He said by working together with scientists, the government would strive to introduce technology so that the state would have renewable energy.

"We already have one source, which is hydropower, and we will try to use hydrogen as a source to move the economy.

"Malaysia has a Blueprint in 2017 to push for hydrogen, but I understand it has not reached a certain stage yet and is still in discussion. But hopefully Sarawak has started on it through our pilot project to produce hydrogen and that will position Sarawak as the first place in Malaysia that is serious about the environment," he said.

Abang Johari also thanked the

federal government for restoring certain powers under the Malaysia Agreement 1963 (MA63) to Sarawak, which had enabled the state to further look after the environment.

"In this DUN session, we amended our laws so that our officers will have the power to carry out any actions and look after the environment through Sarawak's perspective.

"Thus at the state-level, Sarawak will look after the environment holistically and using the latest technology in order to give a good environmental situation for the state and Sarawakians."

Deputy chief ministers Datuk Amar Douglas Uggah and Datuk Amar Awang Tengah Ali Hasan, DUN Speaker Datuk Amar Mohd Asfia Awang Nassar, State Secretary Datuk Amar Jaul Samion and Department of Environment director-general Norlin Jaafar were also present.