

## For Immediate Release

Press Release

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### **Sarawak Metro strives to nurture local talent in public transport industry through collaborations with higher learning institutions and TVET centres**

**KUCHING:** Sarawak Metro Sdn Bhd (Sarawak Metro) aims to collaborate with institutions of higher learning and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) centres to support the public transport ecosystem in Sarawak through green energy solutions and sustainable technologies.

According to Sarawak Metro's Deputy Project Director for the Kuching Urban Transportation System (KUTS) project, Prabu Ganesh, these partnerships will focus on transferring knowledge and technology to local institutions of higher learning and TVET centres, mainly to strengthen local capabilities for the KUTS project.

"Sarawak Metro strives to nurture local talent with the specific skills needed for the implementation, operation and maintenance of the KUTS project," said Prabu, during a forum session at the Hydrogen & Tech Safari 4.0 in Miri recently.

He explained that with this aspiration in mind, Sarawak Metro introduced the Socio-Economic Enhancement Development (SEED) programme; towards enhancing the benefits of the KUTS project by producing a more skillful local workforce and initiating a local supply chain to support the project's operations.

The introduction of the SEED programme was inspired by the Industrial Collaboration Programme (ICP) which had been widely implemented for federal-funded mega projects in Peninsular Malaysia.

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One of the more significant initiatives under the SEED Programme will be the establishment of an assembly plant for the Autonomous Rapid Transit (ART) hydrogen vehicles.

“By working closely with institutions of higher learning and TVET centres, we aim to ensure our hydrogen-powered ART and feeder buses are well-supported by the local industry players,” said Prabu.

The recent Hydrogen & Tech Safari 4.0, which was organised by Centre for Technology Excellence Sarawak (CENTEXS) was attended by more than 500 students from 10 secondary schools from throughout Miri.

ENDS

### About Sarawak Metro and KUTS project:

Sarawak Metro Sdn Bhd (Sarawak Metro), a wholly owned subsidiary of Sarawak Economic Development Corporation (SEDC), has been entrusted by the Sarawak Government to modernise public transport through the Kuching Urban Transportation System (KUTS) project.

Sarawak Metro is the implementer, operator and maintainer of the KUTS project.

The project is being developed in phases, and Phase 1 includes the development of three lines: the Blue Line from Rembus in Kota Samarahan to Hikmah Exchange in the city centre; the Red Line, from Kuching Sentral to Pending; and the Green Line, from Pending to Damai.

Construction of the first package for the Blue Line is expected to complete by the fourth quarter of 2025 and all three lines are scheduled to be fully completed by the end of 2027.

The backbone of the KUTS project is the introduction of the zero-emission Autonomous Rapid Transit (ART) hydrogen vehicles.

The ART vehicles will be operated on dedicated lanes, meaning they will not share the lane with other road users. The ART hydrogen vehicles will run on rubber tires, and hence the dedicated lanes will be trackless. The lanes will mostly be at-grade (road level) while certain sections of the alignment will be elevated.

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The ART operation will be supported by a network of feeder buses, which will also consist of hydrogen-powered vehicles to offer the ‘first mile and last mile’ connectivity for commuters.

The move to use hydrogen is in line with the Sarawak Government’s aspirations to advance the hydrogen economy and to decarbonise public transport in Sarawak.

**Photos and Captions:**



Prabu Ganesh (2nd left) posing for a group photo with panelists from MEITD, SMA, SDEC and HARTASUMA.



Prabu (left) answering questions from the audience.

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