

SABAR to hold town hall sessions.

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KOTA KINABALU: A citizen-driven, nonpartisan initiative which seeks to empower Sabahans to voice their concerns, propose solutions, and play an active role in shaping policies will be held from March to June.

The three-month-long initiative called "*Sabah Voices to Action – Shaping Sabah's Future Together*" will be officially launched by Sabah Action Body Advocating Rights (SABAR) on March 19. SABAR will facilitate inclusive sessions and compile recommendations to be presented to political parties ahead of the 2025 Sabah State Election.

"This will be done through multi-platform engagement, including podcasts, newspaper publications, regional town hall meetings, and a culminating conference.

In addition, six Regional Town Hall Meetings will be held from April to May in Kota Kinabalu, Sandakan, Tawau, Kota Marudu, and Keningau, offering Sabahans a direct platform to voice their concerns and ideas.

The initiative will culminate in a Final Town Hall Conference in June, where stakeholders will consolidate recommendations into the Memorandum of Sabah Priorities.

"The ultimate objective of this project is to promote an inclusive, transparent, and participatory policy-making culture in Sabah by fostering a bottom-up approach to governance," said SABAR Board Chairman Datuk Zainie Abdul Aucasa.

He said it aims to shift the political culture by encouraging transparent, rational, and professional policy discussions that engage experts, stakeholders, and the public in co-creating solutions to Sabah's challenges.

Organising Chairman Lim Hock Song said through open dialogue and collaborative decision-making, the initiative seeks to cultivate a proactive, professional, and inclusive nation-building culture, ensuring that policies reflect informed discourse and the genuine needs of the people.

He urged Sabahans to stay updated on the latest podcast episodes and town hall event schedules by following SABAR's Facebook page and visiting SABAR's official website.

"Join the conversation and be part of shaping Sabah's future through inclusive and participatory policymaking," he said.

The initiative is supported by Daily Express as the official media partner, ensuring widespread coverage and public engagement.

Daily Express Chief Editor Datuk James Sarda welcomed the collaboration, emphasizing the importance of media fostering meaningful discussions on public policy.

“Daily Express has always been committed to providing a platform for informed discourse on Sabah’s most pressing issues,” he said.

“This initiative aligns with our mission to promote awareness, civic engagement, and accountability in governance.

By amplifying expert insights and public voices, we hope to encourage constructive dialogue that leads to real, impactful change for the people of Sabah,” he said.

Meanwhile, the initiative will be officially launched on March 19 with the release of the first episode of an 8-Episode “Sabah Voices to Action” Podcast Series, hosted by Kopitiam Council and SABAR.

Kopitiam Council is a podcast hosted by Sabahans Mohd Hafizul and Aidil Putera, exploring global and local affairs and their impact on Malaysians, especially Sabahans. Through bold discussions, they break down complex issues—from politics to social trends—offering fresh insights into the forces shaping our world.

The podcast series will feature in-depth discussions on Sabah’s challenges in education, healthcare, public infrastructure, and good governance, with local experts from diverse fields, including education, healthcare, architecture & engineering, urban planning, estate valuation, law, finance, banking, and government—offering valuable insights to inform future policies.

Following each podcast episode, Daily Express will publish special newspaper columns featuring extended discussions and expert insights on those subjects.

The public is invited to participate by sharing their thoughts and proposing solutions through a dedicated website.

The initiative is also supported by the Sabah Healthcare Professional Alliance, comprising the Sabah Medical Association, Sabah Nurses Association, Association of Private Practitioners Sabah, Sabah Pharmaceutical Society, Kesatuan Inspektor Kesihatan Sabah and Sabah Dental Practitioners Society, has also pledged its full support for the initiative.

Their collective expertise will provide crucial insights into the healthcare challenges in Sabah, contributing to informed discussions and actionable solutions.

Among the prominent figures featured in the podcast series are Datuk Dr Christina Rundi, former Sabah Health Director; Datuk Mohd Hanafiah Mohd Kassim, Permanent Secretary of the State Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation; Datuk Roger Chin, former President of the Sabah Law Society; Datuk John Lo, member of the Sabah Economic Advisory Council; Rizal Ahmad Banja, President of the Sabah Professional Council; Michael Tong, Senior Partner at Crowe Horwath; Professor Vincent Pang, Honorary Professor at Universiti Malaysia Sabah; and Datuk Dr Amarjit Singh, former Director of the Sabah Water Department, among others.

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Plan long-term, don't write off Kaiduan dam: Armizan

Hayati Dzulkiati



PPH (Kota Kinabalu): The Sabah government should not write off any chance of sustainable water for Sabah because plan for long-term and sustainable hydroelectric power is still available, says former member of Parliament for Papar, Armizan Bintang. (All pix)

He said it is vital for a plan not just for a short-term but for a long-term to ensure enough water supply for the state, industries and the people. Sabah also can attract investors.

"We don't want the [water] issues not

face today to solve it but tomorrow have taken water away."

"So, why not explore other alternatives instead? Because Sabah needs a more sustainable and stable water supply and we have to make sure that our子孙 (children and grandchildren) are going to have water and the next generations would," Armizan said.

The Papar MP said Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs after the recent meeting with the Sabah State Water Supply and Drainage Board, Petronas and Sabah Energy, Water and Natural Resources (SEWAN) at an open hall, Jerry, Sabah.

He was commenting on a recent State

Water Project review by Dr. Ong Kian Ming, former Water Minister, during a meeting with Water Minister, Dato' Seri Dr. Zainal Abidin Yunos last Thursday (March 6).

Malaffitau was reported as saying that the Papar Dam project, the 10th largest hydroelectric power plant in the country, will be completed in 2016 to help building other infrastructures to accommodate the demand for water supply.

The Papar Dam, originally known as the Kaiduan Dam project, was planned to supply water to the surrounding Sabah region as the main dam.

However, it was objected by other opposition politicians who felt that there were some

problems with the project and it was stopped.

Armizan said when he received the minutes of the previous meeting with Minister of Environment, he pledged to consider the matter and to make sure that the project is properly urged the State Government to make a decision on the Papar Dam project.

It was reported in 2013 that the State Cabinet would decide whether to go ahead with the project or not. The project is a study cost power feasibility.

Armizan said he is okay with the State Government decision to put it on hold as long as it is not cancelled.

"With the upgrading of Kepung Matai Dam, the water supply is sufficient and reliable, and selling the water issue in Papar will be resolved by the next to next year."

"If what's being suggested is feasible such as the Papar Hydroelectric Dam project, then it is a good idea to go ahead and supply more litres of water per day of clean and stable water supply to be supplied in many as undred radiation," said Goh, because we won't have to face issues like water supply and water pollution in Kaiduan for Papar Dam project."

"There's nothing wrong with prioritizing the interests of the people in Kaiduan first," he said.

Entire Segama floor collapses

Jimmy Goh

PPH, KINABALU: A major tragedy occurred at the Segama factory shoplot Friday night when an entire first floor section that was part of a two-storey investment gone was after hours had left.

A witness, Wong Wei, 53, witnessed the falling and had to run even harder under the table while he headed to Peng Ang, 56, office where he works in the project director.

They were helping then to open up the Chinese Hotel restaurant. Fortunately the witnesses had left before the last hour.

Witnesses reported hearing a loud noise as the floor gave way, sending debris crashing onto the entire below.

The Fire and Rescue Department received an emergency call at 8pm and dispatched personnel for the scene, within 10 minutes of receiving the call.

They managed to rescue the remain alive and helped to contact the committee of the shoplot operator Queens Ridge Hospital by the public.

"The rescue team conducted thorough inspections and directed all occupants to

evacuate the building immediately," said spokesman of the Fire and Rescue Department.

A total of 15 individuals from the Keta Kuching, fire and Rescue Station responded, along with six police officers and three medical personnel.

Witnesses said the entire building was completely collapsed, exposing the steel structure of the building.

It is believed that the roof collapsed and the entire floor may have contributed to the entire floor collapsed in the past year due to a strong wind storm.

The third and fourth floor houses seven units each, with over 40 residents in total.

Among those evacuated was Adeline, who has stayed on the third floor since last year.

Another tenant, Janet, said she had lived on the fourth floor with her family for four years.

The operation was declared unsafe and controlled by experts and made a progress after it was confirmed no further incident was due.

"The rescue team conducted thorough inspections and directed all occupants to

PM wants adequate space, opportunities for women

KHANIAH HUMAIDI: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (left) wants opportunities and opportunities for women in all aspects of the nation.

He said attention must be given to the nation since there is a lack of acknowledgement among women, including the political level.

He said that every ministry should focus on joint programmes with the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD) to empower women.

"Women, especially when discussing only have a role for women. There must be communication and sufficient space given to women in all areas, although we have given them a role, we have been given space and position have justified importance of women," he said at the meeting.

"I urge the Chief Secretary to the Government to find ways to enhance the role and position of women's contribution with full capabilities," he said at the meeting.

Flood evacuees in Beaufort rise

Abdul Aziz

PPH, BEAUFORT: A total of 440 flood victims from 100 families have been registered and no temporary relief centre at Segama, Beaufort, has been set up after heavy flooding hit the district with 100 families.

Chief Minister of Sabah, Datuk Seri Dr. Musa Aman, said the flooding was the worst in history. Among the survivors are 44 adults, 33 adult women, 26 boys, 26 girls, 16 baby boys, 15 baby girls, three elderly men and 10 elderly women.

The survivors include two households from Kg. Lubuk, consisting of three men, four boys, one baby boy and an elderly woman.

In Beaufort, 60 houses have been affected with 31 adults, 21 women, 20 boys, 20 girls, 12 baby boys, 10 baby girls, three elderly men and 10 elderly women evicted.

Ngan Tiong, 45, a housewife from Kg. Lubuk, said the flooding has been the worst in her life. She said the flooding has caused her to leave her home and stay with her son and daughter in a nearby house.

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The flooded Beaufort town.

Sabar to hold town hall sessions

KINABALU: A town hall meeting, initiated which seeks to empower Sabahans to voice their concerns, propose solutions and play an active role in shaping policies will be held on March 15.

The three-hour long meeting called "Sabar Town Hall: Shaping Sabah's Future Together" will be a friendly forum whereby Sabar will facilitate inclusive discussions and complete transparency in the process presented to political parties ahead of the next Sabah State election.

This will be done through a multi-platform engagement strategy including podium, newspaper publications, regional news and a Facebook and a dedicated website.

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