

# CM: GPS best coalition to lead Sarawak, bring development to rural areas

BY NIGEL EDGAR ON NOVEMBER 24, 2019, SUNDAY AT 3:24 PMNEWS, SARAWAK



*Abang Johari (third left) giving a thumbs-up together with other state dignitaries after unveiling the Batang Rambungan Bridge model during the earth breaking ceremony in Lundu this morning.*

**LUNDU:** Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg is urging Sarawakians to open their eyes and realise that the Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS) is the best coalition to lead the state and bring development to the rural areas.

He said this has been proven when upon capturing Putrajaya, the Pakatan Harapan (PH) federal government had cancelled many infrastructure development projects in the state, particularly the bridges along the Coastal Highway.

“We have decided on how we want to develop Sarawak. One of the ways is to build the bridges along the Coastal Highway. The cost is high.

“That is why we go for the alternative funding approach where we put money in our Development Bank of Sarawak (DBOS) so that it can give out loans to the state government to carry out these infrastructure development projects.

“The RM13 billion Coastal Road we pay back RM3 billion each year, and in four years we can pay off that loan,” Abang Johari was speaking during the Batang Rambungan Bridge earth breaking ceremony here this morning.

He also took pride in the recently tabled 2020 State Budget, where emphasis was given on development, unlike the other states in Malaysia.

“More than 60 per cent were allocated for development while the rest for operation. No other state in Malaysia is like that. We can because of our wisdom in managing our funds,” said Abang Johari.

Because of that, he assured that the state government will make sure that the Coastal Road project including the construction of seven bridges and three missing link roads along that road will be completed by 2025 for the benefit of the rural people along the coastal belt of the state.

Meanwhile, Assistant Minister of Infrastructure and Ports Development Datuk Julaihi Narawi said the RM98.5 million Batang Rambungan Bridge is expected to be completed on Dec 16, 2022.

He said the project involves the construction of about 560 metres long two-lane single carriageway cable stayed bridge over Batang Rambungan comprising of

320-metre cable stayed span, 80-metre approach span on Kuching side and 160-metre approach span on Lundu side.

Additionally, Julaihi said the cost also included the construction of about 255 metres long Kuching side and 560 metres long Lundu side two-lane single carriageway approach roads to Public Works Department (JKR) R5 geometric standard with road side drains, road furniture, guardrails and other facilities.

“Once completed, the bridge would provide a seamless alternative connection from Kuching City to Lundu Town via existing Lundu-Sampadi road.

“Long queues at ferry points will only be a history and the rakyat (people) living along the Lundu-Sampadi road will no longer have to take a long detour to travel to Kuching at night as the bridge would provide an uninterrupted 24-hour access to Kuching,” Julaihi said.

According to a press statement from the state JKR, the superintending officer for the project is the Unit Head for the Coastal Road and Second Trunk Unit (CSTRU) of JKR Sarawak.

The project management consultant is Opus Consultant (M) Sdn Bhd, project consultant is Jurutera Minsar Consult Sdn Bhd, and the contractor for the proposed Batang Rambungan Bridge is Precious Credence JV Ghezhouba Sdn Bhd, the statement added.