# S'wak begins digital economic strategy

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KUCHING: Sarawak is forging ahead with its digital economy strategy by rolling out several projects currently in the early stages of their implementation.

Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg said one such initiative was an online identification system called Sarawak ID, which enabled the public to use state government online services.

"Sarawak ID is the first step towards a service-based, people-centric government.

"Twenty services are now online. Sarawak ID users benefit from the ease of access to these services.

"In the near future, more innovative, personalised and seamless services will be introduced," he said when opening the International Digital Economy Conference Sarawak 2019 at Borneo Convention Centre Kuching yesterday.

Sarawak ID has 208,644 registered users as of July 1.

Abang Johari said the state government also introduced the Sarawak Pay e-wallet application for e-commerce purposes.

He said Sarawak Pay was not profit-oriented but aimed at the economic well-being of the state's under-served rural community.

As of June 30, Sarawak Pay has 91,640 registered users with transactions amounting to RM35mil.

"The target is 150,000 users by year-end," the Chief Minister said.

In addition, he said the Old Kuching Smart Heritage project was aimed at safeguarding the city's historical heritage via technology.

It will use information technology to create a smart community where everyone is involved in heritage preservation.

"Once everything is in place, Old Kuching Smart Heritage will change the way we experience Kuching's heritage," he said.

Abang Johari also defended the state's digital economy strategy, saying that Sarawak could not afford to be left behind in growth that could benefit the people.

"Either we push ahead in new research areas or we will always be a follower without being able to bring much progress to our people," he said.