



برونى دارالسلام

Brunei Darussalam

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Royal speech new Islamic year 1430 HM: Call to raise nation's self-sufficiency rate in agriculture



PHOTO: RAMLI TENGAH

His Majesty delivers a *titah* to mark the new Islamic Year 1430.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 28 – A call was made by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam to raise the rate of self-sufficiency such as in the field of agriculture which is in line with our growth and needs.

His Majesty stated this in his *titah* (royal speech) marking the new Islamic year 1430 which was telecasted through radio and television nationwide.

His Majesty further said that we will move continuously to improve our living standard that is suitable with our goal to achieve zero-poverty.

His Majesty also spoke about leaders within all government agencies where they need to be more aware of current developments whether it is related to their daily tasks or much bigger than that.

The new Islamic year is celebrated throughout the nation every year such as through mass prayers and religious talks. The Islamic calendar is based on 12 lunar months in a year. Its first year was during the emigration of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) from Mecca to Medina.

Brunei-Pakistan signs Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation

BERAKAS, November 20 – Bilateral relation between Brunei Darussalam and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan was further strengthened with the signing of an 'Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income – DTA'.

The agreement, among others serves to lessen the burden on tax on companies when operating in the other country and rates of Withholding Tax are also limited for companies and individuals when conducting business in either country.

Present as signatories on behalf of the Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was Awang Haji Bahrin bin Abdullah, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance; and his counterpart was His Excellency Major General (Rtd) Syed Haider Jawed,



PHOTO: ABULLAH HAJI AWANG DAMIT

The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance (left) and Pakistan's High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam (right) during the agreement's signing ceremony.

Pakistan's High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam.

The signing ceremony took place at the Ministry of Finance.

Brunei Darussalam so far has signed

DTA with the United Kingdom, Republic of Indonesia, Republic of Singapore, People's Republic of China, Laos, Republic of Viet Nam, the Kingdom of Bahrain and Oman.

Sultan Bolkiah or famously known as 'Nakhoda Ragam' was the fifth Sultan of Brunei who reigned from 1485 - 1524. Under his reign, Brunei expanded into an empire.



Mausoleum of Sultan Bolkiah in Kota Batu.

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His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received in audience at the Istana Nurul Iman from:



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- ① The Deputy Chief Minister of Sabah, Yang Berhormat Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Yahya Hussin on November 15.
- ② His Excellency Dr. Lee Boon Yang, the Minister of Information, Communications and the Arts of the Republic of Singapore on November 29.
- ③ The heads of delegations from ASEAN countries and Japan of the Ship for South East Asian Youth Programme (SSEAYP) 2008 on November 8.
- ④ His Excellency Richard Woolcott as Special Envoy to the Prime Minister of Australia, The Honourable Kevin Michael Rudd on December 6.
- ⑤ His Royal Highness Raja Muda Perak Darul Ridzuan, Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah ibni Duli Yang Maha Mulia Sultan Azlan Muhibbuddin Shah on December 20.

PHOTOS BY: PG. HAJI BAHAR PG. HAJI OMAR
MASRI OSMAN
AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGAH
MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN
RAMLI TENGAH

Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha received audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman from:



❶ Madam Ibtisam Hassan 'Abdallah, the spouse of His Excellency Sayyid Fakhri bin Mohammed bin Said Al-Said, the Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Brunei Darussalam on November 8.

❷ Mrs. Ibtisam Abdurkader Bader Al-Mutawa, the spouse of His Excellency Ghassan Mohammed Abdurrahman Al-Dowaisan, the Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Brunei Darussalam on November 8.

❸ Her Excellency Malai Hajah Halimah binti Malai Yussof, the Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam to the Republic of Philippines; Dayang Hajah Latifah binti Haji Tudin, the spouse of His Excellency Haji Abdul Razak bin Haji Mohd. Hussaini, the newly-appointed High Commissioner

of Brunei Darussalam to the People's Republic of Bangladesh; Dayangku Salina binti Pengiran Haji Alli, the spouse of His Excellency Awang Haji Adnan bin Haji Mohd. Jaafar, the newly-appointed High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam to Australia on November 8.

❹ Madam Daw Nang Lao Ngin, the spouse of His Excellency Thura Thet Oo Maung, the Ambassador of Myanmar to Brunei Darussalam on December 9.

PHOTOS BY: HAJI MOHD. YUSOF MOHD. YASSIN
HERNIE SULLANA HAJI OTHMAN
RAMLI TENGAH

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office received audiences at Istana Nurul Iman from:



❶ Brunei Darussalam's newly-appointed High Commissioner to Bangladesh, His Excellency Awang Haji Abd Razak bin Haji Mohd Hussaini; Brunei Darussalam's newly-appointed High Commissioner to Australia, His Excellency Awang Haji Adnan bin Haji Mohd Jaafar; Brunei Darussalam's newly-appointed Ambassador to Philippines, Her Excellency Malai Hajah Halimah binti Malai Yussof on November 4.

❷ The Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Mr. Ghassan Mohammed Abdurrahman Al-Dowaisan on November 10.

❸ The Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Sayyid Fakhri bin Mohammed bin Said Al-Said on November 10.

❹ The newly-appointed Ambassador of Republic of Korea to Brunei Darussalam,

His Excellency Kim Dae-Sik on November 12.

❺ The Honourable Alan Griffin, the Minister of Veterans' Affairs of Australia on December 11.

PHOTOS BY: MASRI OSMAN
RAMLI TENGAH

His Majesty presents prizes to 9th BISAM winners



PHOTO: ABDULLAH HAJI AWANG DAMIT

His Majesty participates in the VVIP Novelty Shooting Competition at the 9th BISAM.

TUTONG, November 6 - His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the Minister of Defence and Supreme Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) graced the closing ceremony of the 9th Brunei International Shooting Skill at Arms Meet (BISAM) held at Gallery 1 Binturan Shooting Range.

Accompanying His Majesty was His Royal Highness Prince General Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office.

His Majesty's itinerary began at the Briefing Room at Gallery 1 of the Secretariat Building. Prior to the briefing, His Majesty was first introduced to the Chief of Defence Forces, Chiefs of Defence Staff and

Representatives, Ambassadors, High Commissioners of participating countries, representatives of participating countries and members of the main organising committee.

His Majesty also participated in the VVIP Novelty Shooting Competition.

His Majesty then presented the medals for the Team Snap Section Match, Solidarity Rifle Falling Plate, VVIP Pistol Shooting, BISAM major trophies, Overall GPMG Team, Overall Pistol Team and Overall Rifle Team trophy and the 9th BISAM overall champion.

This year's 9th BISAM championship title was once again won by Indonesia based on the most aggregate points.

Health Promotion Centre officially opens

BERAKAS, November 13 - In its effort to promote health awareness for the community, a Health Promotion Centre has been established.

It was officially opened by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam during a work visit to the centre based at the Commonwealth Drive in Berakas.

The new building which cost an estimated US\$7.6 million to build is contributed by the Royal Dutch Shell under the initiative of the Ministry of Health.

During the working visit, His Majesty toured around the centre which included the oral section where it shows the proper method of oral hygiene and care; the food and safety section where healthy food groups, for nutritional values are among the items exhibited; physical activities section where it features selected popular

arcade games that is beneficial in a form of dance exercise; tobacco control section; resource centre; Weight Management Clinic; studio rooms; and its administration work space.

The setting up of the Health Promotion Centre will be beneficial for the community as it has interactive activities and interesting exhibition that will make a visit worthwhile and educational. Through this centre, it is hoped that the community will be more aware of the importance of practising a healthy lifestyle.



PHOTO: AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGAH

His Majesty during a tour at the oral hygiene and care.

Ministry of Home Affairs receives royal visit



PHOTO: HAJI MOHD. YUSOF MOHD. YASSIN

His Majesty during a visit to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 13 - The Ministry of Home Affairs received an unscheduled visit by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam based at the Secretariat Building and its new building situated in the heart of the capital.

During the visit, His Majesty visited the Local Authority and Community Unity Section and the Civil Entertainment Control, Publication and Public Relations Section which are situated at the Secretariat Building.

His Majesty also visited the new ministry's building at Jalan James Pearce.

Through this visit, the caring monarch took a closer look at the daily operations of the ministry and interacts with its staff members.



His Majesty in a group photo with other leaders of APEC.

Brunei ready to contribute to regional economic integration

LIMA, PERU, November 23 – Brunei Darussalam with its existing ability will continue to contribute to the regional economic integration in the APEC region and will widen its multilateral trade system.

These were stated by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the Retreat II session held at Peru's Ministry of Defence Convention Centre.

In this context, His Majesty hopes that the financial crisis will not affect technical assistance and the capacity-building programs organised by APEC. According to His Majesty, these programs are vital for developing countries like Brunei Darussalam in assisting efforts towards enhancing a more efficient trade.

With that His Majesty welcomes efforts by Australia who are willing

to host the Ministerial Meeting on Structural Reform. According to His Majesty, in fields like capacity building and sharing of experiences are beneficial for everyone.

His Majesty also said that members of the economies must work together in the bid to achieve the Bogor Declaration and enhance a more organised efforts towards the regional economic integration.

His Majesty and the President of Peru held bilateral meeting



His Majesty during a meeting with the President of Peru.

LIMA, PERU, November 21 - A bilateral meeting was held between His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam with the President of the Republic of Peru, His Excellency Alan Garcia Perez at the Government Palace.

At the meeting, both leaders discussed the efforts towards strengthening bilateral relationship and the agendas that will be focused in the 16th Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' Summit that will commence from November

22 to 23.

His Majesty is in Peru to attend the APEC meeting held at the Peru's Ministry of Defence Convention Centre.

Brunei Darussalam and Peru established diplomatic ties in June 1990. Both countries are the members of the United Nations of Organisation (UN), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), World Trade Organisation (WTO), World Health Organisation (WHO) and APEC.

His Majesty attends APEC

LIMA, PERU, November 23 – His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam attended the 16th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) held in Lima, Peru.

His Majesty arrived in Lima on November 21 where he was received by His Excellency Antonio Brack, Peru's Minister of Environment.

At the 16th APEC meeting, His Majesty with other leaders of APEC attended the Retreat I Session, a dialogue with the APEC Business Advisory Council and attended a Gala Dinner and Cultural Performance. These took place on November 22.

While on November 23, His Majesty attended the Retreat II Session, APEC leaders' official photo session where His Majesty with other leaders of APEC wore a poncho which is a traditional attire of Peru; and the official closing declaration. His Majesty then attended a luncheon hosted by the President of Peru held at Government Palace.

His Majesty left Peru for Honolulu, Hawaii for a three-day working visit on November 23.

PHOTOS BY: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN

His Majesty meets the President of Colombia

LIMA, PERU, November 22 - His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam held a bilateral meeting with the President of Colombia, His Excellency Alvaro Uribe at the Double Tree El-Pardo.

During the meeting, both leaders exchanged ideas on global issues.

Brunei Darussalam and Colombia established diplomatic ties in 1992.



His Majesty discusses global issues during a meeting with the President of Colombia.



His Majesty at a dialogue with the APEC Business Advisory Council.

Facts on APEC

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation or APEC is the premier forum for facilitating economic growth, cooperation, trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. It was established in 1989 to further enhance economic growth and prosperity for the region and to strengthen the Asia-Pacific community.

APEC comprise of 21 member economies which are Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, the United States and Viet Nam.

APEC accounts for approximately 40.5 per cent of the world's population, approximately 54.2 per cent of world GDP and about 43.7 per cent of world trade.

Brunei Darussalam officially joined APEC in November 1989 and hosted the APEC meeting in 2000 with the theme 'Delivering to the Community'. At this meeting, leaders agreed to adopt the Brunei Goals to triple the internet access by 2005 and to ensure all groups within an economy to have access to the internet by 2010.

More information on APEC are available at www.apec.org

His Majesty on working visit to Hawaii

HONOLULU, HAWAII, November 25 - His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was in Honolulu, Hawaii for a three-day working visit which started on November 23.

During the working visit, His Majesty visited United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) headquarters at Camp H.M. Smith; and paid an 'office call' to the Deputy Commander of USPACOM, Lieutenant General Douglas M. Fraser.

His Majesty proceeded to a briefing on the USPACOM's mission; and took a closer look at its Joint Operation Centre. From USPACOM, His Majesty then visited the Boathouse

Museum where this museum exhibits photos on the destruction of Pearl Harbour that took place on December 7, 1941. These visits took place on November 24.

While on November 25, His Majesty visited Hickam Air Force Base. Here, His Majesty took a closer look at 'C-17 Simulator Facility'. His Majesty was given a briefing on the mission of 'C-17 Simulator' presented by Lieutenant Colonel Casey Eaton from the 535th Airlift Squadron.

His Majesty ended his visit to Hawaii with a visit to Asia Pacific Security Studies Centre located at Honolulu City.



His Majesty at an 'office call' to the Deputy Commander of USPACOM during a visit to the H.M. Smith Camp, Hawaii.



His Majesty during a visit to Asia Pacific Security Studies Centre.



His Majesty visits Boathouse Museum that exhibits photos on the destruction of Pearl Harbour that took place on December 7, 1941.



His Majesty takes a closer look at 'C-17 Simulator Facility' at Hickam Air Force Base.

PHOTOS BY: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN

Brunei celebrates *Hari Raya Aidiladha*

KIARONG, December 8 – His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam joined scores of Muslims performing the *Sunnat Hari Raya Aidiladha* prayers at Jame' Asr' Hassanil Bolkiah.

Also present were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen.

Soon after, His Majesty and the royal entourage proceeded to the *Korban* ceremony near the mosque's parking bay. At the ceremony, the monarch consented to personally slaughter one of the seven goats and 46 cows that were His Majesty's contribution

for the ceremony. A total of 14 goats and 46 cows were contributed by His Majesty for the *Korban* ceremony.

A total of 2,216 people in Brunei Muara District, 578 in Tutong District, 775 in Belait District and 238 in Temburong District received the contribution.

Korban refers to an animal that is slaughtered in the time of *Dhuha* or in the morning.

According to *Syariah* or Islamic law, *Korban* is defined as an animal that is slaughtered on *Hari Raya Aidiladha*



His Majesty and male members of the royal family joined scores of Muslims for the Aidiladha prayer.

and on days of *Tasyrik*, that is on the 11, 12 and 13 of Zulhijjah.

PHOTO: HATRAL HAZMI ABD. HAMID



Bali Democracy Forum promotes peace and understanding

PHOTOS: AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGAH



His Majesty delivers a *titah* at the Bali Democracy Forum held at the Republic of Indonesia.

BALI, INDONESIA, December 10 – The Bali Democracy Forum brings many countries together to promote peace and understanding by working towards common objectives.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said at the inaugural session of the Bali Democracy Forum at the Grand Hyatt, Bali, the Republic of Indonesia.

His Majesty was accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Forum was attended by Heads of State and Government, and Ministers from ASEAN, the Asia-Pacific, South and Central Asia and the Middle East and opened by His Excellency Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the President of the Republic of Indonesia.

As one of the four Heads of

Government attending the Forum, His Majesty delivered a statement congratulating President Yudhoyono on bringing many countries together to promote peace and understanding by working towards common objectives.

His Majesty stated that the Forum provided an excellent opportunity for Leaders and Ministers to exchange ideas and share experiences on ways to promote good governance and the rule of law.

His Majesty welcomed the positive approach to global crisis such as food and energy problems and the financial crisis, implicit in the forum.

His Majesty said that globalisation should not be viewed as the cause of these problems but instead, as a solution, which provided opportunities for governments to meet and work together to face these new challenges successfully.

In noting the many different systems of government represented at the Forum, His Majesty stated that this forms the "Social Contract" defined by the work of all governments and stressed the importance of upholding such a contract.

In describing what the contract inferred for the Government of Brunei Darussalam, His Majesty identified health care to all; good education; easy personal access to government and its departments and agencies; the rule of law applying equally to everyone; and respect for each individual, family and community, whatever their background, culture or

faith.

His Majesty added the importance of economic development in the form of employment, jobs, careers and future prospects.

His Majesty went on to say that this was what the Government of Brunei Darussalam is trying to achieve through its thirty year national vision or "wawasan" and its related projects and programmes.

The Government's efforts to achieve all this, His Majesty stated, were linked to the Millennium Development Goals which provided a strong regional and world view, promoting respect and understanding for every other country and government.

The Opening Session of the Forum was followed by a Lunch for the Heads of State and Government, Ministers and Heads of Delegations attending the Forum, hosted by His Excellency the President of Indonesia.



His Majesty and the President of Indonesia at a luncheon in conjunction with the forum.

His Majesty graces new Islamic year 1430 Hijrah

KIARONG, December 28 – Brunei Darussalam celebrated the Islamic new calendar 1430 Hijrah on December 28 which coincided with 1st of Hijrah 1430 (Islamic year).

A ceremony to mark the event was held at Jame' 'Asr Hassanil Bolkiaah in Kampong Kiarong.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam graced the event. Also present were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik.

The highlight of the event was the announcement of the Anugerah Tokoh Ugama/Jasawan Ugama dan Bakti Hijrah for 1430 Hijrah.

The Anugerah Tokoh Ugama/Jasawan Ugama was given to three recipients. They were Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Setia Negara Pengiran

(Dr.) Haji Mohd. Yusof; Yang Berhormat Pehin Jawatan Dalam Seri Maharaja Dato Seri Utama (Dr.) Haji Awang Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri and Yang Dimulikan Pehin Orang Kaya Laila Wijaya Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abdul Aziz.

Each recipient received \$15,000.00, a certificate for appreciation, a souvenir and a free medical care in a first class ward in any government hospitals.

Meanwhile, the Anugerah Bakti Hijrah were awarded to

Awang Haji Abdul Kadir bin Awang dan Awang Haji Tahir bin Haji Jaafar.

Each recipients received \$10,000.00, a certificate of appreciation, a souvenir, and free medical care in a first class ward in



His Majesty presents the award to Yang Berhormat Pehin Jawatan Dalam Seri Maharaja Dato Seri Utama (Dr.) Haji Awang Mohd. Jamil Al-Sufri.

any government hospitals.

This is an annual celebration where this year's theme is 'Kedewasaan Bernegara Dengan Zikir'.

24th Girl Guides Day

Establish strategic measures in line with changes of time



Her Majesty presents an award to one of the members of the association.

JERUDONG, November 2 – All members of the Brunei Darussalam Girl Guides Association were urged to continue with great determination to establish

strategic measures that would enable the association to fulfill regional or international demands according to the changes of time and methods.

Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha stated the matter at the 24th Girl Guides Day 2008 celebration held at the Royal Berkshire Hall, Royal Brunei Polo and Riding Club.

Her Majesty also expressed her happiness in knowing that the association has started its efforts in implementing several integrated development programs. Her Majesty believed that these measures would successfully inculcate spirit of unity among its members. These program,

said Her Majesty, must reflect the association's mature and concern leadership who would always like to see the association to be active in playing its role and adhere to volunteers' principles through its community and charitable works.

The Brunei Darussalam Girl Guides Association was first introduced in Brunei Darussalam on January 1, 1951. Since then, the association has been acknowledged internationally as it became a full member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in 1996. Its members are categorised into age groups which include Brownie and Girl Guide.

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiaah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam sent congratulatory messages to:

- ① His Excellency Barack H.Obama on the occasion of his appointment as the new President of the United States of America on November 5.
- ② His Excellency Norodom Sihamoni, King of Cambodia, and Prime Minister His Excellency Hun Sen in conjunction with Cambodia's 55th Independence Day on November 9.
- ③ The President of United Arab Emirates and the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, His Royal Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan; and his Deputy President, Prime Minister of United Arab Emirates and the Ruler of Dubai, His Highness Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum on the occasion of the United Arab Emirates' 37th National Day on December 2.
- ④ The President of Lao People's Democratic Republic, His Excellency Choummalay Sayasone; and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Bouasone Boupavanh on the occasion of the republic's 33rd National Day on December 2.
- ⑤ His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of the Kingdom of Thailand on the occasion of His Majesty's 81st Birthday on December 5.
- ⑥ His Excellency Prime Minister Abihisit Vejjajiva of Thailand on occasion of his election as the 27th Prime Minister of Thailand on December 17.
- ⑦ His Royal Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani. The Emir of Qatar; and His Excellency Sheikh Hamad bin Tassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, Qatar's Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs on occasion of 37th Qatar's National Day on December 18.
- ⑧ His Majesty Emperor Akihito of Japan and His Excellency Taro Aso, the Prime Minister of Japan in conjunction with 75th birthday anniversary of Emperor Japan on December 23.

Royal call to uphold Islamic literature

BERAKAS, November 5 - Islamic literature represents the literary works that support the co-existence between mankind, the universe and The Creator. For that reason, Islamic literature and art is not only beautiful to hear and behold, but more so, its intricate artwork has the ability to capture the heart whilst also bringing enlightenments or '*Hidayah*'.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office said these in his *sabda* at the Islamic Literature Award ceremony held at the International Convention Centre.

Accompanying His Royal Highness was His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik.

According to His Royal Highness, lately, there have been differences between the Islamic and non-Islamic worlds, where Islam has been linked to sinister elements. There have been literatures by Western authors who have attributed this to being clashes of civilisations. The truth in this analysis has yet to be ascertained, however what has occurred is that these differences have brought about tensions particularly where non-Muslim authors have published literatures on Islam, without the benefit of a true

understanding of Islam.

"In this respect, the effect and initiative of the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkhiah Foundation to perpetuate Islamic civilisation by encouraging the creation of Islamic literature is indeed very relevant," said His Royal Highness.

His Royal Highness expressed his appreciation to Brunei local writers, particularly the writers of Islamic literature, for being able to carry on this treasured heritage whilst at the same time working hard to raise the quality of Islamic literature in the country to a level on par with neighboring countries in the region.

In the *sabda*, His Royal Highness also announced that Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Muhammad Jamalul Alam, is recognised as the "Tokoh Sasterawan Islam Brunei" (Eminent Islamic Scholar of Brunei) and Al-Marhum Pengiran Shahbandar Mohd Salleh ibni Pengiran Sharmayuda as the "Pelopor Kesusasteraan Moden Brunei" (Pioneer of Modern Literature of Brunei) as consented by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, and based upon the recommendations from the



His Royal Highness presents the award to Pehin Siraja Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Awang Haji Yahya.

Appraisal Panel for the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkhiah Foundation Islamic Literature Award.

The other highlights of the event was the announcement of the winner of the Islamic Literature Award.

Pehin Siraja Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Awang Haji Yahya or better known as Yahya MS in literary field won the award with his poetry collection entitled "Perjalanan Terakhir Anakku Yang Hilang".

His Royal Highness presented the grand prize of \$15,000 in cash and a plaque to Pehin Dato Ustaz Awang Haji Yahya.

Crown Prince: Civil servants must rise up to challenges

BERAKAS, November 11 - Members of the civil service were reminded to be progressive in fulfilling the expectations of their customers, always be sensitive and ready to manage situations with proper planning and effective implementation.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office stated these in his *sabda* at the 15th Civil Service Day celebrations held at the Plenary Hall of the International Convention Centre (ICC).

His Royal Highness added that members of the civil service should also be unsullied, where the observance of honorable values is considered the most crucial fundamental for achieving success in the agenda of a nation that adheres to principles of transparency and accountability.

Representing the government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-

Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the civil service plays an important role in the development and progress of the people and the country.

His Royal Highness added that the government has provided a significant amount of expenditure in order to continue enhancing the quality of the civil service by developing various forms of infrastructure and facilities.

Such efforts will continue to strengthen the capability of the entire civil service in order to provide effective and caring services.

At the ceremony, His Royal Highness also presented the Civil Service Excellent Award (ACPA) 2008 to the winners. A total of nine from 12 ministries joined ACPA comprising of 21 groups.

His Royal Highness also presented certificates to more than 1,011 pensioners who have retired from the civil service.



His Royal Highness delivers a *sabda* at the 15th Civil Service Day celebrations.

Crown Prince on work visit to Wasan Paddy Field

WASAN, December 2 – His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office made a working visit to the Wasan Paddy Planting and its other agricultural projects within the area under the supervision of Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources.

His Royal Highness was received on arrival by the Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Yahya and Deputy Minister at Prime Minister's Office, Dato Seri Paduka Eusoff Agaki.

During the visit, His Royal Highness received a briefing on the Wasan paddy planting and other agricultural projects within the area by Acting Director of Agriculture, Dayang Hajah Normah Suria Hayati.

After the briefing, His Royal Highness went to the paddy planting field in Wasan which are developed by locals. With an area of 312.1 hectares, Wasan Field is gazetted as Agricultural Land. From the total area, 230 hectares are made into paddy field.

Then, His Royal Highness visited Bebuloh Paddy Field located at Mukim Pengkalan Batu, which is also gazetted as an agricultural land. With an area of 80 hectares, the paddy field has been developed by residents of Bebuloh since 2002.

His Royal Highness' itinerary also included a visit to Imang Dam. The



His Royal Highness is introduced to types of paddy.

construction of Imang Dam was completed in 1997 while the building of piping for supplying water to paddy field in Wasan and Bertumpu Field were completed in November 2007.

HRH graces Toyota Classics Vienna Operetta Orchestra Concert

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 7 - Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah graced the Toyota Classics Vienna Operetta Orchestra Concert.

The repertoire of the Vienna Operetta Orchestra consisted of a highly mix of classical music, dance and songs.

At the ceremony, Her Royal Highness presented a total of \$90,000 to three charitable organisations namely SMARTER Brunei, Learning Ladders Society and Pusat Ehsan.

The concert was organised by NBT Brunei SDN BHD, guided by the experienced conductor, Siegfried Andraschek.

ASEAN's Charter to realise ASEAN community vision

JAKARTA, December 15 – His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Zariah, attended a ceremony welcoming the Entry into Force of ASEAN Charter at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. Accompanying Their Royal Highnesses was Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Anak Mansurah Izzul Bolkiah.

Also present at the ceremony were President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the President of the Republic of Indonesia, ASEAN Foreign Ministers and their representatives,

Her Royal Highness receives UBD's book award

JERUDONG, November 17 – Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah received the award of a Book Prize for Bachelor of Arts (Public Policy and Administration Year II) during an award ceremony held at the Jerudong Polo and Country Club.

Seventeen Silver University Medals and 108 Book Prizes were handed out by the Deputy Minister of Education, Pengiran Dato Seri Setia Dr Haji Mohammad. The ceremony was held in conjunction with the 20th UBD's convocation.

The University Medal is awarded annually to UBD graduates who have shown academic excellence and exceptional qualities on the basis of leadership, active participation in student activities such as sports, welfare, religious and other activities, and participation in and promotion of community services.

Based on academic merit, the University Book Prizes are also awarded annually to the most outstanding final



Her Royal Highness receives the award from the Deputy Minister of Education.

year student in each discipline, most outstanding student in each year of study of a degree program (except final year) and the most outstanding student in the MIB (Melayu Islam Beraja) course.

Recipients of the University Medal received a token medal, while recipients of the Book Prize received B\$500. All Book Prizes were contributed by individuals and companies from the public and private sectors.

Ambassadors from ASEAN and ASEAN dialogue partner countries.

The ceremony was opened by the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr. Surin Pitsuwan and began with a minute of silence in memory of H.E. Ali Alattas, the distinguished former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and member of the Eminent Persons Group that framed the ASEAN Charter. Also during the ceremony, President Yudhono in his address highlighted the significance of the charter in the development of ASEAN.

ASEAN Charter is a constitution for the regional organisation formed

in 1967 and now comprising Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The first draft of the charter was revealed to the public on the 12th ASEAN Summit in Cebu, Philippines on January 2007.

ASEAN was formed on August 8, 1967 in an agreement deal in Bangkok. The agreement was an effort to overcome political problems and the weakness of South East Asia's Economy.

Did you know that...

- The Ministry of Communications was set up in 1984, soon after the Brunei Darussalam gained her independence.
- The departments under the ministry are the Postal Services Department, the Department of Civil Aviation, the Land Transport Department, the Ports Department, the Marine Department and Department of Telecommunications.
- Effective April 1, 2006, Department of Telecommunications has been corporatised and known as Telekom Brunei Berhad (TelBru).
- The ministry is led by a minister, Pehin Dato Dr. Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apung.

>> BRUNEI IN BRIEF

- Official name is Negara Brunei Darussalam.
- Capital is Bandar Seri Begawan.
- It is located on the north-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia.
- Land size is 5765 sq. km
- Population is estimated at 383,000 people (2006)
- It is divided into four districts – Brunei Muara, Tutong, Kuala Belait and Temburong.
- Malay is the official language but English is widely spoken.
- Islam is the official religion and it allows other religions to be practiced.
- National carrier is Royal Brunei Airlines.
- It has an equatorial climate, a uniform temperature, high humidity and heavy rainfall.

Public Warning: The trafficking of controlled drugs carries the death penalty in Brunei Darussalam

>> HOW TO GET TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM?

There are a number of ways to reach Brunei.

- By air - Brunei's national carrier, Royal Brunei Airlines travels to more than 20 destinations around the world. The airline also has worldwide office for you to book a return flight to Brunei (to know the nearest RBA's office at your place, please log to: www.bruneiair.com)

International airlines such as Singapore Airlines, Malaysia Airlines and Thai Airways also fly frequently to Brunei. Beginning July 2006, Air Asia, the Malaysia's lowest airfare carrier also has direct flight from Kuala Lumpur to Brunei.

Arrival by plane would land you to Brunei International Airport (BWN), the sole airport in the nation.

- For those who enjoy journey by sea, you can reach Brunei by boat or ferry. The main ferry terminal in Brunei is the Serasa Ferry Terminal at Muara. You can catch a ferry from Labuan, Sabah or Lawas and Sundar, both in Sarawak, a state of the neighbouring country, Malaysia. Another option is via a boat from Limbang, Sarawak which will arrive at the jetty around Jalan Residency area in the Capital.
- You would have two options of entry point to Brunei by land transport. You can enter through the Sungai Tujoh Immigration Control Post in Belait District or the Kuala Lurah Immigration Control Post in Brunei Muara District. The Sungai Tujoh Immigration Control Post in Belait is the entry point for those from Miri, Sarawak. While the Kuala Lurah Immigration Control Post is the entrance for those coming from Limbang, Sarawak; Kota Kinabalu; and Kalimantan.

Maintain a variety of partnerships

GADONG, November 25 - A call was made for nurses to participate and sustain a variety of partnerships in the bid to further their careers and ensure that their patients receive the best of care.

The call was made by Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah at the opening of the 8th International Nursing Conference 2008 held at the Rizqun International Hotel.

In terms of local development, Her Royal Highness said that Brunei is in the midst of merging the Institute of Medicine with the College of Nursing. Her Royal Highness said that she sees this initiative as an evolution process in Brunei's nursing profession in 'Pre and Post Registration Programs' where it involves both local and foreign lecturers which will ensure that their qualifications are competitive and marketable worldwide.

Her Royal Highness also expressed her appreciation with the working relationship established between College of Nursing and Kuala Lumpur Hospital where it enables students to undergo their clinical attachment programs abroad. She said that such experience and exposures are vital for the graduate's professional and personal development.

The conference, themed 'Collaboration In Care Through Partnership' outlined specific issues related to the patient's care, health practice and nursing, education development, professional issues related to the nursing and midwifery as well as research.

The conference is organised by Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah Nursing College with collaboration from Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD).



Her Royal Highness delivers a *sabda* at the 8th International Nursing Conference 2008.

PHOTO: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN

UBD's Public Outreach Programme

GADONG, November 11 - His Royal Highness Prince Muda 'Abdul Malik graced the Public Outreach Programme in conjunction with the 20th Convocation of Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD).

At the ceremony His Royal Highness took a closer look at an exhibition from several sections of UBD's services.

Public Outreach Programme for the first time is organised outside UBD's campus. The two-day exhibition is organised in order to provide clear knowledge on the programmes especially information on the entrance to the UBD.

Brunei commemorates United Nations World Remembrance Day for Road Traffic Victims

BERAKAS, November 29 - Brunei Darussalam for the first time commemorated the United Nations World Remembrance Day for Road Traffic Victims.

Present to grace the commemoration was Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna, the Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade who is also the patron of the Brunei Darussalam Road Safety Council.

The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims was started by RoadPeace in 1993. Since then it has been observed and promoted worldwide by several NGOs, including the European Federation of Road Traffic Victims (FEVR) and its associated organisations.

On 26 October 2005, the United Nations endorsed it as a global day to be observed every third Sunday in November each year.

Consumer Price Index OCTOBER, 2008

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) in October 2008 rose by 0.8 per cent over September 2008. The increase in the overall index was attributed to some prices reverting to its original levels after the Brunei Grand Sales (BGS) which was held from August 22 - October 5, 2008; and increase in prices of foods and beverages.

The cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages rose by 0.5 per cent over the previous month due to higher prices of flour, noodles, biscuits, fresh beef, frozen beef, fresh fish, milk, eggs, fresh vegetables, fresh tropical fruits and sauces and soup.

Ikan Merah, Ikan Kerapu, Sawi Putih, rice flour and spinach are among the food items which recorded notable price increase. Meanwhile food items

which showed notable price decrease are such as vegetable oil, small prawn, Ikan Puteh, and lady's fingers.

Higher prices of ready-made clothing, material for male and female and footwear led to a 7.5 per cent increase in the cost of clothing and footwear.

The cost of household goods, services and operation increased by 1.4 per cent as a result of higher prices of furniture, floor covering, household furnishings, kitchen appliances and utensils, crockery and cutlery and household operation.

The cost of communications fell by 0.1 per cent due to cheaper price of instruments including accessories.

Higher prices of toys and games

and selected holiday packages raised the cost of recreation and entertainment by 1.2 per cent.

The cost of miscellaneous goods and services went up by 0.9 per cent due to the increase in price of ladies personal care, infant care and ladies care.

The cost of housing, water and electricity and maintenance; transport; education; and medical and health remained the same.

The CPI in October 2008 was 3.6 per cent higher than that of the same month in 2007.

For the past ten months (January-October 2008) of this year, the CPI rose by 2.7 per cent compared to the same period last year.



The Minister of Development, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdullah and wife, with His Excellency Sayyid Fakhri bin Mohamed Said Al-Said, the Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to Brunei Darussalam with his spouse at a reception celebrating the 38th national day anniversary of the Kingdom on November 18.



The Second Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng and wife with the Ambassador of Thailand, His Excellency Phithak Phrombubpha, in conjunction with the 81st birthday anniversary of The King of Thailand, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej at the International Convention Centre, Berakas on December 3.



The Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Yahya and wife, with His Excellency Hashimoto Itsuo, Japanese Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam with his spouse at a reception celebrating the 75th birthday anniversary of His Majesty Emperor Akihito of Japan on December 5 at International Conventional Centre.



The Minister of Home Affairs, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Adanan and His Excellency Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Abdullah, the Ambassador of Qatar at a reception to mark the 37th National Day of Qatar held at the Empire Hotel & Country Club, Jerudong on December 18.

PHOTOS BY: HAJI MASMALEH HAJI MOHD. ALI
AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGAH

Brunei's representative to APICTA

JERUDONG, November 1 - Authority for Info-Communications Technology Industry (AiTi) of Brunei Darussalam and the Ministry of Communications conducted a souvenir presentation ceremony to the country's representative for the Asia Pacific ICT Award (APICTA) held in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia from November 12 to 16.

Present at the ceremony was the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Dr. Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar.

The recipient was Cyberuni eServices who will join Startup

Company Category; Mars Enterprise being nominated for the 'e-Logistics and Supply Chain Management'; Dayang Sarah binti Haji Abdul Motalif and Dk. Ayesha binti Pg. Haji Md. Salleh from Paduka Seri Begawan Sultan Science College for 'Secondary Student Project' category.

This is the fifth year for Brunei to participate in APICTA which designed to stimulate ICT innovation and creativity, promote economic and trade relations, facilitate technology transfer, and offer business matching opportunities via exposure to venture capitalists and investors.



Dk. Ayesha receives a souvenir from the Minister of Communications.

PHOTO: ABDULLAH HAJI AWANG DAMIT

Reading culture emphasised

SUNGAI LIANG, November 1 – The importance of reading culture was recently emphasised as the intellectual characteristics of language skills include reading, writing, listening and speaking. These characteristics are vital for the development and progress of an individual in the academic and working environment.

These were stated by the Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education, Awang Haji Suhaila at a prize and certificate awarding ceremony for a reading culture project held across primary schools in the Belait district.

He further said that the reading skills

alone possess many components such as spelling, reading fluently, correct pronunciation, comprehending, interpretation and many more.

The Deputy Permanent Secretary also said that the Ministry of Education will soon be implementing a program for reading in English known as 'Program Reading Recovery'. This program will entail phonics methods and will be carried out systematically to all schools across the nation-state.

The reading culture project is an annual project organised by principals and assistant principals in its effort to enhance its learning and teaching quality of their teachers.

MIPR committed develop shrimp farming industry

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 4 – The Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources (MIPR) will continue its efforts and is committed in developing the local shrimp farming industry particularly the 'black tiger shrimp'.

One of the measures taken is a collaboration with Integrated Aquaculture International (IAI) from the United States in developing a program focusing on black tiger shrimp.

These were stated by the Permanent Secretary at MIPR, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mohd. Hamid at the official opening of an International Workshop On Shrimp Nutrition held at Sheraton Utama Hotel.

"Our goal is to develop a technology package which includes health management, genetic selection, developed growth system,

sophisticated way of consumption, and the premium process for international market," said the Permanent Secretary.

The project is running smoothly where the laboratory and quarantine facilities for aquatic animals have succeeded in freeing F2 families of the black tiger shrimp from nine viruses and two disease syndromes. Another aspect of the program is to succeed in designing an advanced pool with water treatment, liner plastic, automatic cleaning drainage system and an efficient aerator system.

The three-day workshop is participated by more than 70 people including 40 international participants which is a collaboration between Fishery Department and Integrated Aquaculture International.

SPN 21 brings vast changes to education system

BERAKAS, November 8 – The new education system named as *Sistem Pendidikan Negara Abad 21* (SPN 21) or 21st Century Nation's Education System will bring vast changes to the existing education system.

SPN 21's concept is more towards 'fun, play and learn more' where students will be introduced to new subjects such as Year 1 to 3 students will have Science using English as medium of communications; Creative Arts and Technology; Arts and Design; and Music and Drama. The last two subjects will be available in either Malay or English streams.

While Year 4 to 6 students will be introduced to Social Studies in English stream; Creative Arts and Technology; Arts and Design; and Music and Drama. The last two subjects will be available in either Malay or English streams. While the Melayu Islam Beraja (MIB) will be delivered in the Malay

stream.

Through SPN 21, students will be exposed to the usage of the information communications technology (ICT) such as laptops in delivering their group presentations; classes will be equipped with internet facilities, and LCD projectors for e-books.

These were highlighted at a curriculum orientation briefing on SPN 21 for school principals from both the government and private schools including religious schools.

This briefing also saw a handing over of documents, framework and guidelines of SPN 21 to the principals by Datin Paduka Dayang Apsah, the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education.

SPN 21 will be carried out in phases where primary schools will be the first batch to use this system in 2009 (Year 1 to 4 students) and expected to be fully commissioned in 2011.

SSEAYP increase youths knowledge and experience

JERUDONG, November 6 – The Ship for Southeast Asian Youth Program (SSEAYP) not only provides invaluable opportunities to the participants but also enhance knowledge and experience through understanding and exchange ideas.

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Pehin Dato Dr. Haji Awang Ahmad said that through this program, the participants will also have an opportunity to learn the economy, politics, culture and social background of each country.

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports said these in the SSEAYP's 2008 welcoming ceremony held at the Royal Berkshire Ballroom, Royal Brunei Polo and Riding Club.

The minister hoped that the participants would use this program as a platform to enhance their potentials and strengthen their network within the SSEAYP participants and also during their home stay with their foster family.

SSEAYP is an exchange international youths program organised by Japan with the collaboration of ASEAN countries since 1974. Brunei Darussalam first joined this program as an observer in 1984 and fully joined the program in 1985.

AIRM, AICM strengthen ASEAN's insurance sector

GADONG, November 6 – Brunei Darussalam hosted 'The 11th ASEAN Insurance Regulators Meeting (AIRM)' and 'The 34th ASEAN Insurance Council Meeting (AICM)' held for three days from November 5 to 7 at the Rizqun International Hotel.

The meeting will discuss the topic on 'The Impact of the US Sub Prime Crisis and Inflation on ASEAN Economies'. The event was officiated by the Permanent Secretary of the Minister of Finance, Dato Paduka Haji Ali bin Apang.

This is the second time for Brunei Darussalam to host the meeting which gathers more than 100 representatives from ASEAN countries.

The Report: Brunei Darussalam 2008

JERUDONG, December 11- The book 'The Report: Brunei Darussalam 2008' is ready to be distributed worldwide. The book was officiated by the Minister of Energy at the Prime Minister Office, Pehin Major General (Rtd) Dato Haji Awang Mohammad held at the Empire Hotel and Country Club.

The second publication is the latest information on Brunei Darussalam. The book will strengthen Brunei Darussalam's profile to worldwide as a continuous effort to provide information on Brunei Darussalam.

The Prime Minister's Office with several government agencies have been discussing with Oxford Business Group (OBG) to publish the report book since April.

In the first publication, more than 65 books have been distributed worldwide. A total of 26 per cent were distributed to Europe; 24 per cent to Asia; 21 per cent Mid East and 19 per cent to United States of America while 21,000 copies distributed in the country.



PHOTO: AK. AMRULNIZAM.PG. HAJU MOHD. ALI

The Minister of Energy at the Prime Minister's Office at the launching of 'The Report: Brunei Darussalam 2008'.

Wide usage of ICT in public sector



Among the panels at the forum is the Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Ismail.

JERUDONG, November 12 – A number of government agencies have been using information communications technologies (ICT) as a new method to deliver their services.

Some of the agencies include the Department of Land Transportations whom introduced customer friendly

services by providing their customers with relevant information received through mobile phones such as reminders on their driving licenses or road taxes expiration dates. While the Department of Immigration and National Registration has already introduced the biometric passports.

Two more examples are Radio Televisyen Brunei (RTB) where it has given online services for its radio and television services; while Information Department has provided Pelita Online Harian, an electronic version of Pelita Brunei, the official government newspaper.

These were highlighted by Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Ismail, the Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office in an interview at the opening of the National Technology Forum Think Big 2008 held at The Empire Hotel & Country Club.

The Permanent Secretary further added that government officers will continue to enhance their services and at the same time meet the customer's requirements.

The one-day forum with the theme 'Innovation - Embracing New Media' is a collaboration between iCentre and Asia Inc Forum; and supported by the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Communications, Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB), Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry (AITI) and InfoComm Federation Brunei (IFB).

MINDEF, JAPEM win Government Websites Excellent Award

BERAKAS, November 12 – The Ministry of Defence and Jabatan Pembangunan Masyarakat (JAPEM) or the Department of Community Development won the inaugural Excellent Government Websites Award held in conjunction with the 15th Civil Service Day 2008.

The Ministry of Defence won the 'Ministry' category followed by Ministry of Religious Affairs in second; and the Prime Minister's Office for third place. While JAPEM won the 'Department' category followed by the Department of Economic Planning

and Development in second place; and the Institute of Public Service for third place.

This award was the first of its kind to be held as part of the Civil Service Day celebration where its objectives are to acknowledge ministries and departments that have produced informative, updated, interactive and user-friendly websites.

To ensure that this award covers both aspects of the public and private sector, the adjudicating panel were selected from various backgrounds ranging from government agencies,

public user, business entrepreneurs, academicians, students of higher learning institutions and other invited panels.

Among the aspects of evaluation were basic needs, usability, layout, content, services and innovative aspects.

This year's award was participated by nine ministries and 25 departments; and co-organised by the Department of Information and the E-Government National Centre.

Cultural performance strengthens Brunei-China ties

BERAKAS, November 21 – A cultural performance was held to further enrich and strengthen the bilateral relations between Brunei Darussalam and the People's Republic of China.

This performance took place at the International Convention Centre where it was attended by the Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Yahya and the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Brunei Darussalam, Her Excellency Tong Xiaoling.

According to Her Excellency in her welcoming speech, the performance would in the future encourage more cultural exchange between both countries.

The performance was presented by 'Lincang Minority Song' and 'Dance Ensembler' from the Yunan Province

The Minister of Industry and Primary Resources and the Ambassador of China to the country at the cultural performances.



PHOTO: AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGGAH

of China where they presented a cultural performance on 'Charming Mountains' and 'Passionate Water'.

The cultural performance was organised by the Chinese embassy with

the collaboration of Brunei's Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and Brunei-China Friendship Association.

Maritime's safety emphasised through rules and regulations

MUARA, November 27 – The safety and security of vessels, the safety of the maritime's environment and technical ethics related with crew matters, employer's responsibilities are emphasised through related maritime's rules and regulations.

Brunei Darussalam has thus so far endorsed four Acts namely; Maritime Offences (Ships and Fixed Platforms) Order, 2007; Prevention of Pollution of the Sea Order, 2005; Merchant Shipping Order, 2002; and Ports Act (Amendment) Order, 2002. A number of 23 regulations related with merchant shipping had also been endorsed.

These were stated by the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Dr. Haji Awang Abu Bakar at a ceremony to mark the World Maritime Day held at the Cruise Ship Centre Muara Port.

The Minister also said that the society must have balanced regulations that are in line with international regulations and standards in the bid to protect Brunei-registered vessels (Foreign Going Vessel) that are carrying the nation's main resource. It is also to protect passenger services using the 'Near Coastal Voyage' route with the neighbouring countries suitable with the country's policy towards protecting and enhancing the importance of the

nation's maritime surroundings.

It is also acknowledged that the shipping industry is exposed to danger, hence 'International Standards' have been implemented where it will control the safety level such as the quality of the vessels, design, cargo load limits, crews' skills and vessel's security which can be used, acknowledged and accepted by all parties.

In the local context, maritime industry plays an important role as 95 per cent of the nation's main source of economy are produced from hydrocarbon, fisheries and shipping activities.

Auto-gate immigration system

BERAKAS, December 31 - Brunei Darussalam has reached another milestone in the field of its information communication technologies (ICT) with the launching of its auto-gate immigration system.

An official launching ceremony was at the Brunei International Airport where passengers arriving on flight SQ182 from Singapore holding biometric passports making their way through the immigration clearance with the auto-gate technology were the first to use this new system.

Through the auto-gate system, biometric passports will be scanned using a passport scanner which will read the information on the chip that is in the biometric passport. Once the information has been read, the finger print of the passport holder is needed before the gate is opened for entering or exit.



The Minister of Home Affairs, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Adanan at the launching of auto-gate immigration system.

Ikan Liking

Ingredients

- *Kuasi* fish
- Dried chilli
- Tamarind
- Salt
- Sugar

Method

Clean the fish, slit open the fish and wash in a running water. Then, combine all the ingredients. Wipe on and stuffing inside the fish.

Lastly, leave to dry for about half day. The fish is ready to be served after deep frying.



Brunei participates APSSO sports

BERAKAS, November 3 – Brunei Darussalam will be participating the 2nd Asean Primary School Sport Olympiad (The 2nd APSSO) in Jakarta.

A total of 26 athletes will join five sporting events such as football, badminton, athletic, chess and table tennis which will run until November 9.

The 2nd APSSO is held at Senayan Stadium in Jakarta with 13 sports event competed.

ASEAN'S Minister of Transportation sign three agreement of cooperation

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 8 – The Minister of Transportation from ASEAN member countries signed three agreements on transportation cooperations with respective protocols.

The signing ceremony was held at Malacanang Palace and witnessed by the President of the Republic of Philippines, Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

The signing ceremony was the highlight of the 14th ASEAN's Minister of Transportation Meeting which was held in Manila from November 6 to 7.

Signing on behalf of Brunei Darussalam was the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Dr. Haji Awang Abu Bakar.

The three agreements signed were ASEAN multilateral agreement on fully free air cargo services; ASEAN multilateral agreement on air passenger services; and ASEAN draft work agreement on convenience transportation within the country.

These agreements would contribute towards realisation the Ministry of Communications `aim in enhancing the growth of civilisation industry which is positive and towards achieving ASEAN open-air towards 2015.

The next ASEAN'S Minister of Transportation meeting will be held in Viet Nam in 2009.

Halal certificate owners monitored

KUALA BELAIT, November 12 – Food eateries that have been awarded with halal certificates will be continuously monitored to ensure that the owners will always abide with the rules and regulations in owning a halal certificate.

This was stated by the head of the Halal Food Control Division from the Syariah Affairs Department, Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abd Rahman at a briefing for Halal Certificate Applicants for restaurants and food eateries owners in the Belait district.

In his briefing, he said that Brunei Darussalam has received appraisals and has become well known in other countries for being stringent and vigilant in carrying out the *syarak* and regulations stated in the Halal Meat Act (Chapter 183) introduced in 1993.

Hence, the relevant authorities will also be stringent in carrying out the Halal Certificate and Label 2005 Act.

More than 300 restaurants and food eateries owners attended the briefing where they were informed on the methods to apply for the halal certificates according to the Halal Certificate and Label 2005 Act.

Brunei to have Maritime Museum

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 20 - A new museum, Maritime Museum will soon be open for the public. A key handing-over ceremony was held on where the building is based at Kampong Pelambayan, Jalan Kota Batu.

Construction works began in December 2006 with a cost of nearly \$5 million on a 3.53 hectare piece of land.

The museum will have three galleries featuring Brunei's community and lifestyle connected with maritime; and lifestyle on Brunei waters such as *padlan* and many more.

The second gallery will showcase Brunei Darussalam's relations with other nations. While the third gallery will showcase archaeological proofs and findings on Brunei waters.

Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque's golden jubilee walkaton

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 23 – More than 800 people joined a walkaton around the capital Bandar Seri Begawan to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque.

The event started and ended at the Omar Ali Saifuddin Mosque. The walkaton was joined by the Minister of Religious Affairs, Pehin Dato Dr. Ustaz Haji Awang Mohd. Zain.

The walkaton aimed to strengthen ties among the government officers and Brunei Muara's mosque committee members. It is also one of the activities to mark the Golden Jubilee this year.

Walkaton to commemorate a renaming of BSB

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 23 – A bicycleton and walkaton as well as drawing competition were organised by Bandar Seri Begawan Municipal Department held at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar `Ali Saifuddin to commemorate the 38th anniversary of the renaming of Bandar Seri Begawan from Bandar Brunei.

Present at the event was the Minister of Home Affairs, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Adanan.

The event began with an aerobic session. The 17-kilometre bicycleton was participated by the minister, while the walkaton was participated by the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Dani.

The renaming of Bandar Brunei to Bandar Seri Begawan was held on October 4, 1970.

Sabah wins BIMP-EAGA Friendship Games 2008

BERAKAS, November 30 - Sabah won the 6th BIMP-EAGA Friendship Games 2008 with 33 gold, 15 silver and 17 bronze medals.

South Sulawesi was in second place with 13 gold, 12 silver and 10 bronze medals while Brunei Darussalam `A` won third place with 12 gold, 9 silver and 14 bronze medals.

Brunei Darussalam hosted the 6th BIMP-EAGA games from November 28 to 30 where the biannual event was participated by Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Brunei Darussalam and an invited team from Australia.

A total of seven sports event comprising athletic, aquatic, badminton, futsal, sepak takraw, pencak silat and tennis were competed.

Philippines will be hosting the 7th BIMP-EAGA Games in 2010.

Silver Jubilee National Day next year

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 2 – Brunei Darussalam will celebrate her Silver Jubilee National Day next year. Theme for the 25th National Day is `Kedewasaan Bernegara`.

The celebration which falls on February 23 will be celebrated at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium in Berakas during the daytime.

UBD join ASEAN's University Games

BERAKAS, 11 December - Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) will be participating the 14th ASEAN's University Games in Malaysia from December 13 to 21.

A total of 22 sports event will be competed in the event. UBD will send 25 athletes to compete in three events namely futsal, silat and netball.



PHOTO BY: AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD BIN AMPUAN HAJI TENGAH

Religious schools in Brunei Darussalam are under the purview of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. With the setting up of Department of Religious Affairs in 1954, a committee was set up to organise religious schools in Brunei and religious education formally began in 1956. There are currently 147 dedicated religious schools and seven Arabic schols based throuhout the nation. According to the Education Order , it shall be compulsory for a pupil professing the Islamic religion in a school to be provided with Islamic Education. 'Islamic educatuon' refers to a subject in the National Curriculum pertaining to matters relating to fardhu 'ain and fardhu kifayah.

Photo above shows students reading Al-Quran during a ceremony - Majlis Khatam Al-Quran (the completion of reading the holy-book, Al-Quran).



PHOTO BY: SAMILE BIN HAJI JAIT

Brunei Darussalam as of 2008 has 250 schools comprising of both the government and private academic institutions. There are 120 government-run primary schools followed by 30 secondary; seven technical; one nursing college; one institute; and two universities. while there are 84 private-run schools comprising of both primary and secondary levels followed with four technical and vocational; and one institue.

Photo above shows a group of male pupils in group discussion.