



بروني دارالسلام

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

newsletter

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STAY DEVOUT TO ENJOY DIVINE GRACE

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said Muslim citizens should remain close to Allah by being pious.

Highlighting an instance that projected Allah's omnipotence, His Majesty said: "The spectre of widespread crises and chaos caused Muslims to celebrate this year's aidil adha with less enthusiasm. The world appears constricted, as everyone is unable to break free from such predicament. Fortunately by the grace of Allah the compassionate and the merciful, Muslims still have a way to overcome difficulties in the midst of confusion by being devout."

This year's aidil adha (a religious



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to donate meat to one of 20 recipients selected from Brunei Darussalam's four districts. This year's aidil adha coincided with the country's national day celebration.

festival marking the culmination of the Haj) coincided with Brunei Darussalam's national day celebration. Adjustment was duly made: the national day was held on February 25th instead of February 23rd.

The royal address called titah, announced on February 22nd reflected the double festivity atmosphere. "Muslims worldwide perform the aidil adha worship on Zulhijah 10th of the Islamic calendar, while those in the holy city of Mecca continue to perform the obligatory religious sequence leading to the Haj."

The sovereign said that these two acts of piety bring Muslims closer to Allah and give a sense of being

complete. "Those who are complete and close to Allah are recipients of His grace," he said.

Their spiritual well being, said His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, is complemented with inner contentment. "With the blessing of Allah, devout Muslims will continue to enjoy divine grace and protection," he said.

"Let us pray so we may all be cared for and protected by Allah the compassionate and the merciful, especially those pilgrims who are currently in Mecca," said the sovereign.

Tinged with concern, His Majesty

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Royalty attends Aidiladha gathering



Her Majesty The Raja Isteri (centre), Her Royal Highness The Pengiran Isteri (seated on the left side of Her Majesty) and members of the royal family consent to attend the aidil adha social gathering organised by the Brunei Darussalam Women's Council.

Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajah Mariam consented to attend the aidil adha social gathering organised by the Brunei Darussalam Women's Council – the association's first ever.

The Council's chairperson, Datin Hajah Masni binti Haji Mohd Ali and members of its management committee received the royalty upon arrival at the International Convention Centre on February 25th.

Their Royal Highnesses Princess Hajah Majeedah Nuurul Bolqiah, Princess Hajah Hafizah Sururul Bolqiah and Princess Hajah Noor Ehsani were part of the royal entourage.

The highlight of the gathering was a special talk delivered by Datuk Dr Haji Mohd Fadzilah bin Kamsah. The talk described the centrality of women in strengthening the family. It underscored the communication scenario as practised in marriage and women's significance from the Islamic perspective.

Religious talk that touched on family awareness was designed to enhance the role of women in establishing a happy, harmonious and religious



Members of an NGO called BAKANITA perform the dikir for the royal guests. Dikir is a group poetry recital that lyrically praises Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

family for the purpose of nurturing a devout community.

Members of an NGO called BAKANITA performed the dikir for the royal guests. Dikir is a group poetry recital that lyrically praises Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

DIVIDEND GROWTH ENCOURAGING

The Tabung Amanah Pekerja, TAP (employee trust fund) posted its 2001 gross revenue from investment worth B\$17.3 million. After deductions the net value stood at B\$13.6 million, payable as dividend to TAP's 70,000 account holders. It paid a B\$11.9 million dividend for 66,000 account holders the previous year. TAP currently holds a B\$550 million investment fund.

TAP's chairman, Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Awang Hussain bin Pehin Dato

Haji Awang Mohd Yusof made the announcement on February 16th.

Its news release said TAP registered a six per cent membership increase in 2001. Seventy-four per cent of members are under 40, bringing contribution worth B\$307 million. 2001's total contribution was worth B\$511 million: the previous figure was B\$420 million.

1,529 account holders made withdrawals in 2001 totalling B\$8.6 million, a seven per cent increase compared to B\$6 million drawn out by

1,432 persons the year before.

Eighty-three per cent of the 2001 withdrawals, totalling B\$7.4 million was made by age group 50-55 year olds. The remainder was divided into specific categories: 0.5 per cent for housing worth B\$142,000; seven per cent for inheritance claims worth B\$640,000; and one per cent for disability claims worth B\$160,000.

TAP is a member of the ASEAN social security association (ASSA) since April 20th, 2001.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to deliver the titah (royal address) during the Golden Jubilee celebration of the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddin College on March 7th. The sovereign studied for his fourth year secondary education at this college in 1964.

Education should be students' top priority - HM

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam frequently said that students are Brunei's most precious assets. "Consequently, my government will continue to provide opportunities to enable students to acquire as much knowledge as possible at home and from abroad," he said.

The sovereign mentioned the centrality of knowledge in his opening address (called titah) during the launch of the Golden Jubilee celebration for the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddin College (SOAS) on March 7th at the college auditorium. The sovereign's entourage comprised His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah and members of the royal family.

"Throughout its 50-year existence, the college endured a number of bitter-sweet instances that have enabled it to attain developments, especially in education," he said. As Brunei's oldest college, the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddin college has proven its merit. SOAS College, he said has produced high-

calibre people: some have become prominent corporate figures and the rest are dedicated members of the country's workforce. As a symbol of Brunei's knowledge civilisation, the sovereign said that SOAS College serves as the country's proud landmark too.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to award a commemorative certificate to Pengiran Dato Haji Sharifuddin bin Pengiran Haji Yusof (right), one of the ten pioneer students of the college. Pengiran Dato Haji Sharifuddin is one of Brunei's prominent businessmen. During its inception in 1951, the college was previously called the State English School and enrolled 20 students; half were sent to study in Kuching, Sarawak. In 1955 the school was upgraded to institution of higher learning status and renamed the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddin College (SOAS).



calibre people: some have become prominent corporate figures and the rest are dedicated members of the country's workforce. As a symbol of Brunei's knowledge civilisation, the sovereign said that SOAS College serves as the country's proud landmark too.

"The purpose of such recollection is to encourage today's students to continue to place education as top priority," said His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam. The sovereign said that nowadays we are faced with aggressive onslaught of social elements affecting the whole world, where students are the main targets. "We need students with high morals who can help not only themselves, but also the community and the country," he said.

"I hope students not only keep themselves away from such elements but also to be more active in the fight against the undesired elements, as a contribution to the country," he said. The sovereign said one's relationship

with Allah should be nurtured continuously. One may become recipient of His grace by being devout, he said.

"The country will not ask more than that from students. But the country will provide more than what they need," said the sovereign. Through the Ministry of Education, the government has supplied computers to primary and secondary schools throughout the country. The purpose was to provide students early exposure so that they will not be left behind in the use of information and communication technology (ICT), which is rapidly developed worldwide.

His Majesty said that not all countries in the world could give such provision. Students should be thankful for being given such facility, he said. SOAS College now has facilities such as a newly built fully equipped science laboratory, a library, a prayer hall, an air conditioned auditorium and the like.

In areas of education, he said, SOAS College has opened classes for lower

* Continued on centrepager



Left: Class of 1964: His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam (centre) and his former classmates recall amusing instances of their school days. "I am thankful to Allah for enabling me to meet once again my former teachers and former students comprising those who are now government employees and ones who have retired," he said.



Left: His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to receive briefing about the history behind the photographs displayed at the college Heritage Gallery. Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajah Mariam, who studied at the SOAS College in 1973, is the gallery's benefactor.

Right: His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to sign the plaque of the college's Golden Jubilee commemorative arch following the official opening ceremony.



Above: His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to meet students during his visits to classrooms.

Royal Highness The Pengiran Isteri consents to visit pre-university pupils studying English and computer proficiency. Her Royal Highness next witnessed demonstration of international cooking by teachers and students who were led by Mrs Irene Hansen Reeder.

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Above: Her Royal Highness The Pengiran Isteri consents to inspect the military hardware on display.

Left: Her Royal Highness The Pengiran Isteri consents to receive briefing by a representative from a government agency that jointly organises the college jubilee event.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to meet the Police cadets comprising the college students. For extra curricular activities, the college offers its students membership of the military cadet, the Scouts association, the Red Crescent Society and several types of martial arts training.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to witness a display of school uniforms worn by male students of the college. The school uniform has changed several times throughout the college's 50-year existence.

expertise such as medicine, engineering, the law, economics, architecture, teaching and the like, said the sovereign.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam next consented to present commemorative certificates to ten recipients. The recipients are pioneer pupils of the SOAS College who enrolled for studies in 1951, the year of its inception. As guest of honour, the sovereign consented to receive a gift from the college.

He also launched the special edition of the college publication, *Seri Berunai* magazine in conjunction with the SOAS College Golden Jubilee celebration. The college entered its 50th anniversary on October 2nd, 2001 but its festivity was postponed until March this year.

The sovereign next went outdoors where he consented to sign the plaque of the college's Golden Jubilee commemorative arch, which was commissioned by staff and students of classes 2001 and 2002. SOAS College engages its students in extra curricular activities by opening membership of the Police and military organisations for cadet intakes, the Scouts Association, the Red Crescent Society and several types of martial arts training. As part of the outdoor itinerary, the sovereign witnessed performances by students who are engaged in such activities.

His Majesty next toured the college Golden Jubilee Heritage Gallery. The site houses a collection of photographs depicting college events, trophies won by its students, school uniforms, and equipment used by the college for administration and learning purposes throughout its 50-year history. Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajah Mariam is the benefactor of the Heritage Gallery. The sovereign also visited several classrooms including ones where he formerly sat: he studied for his fourth year secondary education at this college in 1964.

Outdoors again where His Majesty The



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah (back row, sixth from the right) represents Brunei Darussalam during CHOGM 2002. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II (centre) officially opens the ceremony in her capacity as Head of the Commonwealth.

COMMONWEALTH IN THE 21ST CENTURY: DIVERSITY SUSTAINS DURABILITY

Brunei Darussalam's Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah attended the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) – the first in the 21st century - in Coolumb, Australia on March 2nd.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah represented Brunei for the CHOGM 2002's Executive Sessions and the two-part Retreat. His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah's itinerary included a reception hosted by the Commonwealth Secretary-General, dinner hosted by the Honourable John Howard, Australia's Prime Minister, dinner hosted by the Honourable Alexander Downer, Australia's Foreign Affairs Minister, luncheon jointly-hosted by the Prime Ministers of Australia and



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah meets Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II who is accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Phillip, the Duke of Edinburgh and His Excellency Donald McKinnon, the Commonwealth Secretary-General.



Banquet host, His Excellency John Howard, the Australian Prime Minister (right) receives His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Zariah upon arrival.

United Kingdom, and the Jubilee Banquet in honour of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth. His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah also held bilateral meeting with Sir Allen Kemakeza, the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands.

Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Zariah accompanied His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah during the social events organised by the host member state, Australia.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II officially opened the CHOGM 2002. "It is our very diversity which makes the Commonwealth strong," said Her Majesty the Queen. She said that the events of 11th September have reminded us all of the need to build bridges between different cultures based on greater knowledge and understanding of our differences."

Three key Commonwealth meetings were held prior to CHOGM. The first was the High Level Review Group's (HLRG) Senior Officials' Meeting on February 28th. The purpose of this meeting was to consider recommendations to enable the Commonwealth remains relevant in the future. The meeting issued a special report containing analysis of and proposals for the Commonwealth that was submitted for deliberation during the CHOGM proper.

The second was called the Meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group on the Harare Declaration (CMAG) on March 1st. The Harare Declaration has a set of fundamental political

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His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah engages in bilateral discussion with the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands, His Excellency Sir Allen Kemakeza.

* From page 8
(CHOGM)

values that Commonwealth member states agree upon such as adherence to democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

The third – also held on March 1st – was the Meeting of the Ministerial Group on Small States, chaired by Australia's Foreign Minister, the Honourable Alexander Downer. Thirty-two of the 54 Commonwealth members are small states: each year small states receive A\$35 million worth of technical assistance.

Matters raised during the four-day CHOGM sessions – and later published in the Coolum Communiqué – included terrorism, the world economic situations, multilateral trade issues, landmines/international criminal court, debt, international economic cooperation, strengthening financial systems, promoting business, good corporate governance, technology management for development, climate change, small states, Commonwealth functional cooperation and so on.

The four-day CHOGM 2002 gathering engaged the heads of delegations from its 54 member states in discussions about a wide range of topics of common interest: the most prominent concerned attempts to sustain the Commonwealth's relevance. A special report prepared by the Commonwealth High Level Review Group was submitted for this purpose. The report underscored the significance of CHOGM 2002's theme, *"The Commonwealth in the 21st Century: Continuity and Renewal"* and proposed reforms to enable the 54-member organisation to respond effectively to the current and future challenges.

Concern for the Commonwealth's relevance was reflected in Her Majesty's royal address during the opening ceremony: "It is against this background that your meeting must deal with the challenges facing the organisation. You have a number of important and immediate issues. You also have the task of defining its longer-term future, following the decision at Durban three years ago to set in train the High Level Review. The Commonwealth must move with



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah exchanges views with the President of Malawi, His Excellency Dr Bakili Muluzi.

the times if it is to remain relevant to all generations."

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, the Right Honourable Donald McKinnon also expressed similar sentiment: "The last century has seen unprecedented advances in every field but our problems have not all gone away. New challenges require us to constantly reassess our priorities."

To sustain the Commonwealth's relevance, the Secretary-General said the 54-member organisation must always be prepared to adapt and change. "In order to retain the respect of our peoples and the wider world we must remain true to our values and principles," he said.

"The way to do this is by playing an active part in charting the path to the future. If we want to be ahead of the game, we must help write the rules," said the Secretary-General.

"In the Commonwealth we want to have a spirit of generous globalisation. We must be committed to ensure that the benefits of technological advances and real liberalisation of trade are shared more equitably. This is what the word 'Commonwealth' means," he said.

CHOGM 2002 produced three documents: the Report on Functional Cooperation, the Coolum Declaration and the Coolum Communiqué, plus a Statement on Zimbabwe. The Coolum Communiqué stated that leaders of delegations approved the recommendations of the High Level Review Group on the Special Theme, *"The Commonwealth in the 21st Century: Continuity and Renewal"*. CHOGM 2002 also launched the new Commonwealth fund for Africa under the Commonwealth Private Investment Initiative; the first African fund was launched in 1996.

The modern Commonwealth is made up of 54 member states and 1.7 billion people, about 30 per cent of the world's total population. The countries represent a diverse range of cultures, populations, governments and economies from very small and economically vulnerable developing nation-states to large industrial and advanced economies.



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah consents to receive His Excellency Eduardo Ermita, the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process of the Philippines.

Philippine envoy audience with the foreign Minister

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs has consented to grant an audience to His Excellency Eduardo Ermita, the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process of the Philippines Republic on March 11th at the Balai Penghadapan of Bukit Kayangan.

The Philippines envoy briefed His Royal Highness on the latest situation on the Southern Philippines and on the progress of the peace process.

Youths need role model

Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain bin Pehin Dato Haji Mohd Yusof said the Brunei Darussalam Scouts Association (BDSA) can exert more effort in helping the country to overcome social problems affecting today's youths. The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports highlighted BDSA's potential as agent of social change in his opening remarks on March 3rd during the Presentation of Warrants to the BDSA's National Commissioners Ceremony at its headquarters building in Gadong.

As Head of Scouts, Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain said all BDSA members must commit themselves to strengthening the nation-state through service and devotion to the community based on the national philosophy called the Malay Muslim Monarchy.

To overcome challenges brought about by the new millennium, he said, the Scouts movement must have the endurance, farsighted vision, and enhanced creativity. "In Brunei's context, we must increase our effort to work together not only with the

government but also with other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) at home and from abroad," said Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain.

"This requires competent and enthusiastic frontline leaders to plan, arrange, and implement quality programme of activities that focus not only on the participation of its members and other groups in uniforms, but also on engaging the general public too," he said. Based on previous experience when the BDSA organised the International Youth Camp last year, the minister said he is confident that the BDSA can realise its mission in helping the development of Brunei's youths.



The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, the Honourable Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain bin Pehin Dato Haji Mohd Yusof delivers a speech prior to issuing warrants to the National Commissioners of the Scouts Association on March 3rd.

There are rooms for improvement, he said prior to citing two proposed measures which the Scouts can implement to inspire youths. For example, to raise youths' awareness of their social environment, the BDSA can organise welfare-orientated activities that enhance youths' relationship with the underprivileged who are living in urban and rural areas, he said. "Perhaps the Scouts Association should extend its reach to rural areas by offering alternatives for youths who otherwise resort to meaningless activities that burden the state and society," said Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain.

BDSA's success depends on its frontline leadership awareness and efficiency, he said. "In addition to enthusiastic attempts to strengthen the nation-state, and planning, management and implementation of programmes, one must also foster the tendency for cooperation and mutual respect among troop leaders," said the minister.

Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain delivered warrants to 30 recipients. Touching on the attributes of a National Commissioner, he said: "To qualify for the warrant, a person engaged in this Association must meet a set of criteria that reflect experience, competence, skilful leadership and high calibre management."

A local financial institution, Baiduri Bank Berhad signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on February 6th with the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources (MIPR) for the purpose of administering and managing the channelling government funds to entrepreneurs.

Baiduri Bank Berhad is the second Bruneian bank to participate – the first was the Islamic Development Bank of Brunei (IDBB) – in the realisation of the government-introduced financial package designed to help local businesses that endured dismal performance since 1997. Two types of funding schemes are available to small-and-medium enterprises: the entrepreneurship facilitation scheme, introduced since the end of 1999; and the micro credit scheme, introduced in May 28th, 2001 and offered by the IDBB.

According to MIPR's news statement, IDBB lent B\$10.5 million for the two schemes by December last year. Ninety per cent of the funding was allocated for the entrepreneurship facilitation scheme that offered each borrowing not exceeding B\$1.5 million; and the remainder was for micro credit borrowing of B\$30,000 per

applicant.

Thirty-five companies were beneficiaries of the entrepreneurship facilitation scheme, all engaged in primary sectors: agriculture, fishery, manufacturing that subscribe to the list of preferred industries, and tourism.

Fourteen companies were engaged in the fishery sector worth B\$6 million

of lending; 12 companies engaged in agriculture worth B\$2.5 million; nine companies engaged in manufacturing worth B\$1.15 million.

Forty-two companies were beneficiaries of the micro credit scheme, with total lending worth B\$850,000.

Permanent secretary at the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, Haji Idris bin Haji Belaman was the guest of honour. Haji Matdanan bin Haji Jaafar, the senior special duties officer signed the document on behalf of the ministry; and Yvonne Chan, the senior manager of corporate banking was his counterpart representing Baiduri Bank.

The MoU is another milestone for MIPR's institutional remit as facilitator for the growth of Bruneian small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs). It signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Standard and Industrial Research Institution of Malaysia (SIRIM) on January 19th for the benefit of SMEs engaged in food business.

GOVERNMENT-BACKED FINANCIAL PACKAGE CHANNELLED THROUGH A LOCAL BANK



Haji Matdanan bin Haji Jaafar, senior special duties officer at the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources (seated second right) and Yvonne Chan, senior manager of corporate banking (seated far left) sign the MoU. The agreement enables Bruneian SMEs to access government-backed business funding.

** From Centrepage (Golden Jubilee celebration)*

wife of His Excellency the Canadian high commissioner.

Her Royal Highness The Pengiran Isteri also met her former classmates while visiting her former classrooms and those of His Majesty's. Her Royal Highness next visited exhibits brought by the Royal Brunei Armed Forces. Her Royal Highness The Pengiran Isteri's itinerary was concluded with the presentation of a cheque donation for the Pusat Ehsan Al-Ameerah Al-Hajjah Maryam by the college. Worth B\$1,555 the proceeds was the result of an 11-day bazaar sale that began on March 6th organised by the college with the cooperation of Caterfast Venture Management Company.

Established in 1951, following a proposal submitted to the State Council by the Chief Kadi (Muslim judge) at the time, Pengiran Haji Mohd Salleh, the college was formerly called the State English School. Back then, it enrolled 20 students; half were sent for their studies in Kuching, Sarawak. In 1955 the school was upgraded to institution of higher learning status and renamed the Sultan Omar 'Ali Saifuddien College (SOAS). Today SOAS College has nearly 2,000 students.

Correction

The editor of the Brunei Darussalam Newsletter wishes to apologise for the error in the article called, "Royalty grants audiences" on page four of the February 28th, 2002 edition. The photographs' captions were meant to refer to Madam Mano Hirubalan, wife of His Excellency Mr Hirubalan VP, the Singapore high commissioner; not Madam Kathie Caie, wife of His Excellency Mr Andrew John Forbes Caie, the British high commissioner.

The photographs' captions were meant to state the following.

Her Majesty The Raja Isteri also consents to grant an audience to Madam Mano Hirubalan, wife of the newly accredited Singapore high commissioner to Brunei Darussalam at the Istana Nurul Iman on February 14th.

Her Royal Highness The Pengiran Isteri also consents to grant an audience to Madam Mano Hirubalan at the Istana Nurul Izzah on February 20th.

Audience with His Majesty The Sultan

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has consented to grant an audience to Malaysia's Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Dato Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir on February 28th at the Istana Nurul Iman.

The Malaysian high commissioner to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Salman bin Ahmad accompanied the Malaysian minister. Dato Abdul Kadir was on a one-day visit to Brunei.

Brunei's Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain bin Pehin Dato Haji



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consents to grant an audience to Dato Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir, Malaysia's Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism.

Mohd Yusof who was the acting Minister of Industry and Primary Resources; and the permanent secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, Dato Haji Adanan bin Pehin Dato Haji Mohd Yusof were also present during the royal audience.

Revive the Borneo-bound tourism package

Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia will continue efforts to attract visitors from ASEAN member states, Europe and the People's Republic of China by promoting different tour packages befitting their tourism markets. One of the jointly agreed measures was the revival of the Borneo-bound tour package, introduced in 1997, now renamed "Tour to the East" covering four destinations: Brunei, Labuan, Sabah and Sarawak.

This was disclosed during a courtesy visit of Malaysia's Minister of Culture, the

Arts and Tourism, Dato Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir to Brunei's acting Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain bin Pehin Dato Haji Mohd Yusof on February 28th after the audience at the Istana Nurul Iman. The discussion that followed engaged tourism-related topics of mutual interest. Malaysia offered Sarawak's Mulu caves and Sabah's Mount Kinabalu to Brunei visitors while Brunei showcased the Jerudong Park Playground and the National Park in Temburong district.

Other items raised during the discussion were issues concerning immigration procedures that require updating to enable smoother tourism flow between Brunei and Malaysia. The two ministers also exchanged ideas about tourism strategies relevant to the ASEAN market segments: Brunei-Indonesia, Brunei-Malaysia, Malaysia-Singapore, and Malaysia-Thailand.



Malaysia's Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Dato Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir (left) discusses a set of tourism-related items with the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain during a courtesy visit to the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources. Pehin Dato (Dr) Haji Hussain is the acting minister of the host institution. Haji Idris bin Haji Belaman, the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources (right) and Sheikh Jamaluddin bin Sheikh Mohamed, the director general of Brunei Tourism (foreground) look on.

Brunei In Brief

Official name: Negara Brunei Darussalam

Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan

Land size: 5765 sq. km

Geographical Position: North-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia

Population: 344,500 (2001 estimate)

National Carrier: Royal Brunei Airlines

Official Language: Malay

Official Religion: Islam

Official Website: www.brunei.gov.bn

February Rainfall: 34.7 mm

The Trafficking and illegal importation of Controlled Drugs are very serious offences in Brunei Darussalam and the penalty is death.