



BIMP-EAGA: Economic cooperation towards achieving ASEAN Community



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and delegation during the summit.



SINGAPORE, November 19 – Several matters were raised at the 4th Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Asian Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) Summit Meeting. One of the issues discussed was cooperation among member countries in the bid for efficient development, transportation, tourism, environment, social and culture.

In the bid to achieve ASEAN Community by 2015, the leaders of BIMP-EAGA reiterated their support towards economic cooperation. With regards to this matter, the leaders have agreed to continue plans through the memorandum agreed in the field of development.

Besides that, programmes under the BIMP-EAGA five-year plan (2006-2010) were also agreed by the leaders. To ensure that programmes implemented under the plan are suitable, it was also agreed that a study will be carried out in 2008. Hence, stakeholders of BIMP-EAGA particularly those from the private and public sector, are welcomed to be actively involved in the study. They were also urged to take this opportunity to identify programmes and projects which could generate immediate and direct effect towards trade expansion, tourism and investment in this region. With the re-evaluation, BIMP-EAGA's hope in narrowing the gap between ASEAN member countries would be achieved.

The 4th BIMP-EAGA Summit was chaired by His

Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkih Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore.

It was attended by the Heads of State and Government of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Republic of the Philippines.

In his opening remarks, His Majesty expressed his satisfaction with the encouraging developments within BIMP-EAGE and welcomed the recent signings of two Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) under the transportation section that would enhance sub-regional connectivity.

The sovereign also welcomed initiatives such as the Heart of Borneo (HoB) and the Sulu-Suluwesi-Marine-Eco (SSME) Region as these reflect BIMP-EAGA's contribution in addressing climate change. In this regard, His Majesty also encouraged member countries to jointly work together in seeking more support and assistance from the international community.

The summit ended with the endorsement of the Joint Statement of the 4th BIMP-EAGA Summit which among others directed the Transport and Tourism Ministers to undertake collaborative actions to ensure the sustainability of the current air routes and to ensure that more sub-regional air connections are established in 2008.



Picnic at the beach is among local favourite activities during school holiday. Brunei's fourth term school holiday fall on every December where schools is closed for a month before new term in January.

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

❶ Datin Claudel Elizabeth Kuek, the wife of Lieutenant General Dato Paduka Seri Desmond Kuek Bak Chye, the Chief Defence Forces of the Republic of Singapore.

❷ Her Excellency Magdalene Teo Chee Siong, Brunei's Ambassador to the People's Republic of China; Hajah Aisah Haji Mohd Hussain, the wife of Haji Abdul Ghafar bin Haji Ismail, High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam to the Republic of Singapore; Hajah Daniar Haji Abdullah, the wife of Pengiran Haji Alihashim bin Pengiran Haji Yussof, Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam to Belgium on November 17.



Congratulatory message

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam send a congratulatory message to:

- His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al-Said, Sultan of Oman, on the occasion of the National Day of the Sultanate of Oman on November 17.
- The honourable Kevin Rudd upon his winning in the recent elections in Australia on November 26.
- His Excellency Nader Dahabi on his appointment as the new Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on November 26.
- United Arab Emirates (UAE) President and ruler of Abu Dhabi His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, and Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and ruler of Dubai His Highness Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum on the occasion of the national day of the UAE on December 1.
- Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) President Choummaly Sayasone, and Lao PDR Prime Minister Bouasone Bouphavanh on the occasion of the national day of Lao PDR on December 1.
- His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the King of Thailand, and His Excellency General Surrayud Chulanont, the Prime Minister of Thailand, on the occasion of the 80th birthday of the Thai King on December 5.



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

- ① The High Commissioner of Malaysia to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Dato' Ku Jaafar bin Ku Shaari on November 26.
- ② The Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Pham Binh Man on November 26.
- ③ The Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Laos to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Somdy Bounkhoun on November 26.
- ④ The Minister for National Development of the Republic of Singapore, His Excellency Mah Bow Tan on December 3.



* From Front page
(ASEAN 13th SUMMIT - 2007 SINGAPORE)

ASEAN +3's cooperation in various field continues

SINGAPORE, November 20 – Leaders of ASEAN + 3 (China, Japan and Korea) have agreed to enhance cooperation in various fields including Politic and Security Cooperation; Economy and Finance Cooperation; Energy Cooperation; environment; climate change; development; and continuous organisational and mechanism support.

This was stated in the ASEAN+3 Summit's joint statement.

Representing Brunei Darussalam was His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam where he

also delivered his tithah (royal speech). In his tithah, His Majesty expressed his satisfaction with the political, economic, and social-cultural cooperation achieved since the ASEAN+3 Summit was held 10 years ago.

According to the sovereign, this achievement have enabled member countries to work together when dealing with challenges such as economic crisis, transferable disease SARS and fighting terrorism.

His Majesty also expressed his appreciation with the continuous cooperation since the ASEAN +3 Summit

held in Cebu in January this year. The process of ASEAN+3, said His Majesty, have produced ideas and prepared several initiatives and mechanism for ministerial and senior officers' level which will assist in project and programme management.

His Majesty was in Singapore to attend the 13th ASEAN Summit in Singapore from November 9 to 22.

13th ASEAN Summit enhanced ASEAN solidarity

SINGAPORE, November 22 - The 13th ASEAN Summit which was held for four days in Singapore starting from November 19 to 22 enhanced solidarity and understanding among the ASEAN leaders.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam attended the annual summit together with other ASEAN leaders.

They were the Prime Minister of Singapore, His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong as the Chairman, Prime Minister of Malaysia, The Right Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi; President of Philippines, Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal Arroyo; President Of Indonesia, His Excellency Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Prime Minister of Cambodia, His Excellency Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Thailand, His Excellency General Surayud Chulanont, Prime Minister of Laos, His Excellency Bouasone Bouphavanh; Prime Minister of Vietnam, His Excellency Nguyen Tan Dung and Prime Minister of Myanmar, His Excellency Thein Sein.

At the 13th ASEAN Summit, four declaration were signed. They were 'Declaration on the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint'; ASEAN Declaration on the 13th Session of Conference of the parties (CoP) to the United Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 3rd Session of the Conference of the Parties Serving as the Meeting of the Parties (CMP) to the Kyoto Protocol' and ASEAN Charter, beside the Joint Memorandum with others dialogue partners.

ASEAN welcome his 40th anniversary recently has design all ten Southeast Asian country in a direction and equivalent future.

ASEAN's charter signed at the 13th ASEAN summit has paid law identity to the ASEAN region, where this body could form a more transparent regional community, established and stable economically, social and politics.

This charter had underlined commitment ten member countries to stay united under one vision, one identity and one community and put ASEAN integrity in facing integration challenge, globalization rapidly either at the regional level or international.

The upcoming summit in the year 2008 expected to be held in Thailand. It will gathered the ten ASEAN leader and dialogue countries under one roof to discuss with the appointment of new ASEAN Secretary General, the former Foreign Minister of Thailand, Dr. Surin Pitsuwan which was appointed for the term 2008-2012 to replace His Excellency Ong Keng Yong from the Republic of Singapore where his term lasted on December 31, 2007.



His Majesty greets by His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong, the Prime Minister of Singapore, prior to the Retreat session of the summit.



The Right Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia also presents at the Retreat session.



The leaders of all ten ASEAN member countries in group photo.



Her Royal Highness during the 'Call to the Bar' ceremony.

Her Royal Highness recognised as barrister

LONDON, November 22 – Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Muta-Wakillah Hayatul Bolkiah has been officially acknowledged as a barrister. A ceremony called 'Call to the Bar' was held where it is a tradition in recognition of law graduates who will be barristers.

The ceremony was held at the Gray's Inn in London, a renowned legal institution in England.

Her Royal Highness was among the over 80 graduates from various countries bestowed with the recognition.

Present to witness the ceremony was



Their Majesties with Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Muta-Wakillah Hayatul Bolkiah.

Their Majesties, Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri and Their Royal Highnesses Princess Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah and Princess Hajah Hafzah Sururul Bolkiah.



Their Majesties and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri greet by the Brunei students and citizens in the United Kingdom and Ireland.



The sovereign mingles with the students.

Call to uphold decent value

LONDON, December 2 – Bruneian students, regardless of their whereabouts, were urged to continuously uphold a decent value besides becoming a generation of thinkers to develop and acquire a good nation's value.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam made the call at a get-together with UK and Ireland-based Bruneian students. The gathering was held at Inter-Continental Hotel in London. Also present were Her Majesty The Raja Isteri, Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri and several members of the royal family.

His Majesty underlined that the noblest decent value is to be loyal to Allah,

the Prophet and "Ulil Amri" including parents by upholding it everywhere.

"It should not be neglected but it is to be nurtured in one's heart. This is the way to thank Allah for all the blessings. We should uphold and make such blessings everlasting," said His Majesty.

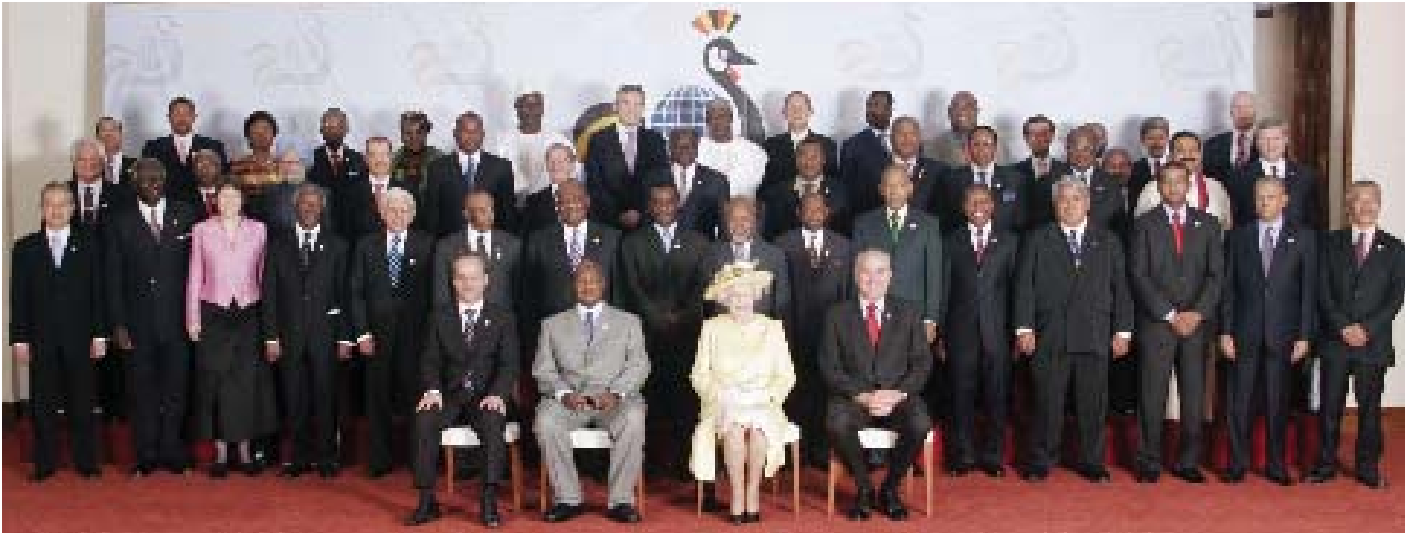
His Majesty also praise be to Allah, that Brunei is a 'good nation' with peace and prosperity as its identity. Without doubt, it is a blessing for Brunei that is seldom available elsewhere. Hence we should uphold it."

His Majesty said the way to uphold such a blessing is to express gratitude, not by sitting comfortably and enjoying

wealth but to always remember Allah.

"While upholding peace and prosperity, we should remember Allah. Those who remember Allah will not commit something that can jeopardise peace and prosperity."

Some 1,315 Bruneian students are currently studying in the United Kingdom and Ireland, where 1,020 are under government scholarship schemes, 91 students under Brunei Shell Petroleum Sdn. Bhd. sponsorship and Brunei Shell Tankers Sdn. Bhd. and another 295 student's self-financed.



Group photo of His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, His Majesty's Special Envoy with Commonwealth member countries leaders.



Executive Session review global developments

UGANDA, November 23 - His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, His Majesty's Special Envoy to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kampala, Uganda attended the Opening Ceremony of CHOGM 2007 at Kampala Serena Conference Centre.

The First CHOGM Executive Session reviewed global developments and the challenges faced by small member states. The first session concluded with reports on the implementation of mandates given at CHOGM 2005 in Malta.

The mandate implementation which has been approved by the Commonwealth Heads of Government in Malta outlines 103 matters where the Commonwealth Heads of Government unanimous to consolidate commitment based upon politics values that more tolerance, mutual respect, security and international peace, democracy, good management, humans right, human quality, law and judicature, freedom of expression and a more transparent political culture and economic development.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government also fully defame whatever form of terrorism and manifestation and aware that terrorism already brought challenges serious for peace and international security.

Commonwealth leader committed handling climate changes

UGANDA, November 24 - The commonwealth governments comprising 53 countries pay emphasis for climate change which is also become the concern and threat to human security and economic situation.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah as the Special Envoy of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam joined other Heads of Commonwealth Government at the Retreat Session at Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort.

During the Retreat Session, the heads of government had underlined 13

matters over handling climate change which became the main issue in the meeting. Among the matter is the Head of Commonwealth Government confirmed the commitment with lies against Langkawi Declaration 1989 which first time define the declaration.

The Head of Commonwealth Government realizes that climate change is a direct threat for 'survival' in several Commonwealth countries, especially in small countries and in the beach area which is in a low area.

At the meeting, the Head of

Commonwealth Government also confirmed their commitment to Framework Convention of the United Nations on Climate Change as the forum to achieve global agreement on comprehensive action collectively.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah was accompanied by Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Anak Mansurah Izzul Bolkiah.

The biannual meeting of Commonwealth Leaders was opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Head of the Commonwealth.



His Royal Highness at one of the sessions.

Prince Mohamed Bolkiah attends Final Retreat

UGANDA, November 25 - His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, His Majesty's Special Envoy to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, joined other Commonwealth Leaders at the Final Retreat and closing Executive Sessions of CHOGM 2007 at Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort, Kampala, Republic of Uganda.

In the meeting, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting have adopted the CHOGM 2007 Communiqué. The next CHOGM will be held in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009.

Kamalesh Sharma appoints as Commonwealth's Secretary General

UGANDA, November 24 - The Commonwealth Heads of Government have appointed the new Commonwealth's Secretary General, His Excellency Kamalesh Sharma. His Excellency is an Indian High Commissioner to London.

His Excellency's appointment was discussed at the Retreat Session at Munyonyo Commonwealth Resort.

The new Commonwealth's Secretary General, His Excellency Kamalesh Sharma will hold the post for four term and directly became the Chief Commonwealth Secretary.



Brunei delegation during the opening of the 24th SEA Games in Thailand.



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah attends the opening ceremony of the games.

Brunei won six medal at the 24th SEA Games in Thailand

KORAT, Thailand, December 9 – A total of six medals has been won by the athletes in the 24th SEA Games this year. The medals was won from the pencak silat, athletics, fencing, karatedo and lawn bowling.

As a token for their efforts, the medal winners was presented with the cash prizes of \$5000 for the gold medallist, \$3000 for the silver medallist and \$1000 for the bronze medallist. The athletes who were awarded with the

cash prizes was Haji Naim bin Brahim, for his gold medal in lawn bowling. Norieyermah binti Haji Raya and Mohd Yazid Yatami bin Yusof were silver medallist in pencak silat and athletics respectively.

Fencing team consisting Mohammad Yunus bin Haji Hamid, Huzaimi bin Haji Abdul Kassim, Ak Mohd Shah Al Mustain bin Pg Hj Azahari and Khairul Quddus bin Mohd Roalee also won silver medals. Men's pair bronze medallists in lawn

bowling, Md. Salleh bin Hitam and Mohd. Israt Amiruddin bin Haji Abd Gani along with bronze medallist and Masdiana binti Haji Tengah in karatedo also received the cash prizes.

Some 436 events in 43 games were competed during the prestigious sports meet. Eleven ASEAN countries including Brunei Darussalam took part in the tournament. The 24th SEA Games took place from December 6 to 15 December, 2007.



Awang Haji Ahmad and the participants of the 9th Meeting of the ASEAN-COCI Sub-Committee on Culture.

Culture as an impetus for human's civilization development

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 20 - ASEAN-COCI, one of the essential components in ASEAN agenda, conducts cultural activities to promote the ASEAN image to bring greater awareness and understanding of ASEAN, as a part of dynamic Asia.

The Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Awang Haji Ahmad bin Haji Abd Rahman highlights the matter at the

opening ceremony for the 9th Meeting of the ASEAN-COCI (Committee on Culture and Information) Sub-Committee on Culture held at the Orchid Garden Hotel.

The Deputy Permanent Secretary said that culture must be seen as an impetus for the growing development of human civilisation. ASEAN-COCI is an extremely vital platform with the capability to formulate and to implement flagship programmes and projects involving

different groups of people in society.

He also expressed his confidence that the discussions and deliberations in the meetings will produce greater benefits to the ASEAN community towards achieving the objectives.

The meeting will consider and evaluate ongoing projects, and will discuss the implementation of new proposals for ASEAN cultural cooperation for the next fiscal year.

Reception – Thai King Birthday

The Minister of Communication, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar and wife with the Ambassador-Designate of Thailand to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Phithak Phrombubpha and a reception to celebrate the 80th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand held at the International Convention Centre on December 5.



Minister of Communications representing Brunei's government to the reception of 80th birthday of His Majesty King of Thailand.

SME's to create Finance Assurance Scheme

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 21 - The establishment of Finance Assurance Scheme / Regional Export Credit and sharing information towards the development of new policy and relevant experience from ASEAN member countries are two projects discussed at 21st Meeting of the ASEAN

Small and Medium Enterprise Agencies Working Group which started from November 21 to 23.

Both projects included in the ASEAN Action Policy Plan for the SME's Development (APBSD) 2004-2014 and Vientiane Action Programme (VAP) for SME 2004-2010.

The meeting was chaired by the Head of Entrepreneur Development Centre, Awang Efandi bin Haji Salleh. It was attended by the ASEAN delegates which was responsible for the SME's progress and ASEAN Secretariat. Brunei Darussalam was represented by the Senior Office from the Entrepreneur Development Centre, Awang Asut bin Kadi.



The meeting gathers ASEAN delegations which responsible for the SME's progressed and also ASEAN Secretariat.

Commemorative stamp unveiled in conjunction with ASEAN 40th anniversary

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 21 – Postal Service Department has organized the launching ceremony of Commemorative stamps co-issued by Brunei Darussalam and other ASEAN member countries to mark the 40th anniversary of ASEAN.

The ceremony was launched by the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Md. Yusof bin Haji Md. Hassan at the Stamp Gallery of the main post office in the capital.

Also present were representatives of delegates from ASEAN member countries. The ceremony was the first of its kind in the Sultanate was organised by Brunei Postal Services Department and the administration of postal services of ASEAN member countries.

The launching of the commemorative stamps to mark the 40th anniversary of ASEAN was the outcome of the 10th ASEAN Postal Business Meeting which was held in Surabaya, Indonesia in September 2003.



Guest of honour viewing the stamps exhibit at the Stamp Gallery.



Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Suyoi touring the exhibition.

Use the latest skills in managing the patient

RIMBA, November 26 - Nurses are required to know and utilise the latest skills in their fields when making evaluations and from there manage the duress or pain that is being experienced by the patient.

The matter was highlighted by the Minister of Health, Pehin dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Suyoi at the launching ceremony of a workshop on Pain Management.

In conjunction with the workshop, the minister also launched the Nurses Protocol and Guideline for Epidural Anaesthesia, and Patient Control Analgesia (PCA). The procedure means to relieve patients of pain or to lessen the burden through pharmacological or non-pharmacological methods. The Pain Management Unit was then established on August 1, and became a fully functioning unit a month later.

The three-days workshop was attended by 64 nurses in various level throughout the country and organized by the Pain Management Unit, Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha (RIPAS) Hospital.



Dato Seri Paduka Awang Eusoff Agaki opens the 3rd Civil Services Strategic Planning Alignment Symposium.

Teamwork To Enhance Civil Service

BERAKAS, November 22 – All officers and staff at every level must understand the contents of their respective ministry's and department's strategic planning so that every member of each organisation is truly committed to the tasks.

These points was underscored by the Deputy Minister at the Prime Minister's Office, Dato Seri Paduka Awang Eusoff Agaki at the opening of the 3rd Civil Services Strategic Planning Alignment Symposium at the International Convention Centre.

The Deputy Minister said that they must realise that the main objective in the planning is to accommodate the customers' needs and enhance the prosperity of the nation.

Strategic planning is done to ensure that every organisation continues to be relevant and effective in meeting the expectations of stakeholders and customers.

The Deputy Minister believed that all

government ministries already have their respective strategic planning and realise the need to take action in supporting His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's Titah in July 2003.

He added that His Majesty's Titah not only focused on each ministry but also every department or implementing agency. The agencies should also prepare their strategic planning to be in line with their respective ministry's strategic planning.

The two-day symposium was attended by the officers in Civil Services comprising the Permanent Secretaries; The Deputy Secretaries; The Head of Department; The Acting and Assistant Head of Departments; senior officers which are responsible in monitoring and evaluation of the strategic planning in every ministries.

A total of 12 ministries presented their strategy planning in the symposium which was divided to four session where is every session involved three ministries.



Delegation from the Civil Service Commission of Malaysia in a group photo with Chairman of Civil Service Commission of Brunei Darussalam, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Wahab (front row, four from left).

Civil Service Commission optimism to explore suitable field

JERUDONG, November 28 - Civil Service Commission always open towards getting assistance and cooperation Civil Service Commission of Malaysia to explore whatever strategic and suitable field.

These matter was stated by the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission of Brunei Darussalam, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Wahab in the welcoming ceremony of the Civil Service Commission of Malaysian held at the Empire Hotel and Country Club.

The Malaysian delegates comprising of more than 60 members and senior was led by the Chairman of the Malaysian Civil Service Commission, Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Jamaluddin.

They were also given the briefing on the role of the Brunei's Civil Service Commission by the Acting Chairman of Brunei's Civil Service Commission, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Majid.

Executive Director of ReCAAP ISC visit Brunei

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 29 - Executive Director of Regional Cooperation for rmed Pirate and Robbery Prevention For Ships In Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Centre (ISC), an International Organisation-based in Republic of Singapore, Mr Toshiaki ITO, made visits to Brunei Darussalam from November 26 to 28 November 2007.

During his visit, Mr Toshiaki ITO made a coutesy call to Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister Office, Datin Paduka Dayang hajah Salbiah and Operation Director Royal Brunei Police Force, Pehin Orang Kaya pendikar Alam Awang Hasi Hsrin, request active support from Bunei Darussalam in ReCAAP's operation and information network.

ReCAAP is the first government with government agreement which overcome the armed pirate and robbery activity in Asia. ReCAAP initiative aimed to enhance cooperation in multi ways among the 16 nations in the region.

The agreement was agreed on November 11, 2004 in Tokyo and implemented on September 4, 2006. Brunei Darussalam joined ReCAAP on october 28, 2006 to become the 11th country to joined the agreement. Other members states were Japan, Republic of Singapore, laos, cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, Philippines, Korea, India, Sri Lanka, China and Bangladesh.

Did you know that...

- The Government of His Majesty is creating a good business environment to strengthen the competitive of Small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs) by providing administrative support, investment and trading opportunities and technical assistance. It is also currently exploring possibilities of financial assistance schemes and incentives for SMEs.
- The Oil and Gas Discovery Centre (OGDC) was set up by the Brunei Shell Petroleum in September 2002: It is the latest landmark in Seria aimed at educating the public about science, technology and the environment.
- The key players in Brunei's oil and gas industry are Brunei Shell Petroleum, Brunei Liquefied Natural Gas, Block B Joint Venture, Brunei Shell Marketing (BSM), Brunei Shell Tankers (BST), and Brunei Gas Carrier (BGC).

>> CALENDAR OF EVENT 2007

January 1	-	New Year 2007
January 20	-	New Year of Islamic Calendar 1428 Hijrah
February 18	-	Chinese New Year
February 23	-	Brunei's 23 rd National Day
March 31	-	Prophet Muhammad's birthday anniversary
May 31	-	Royal Brunei Armed Forces 46 th anniversary
July 15	-	His Majesty's 61 st birthday anniversary
August 11	-	Israk Mikraj celebration
September 13	-	First Day of Ramadhan
September 29	-	Nuzul Al-Quran celebration
October 13	-	Hari Raya Aidil Fitri
December 20	-	Hari Raya Aidil Adha
December 25	-	Christmas

*subject to changes

Brunei's School Holiday

March 16 to 25	-	First Term School Holiday
June 10 to 24	-	Second Term School Holiday
September 7 to 16	-	Third Term School Holiday
November 30 to December 31	-	Fourth Term School Holiday

>> 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.

How to go about... in Brunei Darussalam

Banks

Banks in Brunei Darussalam are opened from Mondays – Fridays 9.00 am – 4.00 pm, Saturdays 9.00 – 11.00 am. Some banks are now operating until late hours.

Islamic banks follow the same operation times except on Fridays when they are closed for prayers between 11.00 am – 2.30 pm.

Credit cards

They are accepted widely in hotels, restaurants and major shopping complexes. Most widely accepted cards are VISA and Mastercard. Some establishments accept American Express too.

Money Changer

The service is available at the airport, at banks, hotels and some licensed money changers.

Money Remittance/Transfer

All major banks in Brunei are able to transfer money overseas or other options include remittance agencies.

Lost/stolen passports & credit cards

If you ever do find your passport missing, go to the nearest Police Station to lodge a police report and inform your embassy to seek further assistance. If your credit cards get stolen, make sure you call your bank to cancel the cards immediately.

Telecommunications

Most public phones operate on calling cards such as Hello card, Net card and Payless. These cards can be purchased at any stores and comes in \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 denominations. Prepaid calling cards for the two mobile phones telephone operators; DST and BMobile can be purchased from their respective authorised dealers in all major shopping areas.

Buses

There are six bus routes operating around the capital: the Central Line, Circle Line, Eastern Line, Southern line, Western Line and Northern Line. They operate from 6.30 am to 6.00 pm. Bus fare starts from \$1.00. Bus heading to other towns in Brunei like Tutong, Kuala Belait and Seria depart from the bus terminal located at the multi-storey car park at Jalan Cator in Bandar Seri Begawan.

Taxis

There are metered taxis available from most hotels, shopping centres and the airport. In capital taxis dock opposite the main bus terminal at Jalan Cator. Airport taxis ply the airport-hotel routes exclusively. There is a surcharge fee for taxi rides from 11.00 pm – 6.00 am.

Water taxis

The water taxis are the most common mean of transportations at Kampong Ayer. You can hail for a water taxi from the numerous jetties along the banks of Brunei River. Fares starts at 0.50 depending on the journey. Regular boat services to Temburong operate between 7.45 am – 4.00 pm daily, and a round trip fare costs \$15.

Ferry Services

Passenger ferry services to the Malaysian town of Labuan, operates between 7.00 am to 4.00pm and departs from the Serasa Terminal in Muara Town. The journey takes between 45 mins to an hour.



ATM machines at The Mall, Gadong



Ferry services at the Serasa Terminal in Muara Town.



Photos by: Haji Ariffin Mohd Noor



A lady drying 'bubuk' (small shrimp), the main ingredients for belacan (shrimp paste).



The famous product of Kampung Batu Marang, belacan (shrimp paste).

Some villager rears fish in cage for own consumption.



KG. BATU MARANG - LEADING PRODUCER OF BELACAN



The view of Kampung Batu Marang from the bridge which connecting the village.

Situated further down Brunei River, there lies a popular village among the locals – Kampung Batu Marang. Based in the Brunei Muara district, Kampung Batu Marang is one of the villages under Mukim Mentiri.

With an area of 2.8188 km², for easy management, the village is divided into five areas. Currently the village is a home to about 1,100 and led by a village head. Although it is under Mukim Mentiri which mostly house villages on land, Kampung Batu Marang is based on water. Thus, most of the houses here are built on water.

Located about 19 kilometres from the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan; Kampung Batu Marang can be reached by road or boat. The village is divided into two as it is separated by a river therefore a bridge is built to connect each other.

The population here enjoy a comfortable living as basic necessities such as water, electricity and telephone lines are available. A mosque and a school are also available.

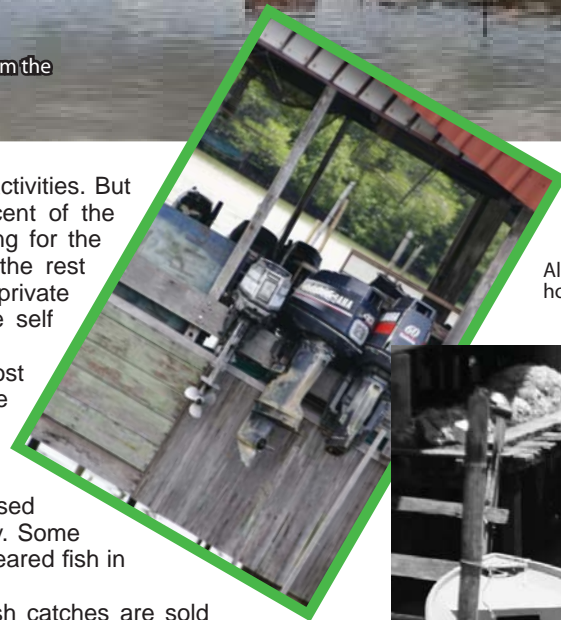
In the olden day, Kampung Batu Marang was one of the leading fishermen's villages. The main activity was related to

sea such as fishing activities. But now, about 72 per cent of the population are working for the public sector. While the rest are working for the private sector and some are self entrepreneurs.

Even though most of the villagers are no longer full time fisherman, fishing and sea related activities are still practised as a part time activity. Some also keep their own reared fish in a cage.

Not all of the fresh catches are sold directly as some are processed into semi or final products. These processing activities are carried out usually by the women.

Catches like fish and prawns are usually dried and made into udang kering (dried prawns) or ikan masin (dry salted fish). Other products made using fish as the main ingredient is ikan liking (pronounced as 'lee-king') which are small fish like kuasi fish stuffs with some ingredients like asam jawa and chillies and



Almost every house had boats

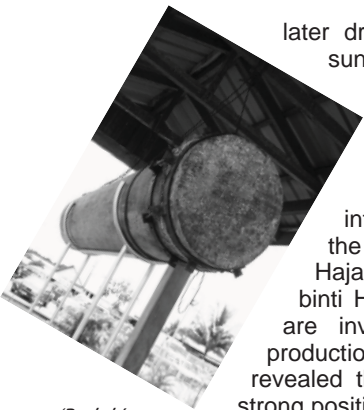




Mosque and concrete jetty are among the amenities provided by the government to the villager. (left and right pictures)



Common scene at the village, people drying 'ikan liking' on the bridge.



'Beduk' at the Batu Marang Mosque.

later dried under the sun for few hours. The ikan liking is sold at \$2 to \$3 per package. Our interview with the family of Hajah Aminah binti Haji Bidin, who are involved in the production of ikan liking revealed that there is a strong positive demand for their products. For less than 10 kilograms of the kuasi

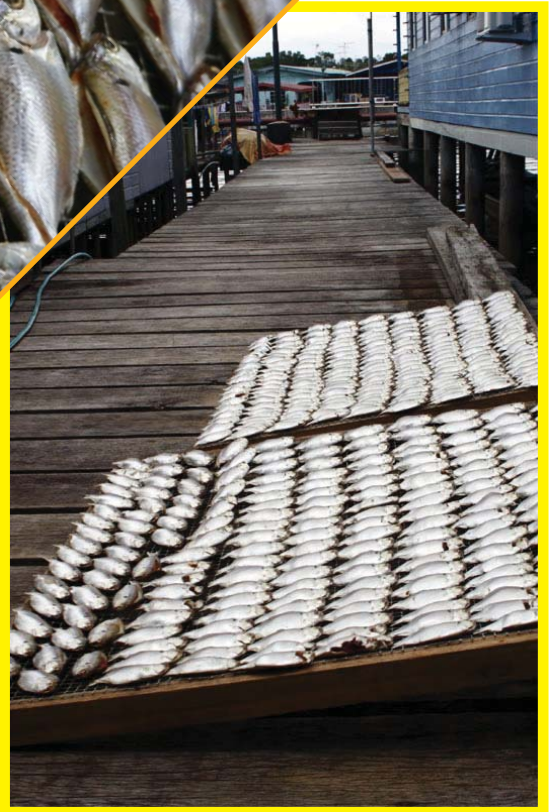
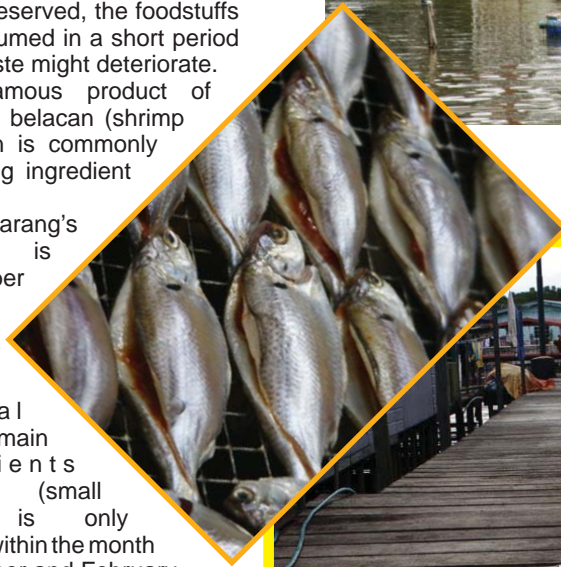
fish they made into liking, the return is more than \$100. However, to ensure the quality is preserved, the foodstuffs should be consumed in a short period of time as its taste might deteriorate.

Yet the famous product of Batu Marang is belacan (shrimp paste). Belacan is commonly used as cooking ingredient in Brunei.

Batu Marang's shrimp paste is ranged as number one in the nation. The production of belacan is seasonal

as the main ingredients 'bubuk' (small shrimp) is only available within the month of December and February. Therefore, manufacturers will have to stock up the belacan for sale as it can be kept in a longer period of time. Well-made belacan can be kept for a year, provided it is kept in a chilled temperature room like in a fridge and still taste good.

Batu Marang remains as a popular village, more so as they are known as the leading producer of belacan. This village can be seen as a role model particularly on the efforts to earn income through the fishery industry.



One of the villager transporting woods by boats.



Primary school is also available at the village.



Padian rowing their boat from house to house selling daily wants.

A *Padian* had been a common sight on the Brunei River, much so, it was mentioned by the famous explorer, Antonio Pigafetta in 1521 AD. According to him, *Padians* had been in this trade for hundreds of years.

When the tide rises, the activities such as fishing and trade by the *Padian* were a common feature. Every day, early in the mornings, boats called *gubang*, *bidar* or *perahu* could be seen.

These boats were rowed by women wearing wide hats called *siraung*.

These women would then row from one house to another in Kampong Ayer selling daily necessities such as vegetables, fruits, fish and other daily supplies. Some of them also piled their wares along the jetties near the capital of the now Bandar Seri Begawan.

A *Padian* was seen as a floating market selling all sorts of foodstuffs, vegetables and commodities. A *Padian* was generally a middleman – making profits from the suppliers or *pengalu*.

The *Padians* declined due to a number of factors. By 1906, with migration of the administration from the water village to dry land, it encouraged residents of Kampong Ayer to migrate to the interior parts. The development of the dry land and the capital brought about the existence of markets and *tamu* or smaller markets. The *Padians* failed to continue serving as the centre of trade as those markets on dry land begun to develop. However, we should remember that they played an important role in the lifeline and the development of Brunei's economy for the last 500 years.

By 1980's, *Padian* activities had slowed down significantly. Today, *Padians* are no longer to be seen, surviving only in the memory, paintings and photographs. Yet the history of *Padians* is the history of Kampong Ayer itself.

Padians: River traders of Kampong Ayer

Brunei students to Japan on exchange programme

GADONG, December 1 – To provide opportunities for enhancing friendship and understanding among the youths of ASEAN member countries and Japan is one of the aims of the Japan East Asia Network of Exchange for Students' and Youths (JENESYS) programme.

The Acting Minister of Education, Pengiran Dato Seri Setia Dr. Haji Mohammad highlighted the matter at the presentation of the national flag to the head of the Brunei delegation held at the Rizqun International Hotel.

The minister said that the purpose of the exchange programme is to

expose students to Japanese culture and innovations. It is also hoped that the programme would provide students with an opportunity to see the world in a new perspective.

Twenty seven secondary students were selected to be part of the first Brunei delegation to join the JENESYS programme which is held from Dec 3 to 12, 2007.

During their stay in Japan, they will also visit other interesting places such as the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation, Hokkaido University, and National Diet Building.



Head of Brunei delegation to Japan East Asia Network of Exchange for Students' and Youths (JENESYS) Programme receive the country flag from Acting Minister of Education.

Drug-Free Asean 2015 needs cooperations

GADONG, December 3 – All sectors of the government and the community should work together in order to achieve 'Drug-Free ASEAN 2015' through teamwork, networking, cooperation within the country itself and among members of ASEAN countries, as well as relevant international agencies and organisations.

The problem of drug abuse has been proven to be one of the greatest challenges facing mankind, and it affects, not only the individuals, but also their families, the nation and the whole society.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Adanan stressed the matter at the opening of the 17th International Federation of Non-Government Organisations (IFNGO) for the Prevention of Drug and Substance Abuse



Minister of Home Affairs opens the 17th International Federation of Non-Government Organisations (IFNGO) for the Prevention of Drugs and Substance Abuse.

Workshop held at the Rizqun International Hotel in Gadong.

The workshop was attended by representatives and experts from ASEAN NGOs, and also from the USA, the Colombo Plan, Macau, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the UN office of Drug Crime. Their presence signifies the collective concern, sheer commitment and dedication to combat drug menace together.

On the theme of the workshop, "Overcoming the Incidence of Recidivism for ASEAN Drug-

Free 2015", it was appropriate and timely as recidivism is a concern, and its prevention should be prioritised by treatment and rehabilitation professionals and relevant agencies.

At the recent 6th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) on November 5 to November 8, it was agreed that to achieve a Drug-Free ASEAN 2015 within the broader ASEAN community, cross-sectoral linkages among existing regional and extra-regional mechanisms need to be further strengthened and coordinated.

Nurses urged practice 7's'

RIMBA, December 15 - Nurses were urged to practice the seven's' at work – senyum, salam, segera, sensitif, sopan, sentuh and segak (smile, greet, prompt, sensitive, polite, contact and smart).

These were highlighted by the Minister of Health, Pehi Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Suyoi at the opening ceremony for orientation of newly recruited nurses in for the year 2007.

According to the Minister, the nursing profession has expanded vastly from bedside nursing care to highly technical tasks involving those of nursing aspects.

He also portrayed the differences between the past and present situation where formerly, nurses only received instructions for doctors. It is no longer the same today as the nurses now run their own nursing diagnosis to identify the patient's problems and plan according to the patient's needs.

He further said that nurses not only need to have knowledge and skills, but they also need to have the ability to use modern medical facilities and assist the doctor confidently.

Nurses also play a role as the mediator

between the doctor and the patient, the patient's family and the public. With this in mind, nurses must also know how to communicate with patients and the public. This has always been emphasizes and it is important if the nurses wants to deliver a good service. Miscommunications, according to the Minister, often happen, little communications can cause misunderstanding and dissatisfaction between both parties.

A number of 130 nurses were recruited for the 17th intake.

As you travel through the river side of Brunei River, you will notice people boarding on board a boat and several boats queuing near the jetties waiting for their passengers. This is a common sight as this service is called water taxi. Water taxis is another form of transportation in Brunei Darussalam which functions similarly as those taxis on land. The only difference is these water taxis commute to send passengers to their destinations on water.

These services have existed since a long time with slight changes, a change that come hand-in-hand with advancement in technology. These boats used to be manually rowed, however today, the boats are now using powered engines.

Almost all of the operators of these water taxis are local youth, who mostly steer their own boats.

These taxis are the most important mode of transportation for those residing in Kampong Ayer (water village) where the houses are built on water. Most of the population here do own a car, however, their vehicles are parked by the riverside. They will need the water taxis to commute from the riverside to their homes.

There are several reasons why the water taxis remain popular – among others is due to the cheap fares and availability. The lowest fare is usually around 50 cents per trip, however, fares are normally charged depending on the distance of the journey taken. The service is available from early hours late night where the taxis are usually waiting for passengers at various jetties located along Brunei River. Among the favourable spots are the Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation and Kianggeh Market jetties.

The boats used for water taxis are mostly made of woods like Kayu Meraka Merah or Meranti Merah (light hardwood belonging to dipterocarpa ceae species) while the tajuk biak (the place to hang the boat engine) is made from Kayu Kapor.

Even fibreglass boats are available in the nation but water taxis operators favour to choose wooden boats. This is because wooden boat has a better knock-resistance, long-lasting and can be easily repaired.

The cost of the water taxi boat (for use in water village) varies depending on the size and boat-makers itself. The smaller size water taxi boat which can accommodate around six people will cost around B\$1700 to B\$1750 each. Meanwhile the bigger size water taxi which can accommodate around eight to 10 people will cost about B\$1,800 to B\$2,000.



A family enjoying the trip around the water village with water taxi.



Picture shows water taxi commuting with a passenger.

The operation of water taxi in Brunei is monitored by the Marine Department of Ministry of Communications. Every water taxi driver should possess boat driving licence endorsed by the department. The boat used must also acquires a licence namely Class Nine License which is also certified by the same department. The boat license is renewable annually.

Besides for commuting to the water village areas, water taxi services are also used to transport passengers to Temburong District. The journey from the Kianggeh/ Subok Jetty to Temburong Jetty takes about 40 to 45 minutes per trip.

The type of boat used is also different as the boat is covered (with roof) and wall. Each boat can accommodate around 15 people per trip with a surcharge of \$6.00 to \$7.00 per person for a one way trip. The water taxis services to neighbouring country; Limbang, Sarawak is also available from the same jetty.

As another source of income, these services can also be used to tour around the water village. The rates, however, differ from each operator ranging from \$10 o \$30. It is advisable for the passenger to negotiate with the boat operator on suitable pricing.

Water taxis remain a popular mode of transportation among commuters from the water village to the mainland. It is hoped that the water taxis services is retained not only as part of our heritage but also as a contributor to the nation's economy.



Passengers flock to the water taxi.



Numbers of water taxi waiting for passenger at the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation jetty.

Putu Mayang

Ingredients:

1.8 kg rice
Water sufficiently

Sauce:

2 whole coconuts
4 eggs
302 g sugar
1 cup pandan water
1 spoon rice flour

Methods:

Grate coconut meat, extract the milk and boil. Then add in sugar, flour, egg, pandan water and bring to boil. Then remove.

Methods:

Soak rice for 2 hours and drip away. Then grind, sieve and steam until tender and then remove into a rattan tray. Boil water, then pour into the rice flour all over, stir and let to cool down. Then put dough into the brass 'pengantulan', press, catch in the tray and curl round like a bun. Then steam until done.



RBTS and World Aerospace Ink MoU

LANGKAWI, December 5 - The Royal Brunei Technical Services (RBTS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with World Aerospace Sdn. Bhd. of Malaysia for Brunei's second international defence exhibition, better known as Bridex 2009.

The MoU was signed at the Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre on the sidelines of the Langkawi International and Maritime Aerospace Exhibition Lima 2007 air show. It was witnessed by Brunei's Deputy Minister of Defence, Pehin Datu Singamanteri Colonel (Rtd) Dato Seri Paduka Haji Mohd Yasmin and the Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister, The Right Honourable, Dato' Seri Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak.

Signing on behalf of RBTS was its acting chairman, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat meanwhile the World Aerospace was represented by its chairman, Tan Sri Dato' Kamaruzzaman Shariff.

Hosted by the Ministry of Defence, Brunei's second international defence exhibition is set for August 10 to 14, 2009.

HIV/AIDS claim two death

BERAKAS, December 6 - Seven locals were reported to suffer from HIV infection / AIDS in 2007 and two people had died because of that infection.

The Acting Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Hazair stated the matter at the World AIDS Day 2007 held at the International Convention Centre. The acting minister said that prevention is still the most effective method to avoid the deadly disease which still has no medicine to cure it. So far, said the acting minister, AIDS had killed more than 25 million people worldwide and according to the United Nations Organisation's report, every eight seconds, there is a person to suffer the HIV infection. World AIDS Day is held every December 1, aimed to commemorate and to enhance efforts towards the fighting of HIV epidemic.



Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Hazair, Acting Minister of Health delivers his speech at the celebration of World AIDS Day 2007 in Berakas.

Custom Import Duties Order and Excise Duties Order enforced

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 31 - The Custom Import Duties Order 2007 and the Excise Duties Order 2007 have been enforced in the country on three import items that took effect from December 31.

The enforcement was announced by the Acting Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, Awang Haji Md. Rozan bin Dato Paduka Haji Md Yunos at a briefing for Automobile Importers Association; Commodity Productions Agency and Government Agencies held at the ministry's building.

Under the implementation of the new Order, there are no import taxes on cigarettes and tobacco, alcoholic beverages

and motor vehicles, but instead replaced with excise duties.

The Custom Import Duties Order 2007 comprises of three schedules: the rate of import duty; exemption from import duty, and scheduled persons.

The Excise Duties Order 2007, meanwhile, entails the rates of duties that need to be paid for imports into the country, while the Excise Duties Order 2007 entails the excise rates that need to be paid for imports into the country as well as goods produced locally.

Both duties will be collected by the Royal Customs and Excise Department.

Brunei collect nine gold medals in Borneo Games

KUCHING, December 1 - Brunei's Borneo Games contingent was greeted with a hero's welcome after bagging nine gold, eight silver and 16 bronze medals in the biennial event in Kuching, Malaysia.

The record surpassed the gold medal tally in the 1st Borneo Games held in Sabah, Malaysia in 2005 when Brunei took seven gold medals.

Brunei Darussalam's gold medal came from tenpin bowling, athletics, gasing (top spinning), sepak takraw, futsal, lawn bowling and hockey. Brunei Darussalam is scheduled to host the next Borneo Games in 2009.

Minister of Health awarded honorary fellowship

UNITED KINGDOM, December 7 - The Minister of Health Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Suyoi was awarded the honorary fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh's Faculty of Dentistry. The college is the oldest surgical college in the world.

The award of this fellowship to the Minister of Health is in recognition for His Majesty's vision and leadership and that the implementation by the Ministry of Health has been exceptionally recognised by the Faculty of Dentistry, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. Recognised for his achievements in the country's health development, the Minister of Health was lauded for starting a dental training programme at the post-graduate level in Brunei, after being accredited by the surgical college in 2004.

OBBD has its own website

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 15 - Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam (OBBD) has now its own website.

The website was launched by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Jemat bin Haji Ampal.

This website is hoped to create bilateral relationship between OBBD with the public especially OBBD's customers. The website which has two language version, Malay and English can be surf through <http://www.obbd.org.bn>.

Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam is a non-profitable government entity directly under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports. It is purely a 'Character Building Center' and by all definitions should not be mistaken as a physical fitness center or a military camp or an outdoor center.

Outward Bound Brunei Darussalam began its full operation in 1999 when the maiden idea for its setting up was initiated by His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei himself. This excellent endeavor was heeded immediately by the Brunei Shell Petroleum Company who undertook the initiatives to conduct serious preliminary study towards the setting up of an Outward Bound center in this country.

New education system for secondary school introduce

GADONG, November 19 - The Ministry of Education will be introducing a new education system in 2009 in all secondary schools.

The Minister of Education, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abdul Rahman stated the matter in an interview soon after officiating the 3rd Annual Seminar in Education at Chancellor Hall, Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

The minister said as trial starting 2008, form one classes in all secondary schools will be using the new syllabus as a basic to the nations' 21st century education system.

Its objectives, said the minister, is to give opportunities to all students to achieve a high level of academic according to the students' ability.

The new education system at the trial stage only involves several subjects in form one and the same time, the ministry will discuss continuously with stakeholders such as, schools; teachers and parents and will do the changes accordingly, said the minister.

World Children Day 2007

TUTONG, November 20 - A total of 500 students from 38 schools from the government and non-government schools in the Tutong District and also special children from several associations attended the World Children Day 2007 celebration held at the Seri Kenangan Hall.

Present at the ceremony was the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Pehin Dato Seri Pahlawan Retired Mejar General Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Awang Mohammad. World Children Day is a global commemoration held every November 20.

New dialysis centre in Kuala Belait

KUALA BELAIT, November 28 - Suri Seri Begawan Hospital will have its own dialysis centre next year for kidney patients who are undergoing haemodialysis treatment in the district.

A foundation laying ceremony was led by the Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Suyoi.

The construction on the new two-storey building began in September last year on a 0 points 4 hectare site near the Suri Seri Begawan Hospital.

The new centre is expected to provide 15 haemodialysis points for non-infected patients with a capacity to treat 90 patients and another five points to treat Hepatitis C patients with a capacity to treat 30 patients.

Customs Department marks 100th Years

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 28 - The Royal Brunei Customs and Exercise Department must enhance the capability and have customised international network to continue develop and ready to face challenges.

The Second Minister of Finance, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman stated the matter at the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Royal Brunei Customs and Excise Department.

The minister said that with having a good networking with the regional and international custom, the Royal Brunei Customs and Exercise Department can exchange knowledge and experience and techniques or new ways to fight smuggling activities.

The Royal Brunei Customs and Exercise Department was established in the year 1906 where its early role was to collect revenue to national income.

At the ceremony, the minister officiated the books to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Royal Brunei Customs and Exercise Departments' establishment. The minister also presented the prizes to the winner of the logo competition.

International Food Safety Forum

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, November 28 - Some 45 countries from regional level including Brunei Darussalam attended the high level International Food Safety Forum from November 26 to 27 in Beijing, China.

Brunei Darussalam was represented by Acting Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Hazair and several officers from the ministry.

In the forum, a joint declaration has been agreed to increase a security global food through the exchange of information about food contamination and endowment disease outbreak food.

Beijing Declaration is the result from the two day forum which involved experts from the World Health Organization (WHO), United States, Canada, Australia, Malaysia, Thailand, Japan and 600 representatives representing 45 countries and 35 organisations.



Takiding can be found in various sizes.

TAKIDING

A basket and other related containers come in many sizes, shapes and colours. They include ordinary baskets that come with or without a lid.

Takiding is a famous traditional basket usually used during harvesting. Tall and wide at its top, it is worn piggy-back used to carry fruits, vegetables and harvested rice.

It is still widely used today as it is convenient and easy to carry. To make a takiding, buluh liat or flexible young bamboos are used. Each stalk is cut to the required length and split into eight equal parts. These are then scraped until smooth and painted in different colours according to the design desired. The process of weaving begins as soon as the paint is dry.

Plaiting is a skill that is passed down through generations and has been carried out until today. The beauty of the art of plaiting can be seen through various flower motifs and patterns which comes in various sizes and colours. The various motifs shown are visible proof of creative, hard-working and diligent Bruneians.

As a measure towards sustaining and to increase the production of this industry, the Brunei Arts and Handicrafts Training Centre (BAHTC) are responsible to carry out these tasks. BAHTC is an agency which plays a vital role on preserving Brunei's high quality handicraft works particularly in weaving. Besides providing proper training for youths who are interested in obtaining this skill, this centre also have an assessing committee to control the quality and value of the products which are produced by their students. As a result, the quality remains at its best and the number of productions have increased each year.



Takiding is commonly used during harvesting.

