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Brunei Darussalam

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## Economic progress, public well-being as national priorities

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 31<sup>st</sup> December** - Brunei Darussalam remains resilient despite ongoing global economic challenges, with the people staying calm and vigilant. His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam stated the matter in a *titah* (royal speech) delivered in conjunction with New Year 2026.

His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam praised the growing role of youth groups in driving positive change and noted encouraging progress among farmers and livestock breeders in boosting production towards food security self-sufficiency.



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam delivering a *titah* (royal speech) in conjunction with New Year 2026.

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## Synergy between human capital, technology highlighted as priority



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office delivering a *sabda* (royal speech) at the Sovereign's Parade Ceremony for the 24<sup>th</sup> Intake of the Officer Cadet School (OCS).

**TANAH JAMBU, 15<sup>th</sup> January** - Modern warfare now extends beyond land, sea and air to include space, cyber and information domains, posing new threats such as cyberattacks and misinformation amplified by artificial intelligence, said His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office at the Sovereign's Parade Ceremony for the 24<sup>th</sup> Intake of the Officer Cadet School (OCS), Defence Academy of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (DA RBAF). His Royal Highness the Crown Prince emphasised the need for strong synergy between human capital and technology, and called for the continued strengthening of the Ministry of Defence's Cyber Defence Policy through a Whole of Government approach.

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## BDCB issues 4 commemorative products

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 22<sup>nd</sup> January** – Brunei Darussalam Central Bank (BDCB) is launching four commemorative products to mark the Diamond Jubilee Wedding Anniversary of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, and Her Majesty Duli Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha binti Al-Marhum Pengiran Pemancha Pengiran Anak Haji Mohamed Alam.

The commemorative collection includes a gold coin, silver coin, cupronickel coin, and – for the first time – a commemorative gold foil.

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## His Majesty sends congratulatory messages

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to send congratulatory messages to:

- His Excellency Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; as well as the people of Myanmar on the occasion of the 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Myanmar on 4<sup>th</sup> January;
- Her Excellency Droupadi Murmu, President of the Republic of India; His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India; as well as the government and people of India on the occasion of the 77<sup>th</sup> Republic Day of India on 26<sup>th</sup> January; and
- Her Excellency The Honourable Samantha Joy Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia; The Honourable Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister of Australia; as well as the government and people of Australia on the occasion of Australia Day on 26<sup>th</sup> January.

## *News*

### Economic progress, public well-being as national priorities (continued)

#### From front page

His Majesty reaffirmed the government's commitment to economic progress and public well-being through renewed and enhanced policies. Although the economy contracted by 1.1 per cent in the first half of 2025, Brunei's macroeconomic fundamentals remain strong, supported by a \$4.0 billion trade surplus and

easing inflation, underscoring the need to enhance competitiveness across key sectors.

The Monarch emphasised continued efforts to attract investment, create high-quality jobs, strengthen international partnerships, empower halal brands and expand exports of locally produced industrial goods. In line with Brunei

Vision 2035, the national digital identity project, Brunei-ID, will be implemented from 3<sup>rd</sup> January to enhance digital governance and public services. His Majesty also consented to the corporatisation of the Postal Services Department into PosBru Sdn. Bhd., effective 1<sup>st</sup> January, to improve service delivery and support broader public sector transformation.

### Synergy between human capital, technology highlighted as priority (continued)



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office at the Sovereign's Parade Ceremony for the 24<sup>th</sup> Intake of OCS, accompanied by His Royal Highness 920 Lieutenant Colonel (U) Prince 'Abdul Mateen ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah.



#### From front page

His Royal Highness noted that 50 officer cadets were commissioned at the ceremony, including participants from the Malaysian Armed Forces, the Singapore Armed Forces, and for the first time, the Royal Thai Armed Forces, reflecting the growing regional recognition of OCS training quality.

His Royal Highness also lauded DA RBAF's achievements over its 15 years, including the first conferment of a Master of Defence and Security Studies in collaboration with Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD).

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His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office presenting the Sword of Honour to Officer Cadet Nur Amanina binti Ismail; and the Best Academic Award to Officer Cadet Jayden Lim Jie En from the Republic of Singapore.



His Royal Highness the Crown Prince presenting Best Military Skills Award to Officer Cadet (U) Awangku Muhammad Haziq Dzulfadhly Mubarak bin Pengiran Haji Md. Amir Ilham; and the Best Physical Endurance Award to Officer Cadet Muhammad Sufi Shayiran bin Roslan.

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Plans to introduce a Bachelor of Defence and Security Studies as a foundational qualification for junior RBAF officers were welcomed, supporting lifelong military education in line with Brunei Vision 2035. His Royal Highness expressed confidence that this approach would strengthen strategic development, defence diplomacy and regional security.



His Royal Highness presenting the Outstanding International Officer Cadet Award to Officer Cadet Rizq Dzakwan bin Sharifuddin from Malaysia (right).



His Royal Highness further highlighted that the update of the Defence White Paper 2021 is underway and will be launched during RBAF's 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary, while reminding that RBAF must remain vigilant amid evolving geopolitical and security challenges. The ceremony also saw the commissioning of 36 male and 14 female officers, the presentation of awards to outstanding cadets, and related ceremonial proceedings.

His Royal Highness and His Royal Highness 920 Lieutenant Colonel (U) Prince 'Abdul Mateen ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah during the doa recitation (left).

## Strong family institutions: The foundation of human excellence

**BERAKAS, 17<sup>th</sup> January** – Human excellence begins with strong family institutions that shape children’s character, morals, and personality, and efforts to strengthen families must be comprehensive and integrated. This was emphasised by His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office, during the National Israk and Mikraj Celebration 1447 Hijrah.

Echoing His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam’s *titah* (royal speech) during the Maulidur Rasul Celebration for 1447 Hijrah, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince highlighted that families founded on faith, piety, and love for Allah foster tranquillity, affection, and mercy. His Royal Highness reminded everyone that they are accountable as leaders within their families, stressing the importance of nurturing noble character in children and protecting them from negative influences.

Referring to the theme ‘Prayer, Foundation of Excellent Human Capital’, His Royal Highness noted that true excellence is not based solely on physical strength or



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office stressed the matter in the *sabda* (royal speech) during the National Israk and Mikraj Celebration for the year 1447 Hijrah.

intellect, but also on spiritual resilience, discipline, and noble character developed through sincere and consistent prayer. Strengthening families in this way supports the goals of Brunei Vision 2035.

The ceremony included Al-Quran recitation, a welcoming speech by Yang

Berhormat Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Awang Haji Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka Awang Haji Othman, Minister of Religious Affairs, religious performances, a special lecture, and prayers, attended by members of the royal family.

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His Royal Highness receiving a pesambah (souvenir) titled Nash'at al-Qa'id (The Making of a Leader) and a book called Perjalanan (Journey).



Their Royal Highnesses with the newly commissioned officer cadets and their family members.

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His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office at the National Israk and Mikraj Celebration for the year 1447 Hijrah. Also present at the event were His Royal Highness the Crown Prince' brothers: His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen.



Yang Berhormat Minister of Religious Affairs delivering a welcoming speech at the event.

Scenes from the event (above & below).



Performances at the event.

## Crown Prince launches UTB's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 19<sup>th</sup> January** – His Royal Highness Prince (Dr.) Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Pro-Chancellor of Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB), graced the Official Launch of UTB's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations, held at Balai Khazanah Islam Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah.

The event commenced with the recitation of Surah Al-Faatihah and a *doa selamat* led by Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Paduka Seri Utama Dato Paduka Seri Setia Awang Haji Salim bin Haji Besar, followed by welcoming remarks from Datin Paduka Professor Dr. Dayang Hajah Zohrah binti Haji Sulaiman, Vice-Chancellor of UTB as Chairperson of the Supreme Committee for the Official Launch of UTB's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.

His Royal Highness the Crown Prince then officially inaugurated the event.



His Royal Highness the Crown Prince inaugurating UTB's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.



His Royal Highness Prince (Dr.) Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Pro-Chancellor of Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) presenting an award to a recipient at the Official Launch of UTB's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations (left); and presenting the Special 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Awards to the recipients (centre, right).



A special celebratory video reflecting on UTB's milestones and institutional development was subsequently screened.

This was followed with the presentation of the Special 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Awards, honouring individuals who have made significant contributions to the university's development and legacy.

The awards included: Anugerah Jasawan (22 recipients); Anugerah Kerja Lama (13 recipients); and Anugerah Extraordinary Staff (seven recipients).

Meanwhile, the UTB 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Logo Design Award went to Dayang Izzati binti Haji Sahrin.

The event also featured the launch of the Wakaf Mushaf UTB; the '4 Dekad' Exhibition, which chronicles

the university's transformation and contributions over 40 years; and the launch of a commemorative book titled 'The First 40 Years: Enlivening Legacy, Empowering Innovation', which documents UTB's institutional journey, leadership, and contribution to national development.

Prior to departure, His Royal Highness received a *pesambah* (souvenir) and took part in a photography session.



Vice-Chancellor of UTB as Chairperson of the Supreme Committee for the Official Launch of UTB's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations delivering her welcoming remarks.

The Wakaf Mushaf UTB (left).

## Nationwide prayers for His Majesty



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and other members of the royal family at the Sunat Hajat Prayer, Recitations of Surah Yaa Siin and Special Doa Ceremony for the health and well-being of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 17<sup>th</sup> January** - A Sunat Hajat Prayer, Recitations of Surah Yaa Siin and Special Doa Ceremony was held for the health and well-being of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, who is scheduled to undergo medical treatment on 18<sup>th</sup> January. The ceremony took place at Istana Nurul Iman, in continuation of similar observances held nationwide on 15<sup>th</sup> January.



Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah binti Pengiran Haji Salleh Ab Rahaman and other members of the royal family at the ceremony.

Gracing the ceremony were His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office, and Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah binti Pengiran Haji Salleh Ab Rahaman, as well as other members of the royal family.

Also present were cabinet ministers; deputy ministers; permanent secretaries; deputy permanent secretaries; and their spouses.

Earlier, on 15<sup>th</sup> January, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince attended the ceremony held at Jame' 'Asr Hassanil Bolkiah, Kiarong. Accompanying His Royal Highness were His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen; and His Royal Highness Prince Haji Jefri Bolkiah.

The event saw the attendance of members of the public service, uniformed personnel, mosque takmir committee members, congregants, and members of the public. Concurrent prayer ceremonies were also held at Masjid Mohammad Jamalul Alam, Belait District; Masjid Hassanal Bolkiah, Tutong District; and Masjid Utama Mohammad Salleh, Temburong District.



His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, sons and brother of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam: His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen; and His Royal Highness Prince Haji Jefri Bolkiah during the ceremony held at Jame' 'Asr Hassanil Bolkiah.

## Minister receives courtesy call



Yang Berhormat Minister of Religious Affairs during the courtesy call from Yang Berbahagia President of Malaysia Ulama Association (PUM) Centre.

**BERAKAS, 20<sup>th</sup> January** - Yang Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Awang Haji Berhormat Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka

Awang Haji Othman, Minister of Religious Affairs, received a courtesy call from Associate Professor Datuk Dr. Luqman bin Haji Abdullah, President of Malaysia Ulama Association (PUM) Centre, who is on an official academic visit to Brunei Darussalam.

During the meeting at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, both sides exchanged views on religious services, including religious and Arabic education, *dakwah*, and the implementation of Islamic law.

The visit strengthened scholarly ties and opened up opportunities for future cooperation.

The Malaysian delegation included senior PUM leaders and representatives from Sabah and Terengganu.

## SAF, RBAF celebrate Golden Jubilee

**JERUDONG, 12<sup>th</sup> January** - An Opening Dinner was hosted by The Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) to mark the commencement of joint activities commemorating the Golden Jubilee of defence relations between the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) and SAF. The event took place at the Indera Samudera Hall, The Empire Brunei.

Present as the Guest of Honour was Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Awang Haji Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yussof, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Defence.

At the event, His Excellency Vice Admiral Dato Paduka Seri Aaron Beng Yao Cheng, Chief of Defence Force of SAF delivered his opening remarks, emphasising the strategic importance of the partnership between the Republic of Singapore and Brunei Darussalam.

The event also featured the launching of the Golden Jubilee Commemorative Logo (SG-BRU 50), which will be worn by



Yang Berhormat Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Defence attending the event as the Guest of Honour.

SAF and ABDB personnel during bilateral engagements throughout the year.

The launching was carried out by Chief of Defence Force of SAF, together with Major General Dato Paduka Seri Haji Muhammad Haszaimi bin Bol Hassan,

Commander of RBAF. The event then proceeded with a ceremonial cake-cutting.

This month, the Singapore Army and the Royal Brunei Land Force will be conducting the 29<sup>th</sup> Exercise Maju Bersama and the 25<sup>th</sup> Exercise Rintis Bersama.

## Brunei-UK strengthen green economy cooperation

**BANDAR SERIBEGAWAN, 25<sup>th</sup> January** - A high-level Brunei Darussalam delegation conducted a working visit to the United Kingdom (UK) from 19<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> January under the Brunei-UK Strategic Dialogue: Brunei Green Economy Framework (BGEF). Led by Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and Second Minister of Finance and Economy, with a separate

delegation to Aberdeen led by Yang Mulia Dato Seri Paduka Awang Haji Mohamad Azmi bin Haji Mohd. Hanifah, Deputy Minister (Energy) at PMO, the mission aimed to strengthen bilateral cooperation on the green economic transition.

The visit focused on balancing economic growth, energy security and environmental protection, building on the 2024 Brunei Green Economy Report and

reinforcing commitments to turn strategic plans into action. Engagements in London highlighted regional and ASEAN collaboration, including partnerships with UK institutions such as Imperial College London's Grantham Research Institute, and explored research linkages with the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change at Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

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Yang Berhormat Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy leading the high-level mission and working visit to the United Kingdom.

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Meetings were held with UK government officials, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC),

and the UK Trade Envoy to advance cooperation in policy coordination, investment readiness and transition finance. In Aberdeen, discussions

centred on energy transition, offshore and industrial decarbonisation, and sustainable decommissioning best practices.

The delegation included representatives from the Ministry of Finance and Economy; the Department of Energy; the Brunei Climate Change Office; the Petroleum Authority of Brunei Darussalam; and the Brunei Economic Development Board. The delegation also included industry players from the Brunei Methanol Company Sdn. Bhd.; Brunei Fertilizer Industries Sdn. Bhd.; and Brunei LNG Sdn. Bhd. The mission concluded with a UK–ASEAN Business Council roundtable to explore commercial opportunities, with outcomes supporting Brunei's economic diversification and sustainable development goals.

## Partnership for energy transition, employment growth

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 30<sup>th</sup> January**

– Brunei Darussalam is strengthening engagement with the United Kingdom (UK) under the Brunei–UK Strategic Dialogue within the Brunei Green Economy Framework (BGEF) to better manage the global energy transition in a balanced and responsible way. The aim is to protect jobs, safeguard energy security, and create new opportunities for Bruneians while moving towards lower-carbon energy sources.

Led by Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and Second Minister of Finance and Economy, the delegation held discussions with UK policymakers, academia, industry experts and professional services firms. Key topics included energy transition pathways, solar energy development, carbon markets, carbon capture and utilisation, and the socio-economic impact of economic transformation.

The discussions focused on Brunei's gradual shift from an oil and gas-based economy to a more diversified, low-carbon model that ensures inclusive growth,



Yang Berhormat Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy during the discussion with UK policymakers, academia, industry experts and professional services firms.

industrial competitiveness and long-term resilience. Solar energy development was highlighted for its potential to support industrial growth, job creation and skills development, while allowing oil and gas resources to be channelled towards higher-value uses.

The delegation also engaged with Imperial College London's Grantham Institute on Climate Change and the Environment

on science-based policymaking and collaboration, met with UK ministers and members of parliament on policy coordination and investment readiness, and participated in UK–ASEAN Business Council discussions on trade and green economy opportunities. The Minister further met Bruneian students in London to discuss future employment prospects and the evolving challenges facing oil and gas producing economies.

## Enhancing tourism coordination, Brunei signs MoU with Cambodia

**CITY OF CEBU, REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, 30<sup>th</sup> January** – Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Abdul Manaf bin Haji Metussin, Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism led Brunei Darussalam's delegation to the 29<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Tourism Ministers (M-ATM) Meeting and related meetings held alongside the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2026, from 29<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> January.

The meetings highlighted ASEAN's strong tourism recovery and progress under the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP)

2016–2025, including regional marketing campaigns, tourism standards cooperation, and the Mutual Recognition Arrangement of Tourism Professionals (MRA-TP).

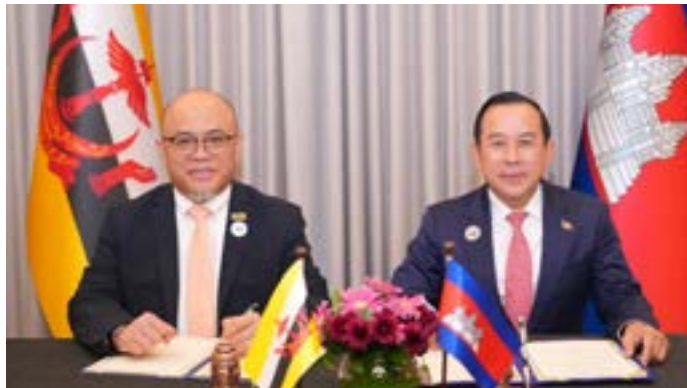
Ministers adopted the ASEAN Tourism Sectoral Plan (ATSP) 2026–2030 and the ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy (ATMS) 2026–2030 to guide regional tourism development, branding and visibility over the next five years.

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Discussions focused on six priority areas: resilient tourism; accessible and seamless travel; tourism workforce empowerment; digital tourism; product and market diversification; and sustainable tourism.

Brunei emphasised enhancing service quality, diversifying tourism products, strengthening cross-sectoral coordination, and promoting low-impact, high-value tourism aligned with sustainability frameworks.



Yang Berhormat Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism during the signing.

Brunei also reaffirmed active engagement with Dialogue Partners, collaboration with ASEAN Centres on community-based tourism and agrotourism, and continued improvements in connectivity, capacity-building and digital solutions.

On the sidelines of ATF 2026, Brunei signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Tourism Cooperation with Cambodia to enhance collaboration in product development, capacity-building and joint marketing, positioning both countries as complementary ASEAN tourism destinations.



Yang Berhormat Minister at the meeting.

## Brunei recognised at the ASEAN Tourism Standards Awards

**CITY OF CEBU, REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, 31<sup>st</sup> January** - The ASEAN Tourism Standards Awards Ceremony was held in conjunction with the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) 2026 to recognise the tourism sector's excellence – highlighting tourism organisations' quality standards, sustainable practices, and outstanding achievements.

Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Abdul Manaf bin Haji Metussin, Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism presented the awards to the Brunei Darussalam recipients.

Under the ASEAN Green Hotel Award category, Radisson Hotel was recognised for its commitment to sustainable hospitality practices.

Several Bruneian venues were also honoured under the ASEAN MICE Venue Awards. Among them, the An-Naura Hall at the Yayasan Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Complex; the Mutiara Ballroom at Radisson Hotel Brunei Darussalam; and the Indera Samudra Grand Hall at The Empire Brunei received awards in the Meeting Room category. Meanwhile, the Indera Samudra Grand Hall at The Empire Brunei, and the BRIDEX International Conference Centre were recognised under the Exhibition Venue category.



Yang Berhormat Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism with the Brunei Darussalam recipients.

Brunei also stood out in sustainable tourism. The Mangrove River Safari by Freme Travel Services won the ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Award under the Eco-Tourism Destination Theme and Packages for the Urban Product category. Meanwhile, Discover Temburong and the Canopy Walk Tower were also commended under the Eco-Tourism Destination Theme for the Rural Product category.

## Strengthening regional digital ecosystems

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 17<sup>th</sup> January** – Yang Berhormat Pengiran Dato Seri Setia Shamhary bin Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Mustapha, Minister of Transport and Infocommunications led Brunei Darussalam's delegation to the 6<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Digital Ministers' Meeting (ADGMIN) and related meetings in Ha Noi, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, held on 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> January.

The meeting, chaired by His Excellency Nguyen Manh Hung, Minister of Science and Technology of Viet Nam with Brunei as Vice-Chair, focused on the theme 'Adaptive ASEAN: From Connectivity to Connected Intelligence', emphasising stronger regional digital ecosystems, digital trust, and inclusive, sustainable development.

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Yang Berhormat Minister of Transport and Infocommunications leading Brunei Darussalam's delegation to the 6<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Digital Ministers' (ADGMIN) Meeting and related meetings.



WIKGames receiving the Silver Award under the Digital Content Category for their digital product, Tikus Tales.

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During the meeting, the Minister of Transport and Infocommunications highlighted the importance of advancing connected intelligence and digital public infrastructure. The ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2030 was officially launched to guide the region's digital transformation over the next five years. The meeting also endorsed 17 digital projects for implementation in 2026, including several coordinated by Brunei, such as the ASEAN AI Skilling Framework and ASEAN Digital Trade Infrastructure (Phase 2).

The meeting included engagements with ASEAN's dialogue partners and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). At the ASEAN Digital Awards 2026, Brunei's WIKGames won a Silver Award in the Digital Content category for its 3D game, Tikus Tales.

## Reception celebrates Republic Day of India

**JERUDONG, 27<sup>th</sup> January** - The High Commission of India in Brunei Darussalam hosted a Reception in conjunction with the 77<sup>th</sup> Republic Day of India at the Royal Berkshire Hall, Tarindak D'Polo.

Representing the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the Reception was Yang Berhormat Pengiran Dato Seri Setia Shamhary bin Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Mustapha, Minister of Transport and Infocommunications, accompanied by his spouse.

The event commenced with the national anthems of both countries, followed by welcoming remarks from His Excellency Ramu Abbagani, High Commissioner of the Republic of India to Brunei Darussalam.

During the Reception, His Excellency also presented appreciation awards to three distinguished Indian figures for their respective contributions: namely Dr. Thirunavukkarasu Ganesan; Professor Dr. Nehaluddin Ahmad; and Professor Hasnain. The event saw the attendance of an estimated 300 guests.



Yang Berhormat Minister of Transport and Infocommunications representing the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the Reception.

## MoU inked to advance regional maritime sector

**ANGGEREK DESA, 28<sup>th</sup> January** – Brunei Darussalam's strategic position along key regional and international shipping routes underscores the need for resilient, efficient and well-connected maritime and logistics networks amid increasingly complex global supply chains.

Speaking at the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Signing Ceremony between DP World Logistics Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. and Warisan Shipping Line Sdn. Bhd., Yang Berhormat Pengiran Dato Seri Setia Shamhary bin Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Mustapha, Minister of Transport and Infocommunications as Chairman of Maritime and Port Authority of Brunei Darussalam (MPABD) highlighted that the collaboration supports MPABD's Navigating 2030 Strategic Plan. The plan aims to enhance port competitiveness, strengthen maritime connectivity and position Brunei as a trusted maritime gateway.

The Minister of Transport and Infocommunications emphasised the crucial role of maritime businesses in driving sector growth, noting that partnerships such as this translate strategic vision into tangible outcomes that reinforce supply chains, expand regional linkages and generate economic value.

Under the MoU, both companies will collaborate to develop and



Yang Berhormat Minister of Transport and Infocommunications as Chairman of Maritime and Port Authority of Brunei Darussalam (MPABD) delivering his speech at the event.

operate container transportation services, increase shipment volumes and routes, and explore future logistics infrastructure to boost trade flows between Brunei; Malaysia; the Republic of Indonesia; and the southern region of the Republic of the Philippines.

## 49<sup>th</sup> SSEAYP: Bridging cultures, sharing perspectives

**BERAKAS, 12<sup>th</sup> January** – The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports is sending a delegation of 16 youths and a national leader to participate in the 49<sup>th</sup> Ship for South-East Asian and Japanese Youth Programme (SSEAYP) in Tokyo, Japan, from 14<sup>th</sup> January to 17<sup>th</sup> February.

At the National Flag Handover Ceremony held at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium, Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Nazmi Mohamad, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports emphasised that participation in SSEAYP supports Brunei Darussalam’s national youth development agenda by strengthening leadership skills, intercultural competence and regional responsibility. The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports encouraged delegates to actively engage, exchange perspectives and build lasting networks with youths from ASEAN Member States and Japan.

The delegation, comprising eight males and eight females aged 18 to 30, is led by a National Leader and Youth Leader, with an Assistant Youth Leader. During the programme, participants will take part in discussions on regional and global issues, cultural exchanges, community engagement and leadership development activities.

Six key themes will be covered: Quality Education; Economic Growth and Sustainable Tourism; Global Environment and



Yang Berhormat Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports delivering an address during the National Flag Handover Ceremony for the Brunei Darussalam delegation to the 49<sup>th</sup> Ship for South-East Asian and Japanese Youth programme (SSEAYP).

Climate Change; Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery; Social Welfare and Inclusion; and Digital Society and Artificial Intelligence. This edition of SSEAYP will also include port calls in the Kingdom of Thailand and the Republic of Singapore.



Yang Berhormat Minister officiating the handover (left); and in a group photo at the ceremony (right).



## Workshop enhances technical understanding, addresses maritime challenges

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 27<sup>th</sup> January** - The Prime Minister’s Office, through the Security and Law Division Unit of the National Maritime Coordination Centre (NMCC), co-hosted a Maritime Technical Workshop with the United States Embassy in Brunei Darussalam. The event took place at Radisson Hotel.

The workshop was officiated by Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Anak Haji Mohammed Saifullah bin Pengiran Indera Setia Diraja Sahibul Karib Pengiran Anak Haji Idris, Deputy Commissioner of the Royal Brunei Police Force (RBPF); with opening remarks from Commander Rasman bin Puteh, Director of NMCC.



Yang Amat Mulia Deputy Commissioner of the Royal Brunei Police Force (RBPF) in a group photo during the workshop.

The workshop served as a platform to enhance maritime technical understanding and address evolving

maritime security challenges through best practices and knowledge exchange. It also aimed to streamline maritime

knowledge and strengthen collective and coordinated responses to such challenges.

## Four awarded Australia Awards scholarship

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 9<sup>th</sup> January** - Four individuals from Brunei Darussalam will be pursuing postgraduate studies in Australia this year under the Australia Awards scholarship.

The recipients are: Dayang Siti Nur Diyana Mohd. Alipah (pursuing PhD in Medicine and Health at the University of Sydney); Dayangku Fatnin Syahirah Pengiran Mohd. Shah (pursuing Master of Environmental Management and Development at the Australian National University); Dayang Nurnafaizzan Syahmi Nordin (pursuing Master of Data Science at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology); and Awang Muhammad Irahm bin Awang Roslan (pursuing Master of Biological Sciences at the University of Melbourne).

Fully funded by the Department of



His Excellency Australian High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam with the recipients and alumni of the Australian Awards scholarship.

Foreign Affairs and Trade of Australia, but also professional development opportunities and entry into a global network of Australia Awards alumni. The scholarship recipients will not only receive world-class higher education,

## National contingent returns home with major wins

**BERAKAS, 27<sup>th</sup> January** - Twenty-one members of the Brunei Darussalam contingent – comprising 12 athletes, nine officers – have safely returned to the country after securing six medals (comprising one gold, three silvers and two bronzes) in the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games 2025 in Nakhon Ratchasim, Kingdom of Thailand.

Present to welcome the contingent at the Brunei International Airport were Pengiran Haji Mohd. Hasnan bin Pengiran Haji Ali Hassan, Permanent Secretary (Culture) at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports; as well as senior officials from the Department of Youth and Sports.

During the games, Awang Kamarul Ariffin bin Haji Abd. Ghaffar managed to clinch one gold medal in the TPB2 Tenpin Bowling Single event; and a silver medal together with Awang Saidin bin Awang Haji Damit in the TPB2 + TPB2 Tenpin Bowling Double event. Awang Saidin also collected a bronze medal in TPB2 Tenpin Bowling Single.

On the other hand, the athletics team secured two silver medals through Awang Haji Mohd. Rudy Izman bin



The Permanent Secretary (Culture) at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports welcoming the national contingent at the Brunei International Airport.

Awang Haji Badar in the Men's Shot Put F53/F54 event; and Dayang Nor Hensan binti Haji Mataha in the Women's Shot Put F11 event.

Meanwhile, under the Men's Javelin F34 Para Athletic, Awang Alihan bin Muda

managed to bring home a bronze medal.

The contingent was led by Awang Haji Ali Yusri bin Haji Abdul Ghafor, Chef de Mission of the Brunei Darussalam Contingent to the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games 2025.

## UNISSA joins international conference

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 25<sup>th</sup> January** - Dato Seri Setia Dr. Haji Norarfan bin Haji Zainal, Rector of Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) attended the 36<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, held in Cairo from 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January, following an official invitation from His Excellency Dr.

Osama Al-Azhari, Minister of Awqaf of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

This conference was convened under the patronage of His Excellency Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, President of Egypt, bringing together ministers, muftis, religious leaders, scholars, and intellectuals from

over 50 countries.

Discussions include the renewal of religious discourse, the rejection of extremist ideologies, and the role of

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Islamic institutions in human development and societal development worldwide.

As part of the conference, a special meeting and roundtable discussion were held between His Excellency President of Egypt and the heads of delegations from all participating countries.

UNISSA's participation is in line with the conference framework, which emphasises human development, professional ethics, the empowerment of moderate Islamic discourse, and international cooperation in the fields of knowledge and *dakwah*.

The Rector of UNISSA also paid courtesy visits and held bilateral discussions with His Eminence Professor Dr. Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed Al-Tayeb, the Grand



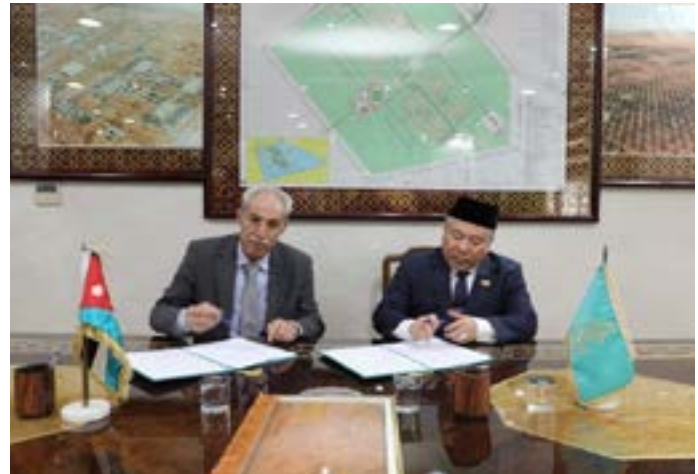
The Rector of Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) attending the 36<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs.

Imam of Al-Azhar; His Eminence Mufti of Egypt; as well as the Presidents of Professor Dr. Nazir Ayyad, the Grand Al-Azhar University and Cairo University.

## Strategic collaboration in education, research

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 26<sup>th</sup> January** – Dato Seri Setia Dr. Haji Norarfan bin Haji Zainal, Rector of Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA), conducted official visits to enhance international academic partnerships. On 22<sup>nd</sup> January, UNISSA renewed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with three Jordanian universities – University of Jordan, Yarmouk University, and Al al-Bayt University – to expand collaboration in academic exchanges, joint research, conferences, and resource sharing, while reinforcing bilateral ties.

Earlier, on 13<sup>th</sup> January, the Rector of UNISSA signed an MoU with Kansai University of International Studies (KUIS) in Japan to advance education and research in sustainable tourism. The partnership supports national sustainable tourism goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through student and staff exchanges, joint short courses, and collaborative curriculum development integrating sustainability, circular economy, and social responsibility principles into tourism programmes.



The Rector of Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) signing one of the renewed Memoranda of Understanding during the official visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

## MoU inked to strengthen academic, research collaboration

**TUNGKU LINK, 29<sup>th</sup> January** - Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) and Chongqing University (CQU) have officially strengthened their collaboration through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The MoU was signed by Dr. Hazri bin Haji Kifle, Vice-Chancellor of UBD; and Profesor Dr. Jun Yang, Vice-President of CQU.

The ceremony was also witnessed by Dr. Haji Abdul Hanif bin Dato Paduka Haji Mahadi, Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Research, Innovation and Sustainability) of UBD; Professor Dr. Hui Xie, Deputy Secretary-General of the University Network of Research Cooperation (iUNRC), Vice Director of the International Office and Vice Dean of the Institute for Science and Technology Development at CQU.

The agreement establishes a framework for cooperation in areas of mutual interest – including academic exchange, joint research initiatives, and collaborative activities that support innovation, capacity building, and sustainable development.



A group photo session during the signing ceremony.

## Deepening cooperation against cross-border cybercrime threats

**GADONG, 22<sup>nd</sup> January** - The Royal Brunei Police Force (RBPF) held a meeting at the Officers' Mess, Gadong Police Headquarters, with a delegation from the INTERPOL Cybercrime Directorate as part of its efforts to deepen strategic cooperation in addressing cross-border cybercrime threats.

Leading the delegation was Dr. Neal Jetton, Director of Cybercrime at INTERPOL; accompanied by Wei Xian Tee, Cybercrime Specialist Officer at INTERPOL.

The meeting was attended by the Director and Deputy Director of the Criminal Investigation Department; the Assistant Head of the Cyber Crime Investigation Division; as well as the Head of the International Affairs Unit and National Central Bureau of Brunei Darussalam.

The session aimed to reinforce the collaborative relationship between RBPF and INTERPOL, particularly in enhancing joint capabilities to combat increasingly complex and global cybercrime.



The meeting with a delegation from the INTERPOL Cybercrime Directorate taking place.

The discussions focused on evolving cyber threats, the importance of information sharing, and the need for coordinated efforts.

During the meeting, RBPF shared insights into current domestic trends and cybercrime threats, including key challenges and operational priorities.

Meanwhile, INTERPOL presented its latest initiatives undertaken by the Cybercrime Directorate, including approaches to addressing the growing commercialisation of cybercrime, as well as regional and global operational activities aimed at strengthening cross-border coordination and enforcement efforts.

## Brunei maintains 13<sup>th</sup> position in IFDI 2025

**BERAKAS, 3<sup>rd</sup> January** – Brunei Darussalam retained its 13<sup>th</sup> global ranking in the Islamic Finance Development Indicator (IFDI) 2025, demonstrating continued resilience in its Islamic finance sector. Its overall score rose to 31 points (from 29 in 2024), even as the global average declined from 12 to 11 points.

The results, published in the 2025 Islamic Finance Development Report by ICD and LSEG, assess Islamic finance performance across 140 countries using five indicators: Financial Performance, Governance, Sustainability, Awareness, and Knowledge.

Although Brunei's Financial Performance

score fell to 9 points, it ranked 10<sup>th</sup> globally in total takaful assets at USD0.5 billion. The Awareness indicator saw a significant increase from 24 to 44 points, driven by more Islamic finance news publications. In Governance, Brunei maintained a full score for Regulations, contributing to a slight rise in its overall Governance score from 71 to 72 points.

## Bruneian student receives award at ACGS 2026

**SEOUL, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, 15<sup>th</sup> January** – A Bruneian student received recognition at the 15<sup>th</sup> ASEAN+3 Student Camp for the Gifted in Science (ACGS) 2026, held in Seoul, from 4<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> January.

'Aliah Zahra binti Mohamed Fairuz, a Year 10 student under the Lower Secondary Scholarship Scheme at Jerudong International School (JIS), won the Exemplary Pre-Camp Activities Award for her research project titled 'Sun, Salt, Shrimp: How Does Varying Salt Concentration Affect Microbial Growth and Water Activity (aw) in Dried Shrimp During Storage'. Her work focused on traditional food preservation methods.

Organised by the ASEAN+3 Centre for the Gifted in Science with support from the Korean Ministry of Science and ICT and the Korean Foundation for Science and Creativity (KOSAC), the camp was themed 'Food for All: The Role and Responsibility of Science for a Sustainable Tomorrow'. Participants engaged in expert lectures, scientific discussions and collaborative presentations with peers from ASEAN+3 countries.

Three students represented Brunei through coordination by the Ministry of Education's Centre for the Development of Gifted and Talented Education: 'Aliah Zahra and Nadia binti Ahmad Sukarni from JIS, and Hasya Fasiha binti Azrin from International School Brunei.



'Aliah Zahra binti Mohamed Fairuz with her award.

## BDCB launches 4 commemorative products



Among the commemorative products to be issued by Brunei Darussalam Central Bank.

### From front page

All items feature a portrait of Their Majesties taken during the 2017 Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration at the International Convention Centre. The design incorporates the traditional woven motif *Kain Si Lubang Bangsi*, symbolising cultural heritage and refinement, as well as the number '60' in Roman and Jawi numerals to represent six decades of royal marriage. The reverse of the gold foil displays Their Majesties' personal emblems, reflecting royal sovereignty and strength.

In terms of specifications and pricing: the gold coin (999.9 gold,

31.1g) carries a face value of \$600 and is priced from \$6,700, subject to market rates; the silver coin (999 silver, 31.1g) has a face value of \$60 and is priced at \$560; the cupronickel coin (28g) carries a face value of \$6 and is sold at \$360, and the gold foil (999.9 gold, 1g) is priced from \$450, subject to prevailing gold prices.

The public may purchase the commemorative products starting Monday, 2 February 2026 at the BDCB Gift Shop, Level 1, BCMB Building, Ministry of Finance and Economy Complex, Commonwealth Drive.

## Luminara: First high-end superyacht to visit Brunei

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 22<sup>nd</sup> January** - Brunei Darussalam welcomed the maiden visit of Luminara, a superyacht from The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection, carrying approximately 207 passengers and 334 crew members to the country on its maiden visit.

The yacht arrived from the Republic of the Philippines before continuing on to the Republic of Singapore.

The passengers were greeted with a cultural performance upon arrival. They also had the opportunity to visit key attractions, gaining deeper insights into the country's history, culture, and way of life.

Luminara is the first high-end luxury superyacht to ever call at Brunei. Its visit sets a new benchmark in the development of the country's cruise



Brunei Darussalam welcomed the maiden visit of Luminara, a superyacht from The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection.

tourism and underscores its appeal as an exclusive destination for premium and luxury cruise segments, while also paving the way for future high-end cruise opportunities.

Brunei is also expected to receive further cruise calls following this inaugural stop, including Zhao Shang Yi Dun – Viking Sun on 25<sup>th</sup> January and Adora Mediterranea on 30<sup>th</sup> January.

## UBD Computer Science enters THE Subject Rankings

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 28<sup>th</sup> January** - Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) has achieved a new milestone with the entrance of Computer Science into the Times Higher Education (THE) Subject Rankings for the first time, placing in the 251-300 band.

The university recorded its highest number of ranked subjects to date, with eight subjects now featured in the rankings. Alongside

the debut of Computer Science, six of the seven previously ranked subjects improved their positions. Education Studies ranked 201-250; while Business and Economics, and Engineering ranked 251-300. Life Sciences; Medical and Health; and Physical Sciences ranked 401-500. Social Sciences maintained its position at 301-400.

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Within Southeast Asia, UBD's ranked subjects continue to place competitively in the top 10. Computer Science, Social Science, and Engineering ranked seventh in the region; while Medical and Health ranked eighth; Education Studies ranked ninth; while Business and Economics, Life Sciences, and Physical Sciences ranked 10<sup>th</sup>.

Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) has achieved a new milestone with the entrance of Computer Science into the Times Higher Education (THE) Subject Rankings for the first time.



## Total trade shows surplus of \$390.0 million

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, 26<sup>th</sup> January** - The total trade in November 2025 amounted to \$1,687.4 million, comprising exports valued at \$1,038.7 million and imports amounting to \$648.7 million, resulting in a trade surplus of \$390.0 million.

The major contributors to the export value were mineral fuels accounting for 73.4 per cent; followed by chemicals at 23.5 per cent; and machinery and transport equipment at 1.0 per cent.

The main export markets were Australia, accounting for 23.1 per cent; followed by the People's Republic of China at 15.7 per cent; and Japan at 12.3 per cent. The largest export commodities to these countries were mineral fuels and chemicals.

Meanwhile, for imports, the major contributors were mineral fuels at 65.7 per cent; followed by machinery and transport equipment at 10.7 per cent; and Food at 10.1 per cent.

The largest import partners were Malaysia, accounting for 50.4 per cent; followed by South Africa at 13.1 per cent; and the People's Republic of China at 7.4 per cent. The main import commodities from these trading partners were mineral fuels and food.

The imports for end use categories were mainly used as intermediate goods processing, accounting for 59.6 per cent; followed by capital goods for business operations at 36.4 per cent; and consumption goods for household use at 4.0 per cent.

Compared to November 2024, the total trade value declined by 10.1 per cent in November 2025, driven by decreases in both exports and imports by 9.9 per cent and 10.4 per cent, respectively. The decline in exports value was mainly driven by lower global prices of key commodities.

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جيدان فرزانجان ايكونومي دان ستاتيستيك  
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 MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMY  
 BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

### INTERNATIONAL MERCHANDISE TRADE STATISTICS NOVEMBER 2025 BND Million

