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BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

newsletter

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Sultan takes a close look at the Ministry of Development



The head of the Research and Development Unit of the Ministry of Development, Malai Haji Hashim bin Malai Haji Othman briefs his Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam about one of the exhibited items at a science and technology exhibition being held at the ministry's foyer. The exhibition's theme: Mathematics in our daily lives, is being held until August, at the ministry.

The Ministry of Development, in its endeavours to support nation-building aspirations, is providing among others, basic infrastructure, various amenities and public services, His Majesty and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has heard.

All these are aimed at improving the quality of life of

the people and facilitate national socio-economic development.

These were some of the details disclosed by the Minister of Development, Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Indera Wijaya Pengiran Dr. Haji Ismail when he briefed His Majesty Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-

Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam during the ruler's visit to the ministry on 27 May and 29 May.

The Development Minister said that in order to fulfill the requirements and needs of these provisions, his ministry undertakes such functions as managing a well-organised and

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**BRUNEI
DARUSSALAM
NEWSLETTER**

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Editorial Staff

Chief Editor
Mahari Haji Ismail

Editors
Aisah Haji Piee
Hanafiah Mohamad
Hajjah Zaianit Haji Noorkhan

Layout/Design
Editorial Staff

Photographs
Photography Unit of
The Department of Information

YOUR TURN

The next issue of the Brunei Darussalam newsletter will appear on 31 July 1997. If there are events relating to our country you would like featured in this newsletter please call us on Tel: 02-383941 or better still, send us a report with a picture, if possible. All editorial rights reserved.

Role of Muslim youths are crucial in facing the twenty first century

Concerted effort sought to solve social problems faced by Muslim youngsters.

Brunei Darussalam's Religious Affairs Minister has called on the Religious Councils of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, or 'MABIMS,' to seek ways on solving social problems faced by the Muslim youths in these countries.

Youths to continue present effort in the future

Yang Berhormat Pehin Jawatan Luar Pekerma Raja Dato Seri Utama Dr. Ustaz Haji Mohd. Zain, the Religious Affairs Minister said that the resources of Muslim youngsters and youths are vital in the 21st century because they are the ones to continue and enhance the efforts that are being rapidly undertaken at present.

The minister made the remarks at the opening of the Seventh Informal Religious Ministers' Meeting held at the Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkiah mosque in the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan on 19 June 1997.

Parents not to neglect roles towards their children

He stressed that parents are responsible for the development of their children and should not neglect their responsibilities enjoined by Allah (God) the Almighty.

The meeting among others discussed current issues of various topics especially on matters of Islamic community in the region.

The topic discussed included economic matters, such as

cooperation on information exchanges namely the 'Islamic Economic Foundation' that is progressing rapidly on the efforts to implement economic activities that are based on the Islamic principles such as banking management, insurance and other commercial businesses.

The minister said that there has been cooperation in the insurance sector among the Islamic economic foundations of ASEAN member countries.

He added that they will also discuss on cooperation about implementing 'zakat' management (zakat is the tithe payable by Muslims after the fasting month of Ramadhan).

Pehin Dato Dr. Haji Mohd. Zain also highlighted the importance of the Islamic Information Resource Centre. He said that the availability of information could be utilised for the benefit of the Muslim ummahs.

This is one of the measures to combat ignorance (in religious matters) of Muslims, stressed the minister.

The meeting was attended by Malaysian Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Dato Dr. Haji Abdul Hamid, Singapore's Community Development Minister cum Minister Responsible for Islamic Community Affairs, Encik Abdullah Tarmugi and Dr. Haji Termizi Taher, the Indonesian Religious Minister.

(Picture opposite page)

Brunei Darussalam's Religious Affairs Minister, Yang Berhormat Pehin Jawatan Luar Pekerma Raja Dato Seri Utama Dr. Ustaz Haji Awang Haji Mohd. Zain, second from left, alongside his counterparts from Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore at the Seventh Unofficial Meeting of the Religious Councils of the four countries, which Brunei Darussalam hosted recently.



Knowledge and skills top priority to meet Sultanate's needs

Brunei Darussalam places a high premium on knowledge and skills by constantly reviewing and fine-tuning its education policies and their implementations to meet the needs of a young and growing nation, the acting Minister of Education has said.

Dato Seri Laila Jasa Dr. Haji Ahmad said that besides having abundant natural resources, the country now initiates its education and development policies towards nurturing human talent and developing human potential to the fullest.

The minister made the remarks when he opened a three-day seminar on "Literacy in the School and the Home Research to Practice" at the University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD) on 16 June 1997.

He said: "Some Bruneians are too complacent with the idea that

our natural resources such as gas and oil are going to be with us until doomsday. On the other hand some of us now realise that people are our most valuable resources."

Living standards determined in classrooms

Dato Dr. Haji Ahmad pointed that the struggle to raise a nation's living standards is fought first and foremost in the classroom, and through conscious, deliberate and long-term planning of good government.

Brunei Darussalam provides at least 12 years of education for all children since the year 1992, for which the system incorporates flexibility so that children of different abilities have the opportunity to succeed and go as far as they can, he said.

He went on to say that the Sultanate will continue to prepare the young people to meet the

challenges of today and tomorrow and to give every child the values of the national M.I.B (Malay Islamic Monarchy) philosophy that will help the child to earn a living and to contribute meaningfully to society.

Reading is key to all other knowledge

Speaking to over 200 participants from within and outside the country, Dato Dr. Haji Ahmad also highlighted the importance of reading as one of the three fundamental skills to be acquired and possessed by children as a gateway to all other knowledge.

He said that if children do not learn to read efficiently, the path is blocked to every subject they encounter in their school years and they will face a rather difficult

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future.

He noted that there have been many studies in recent years, particularly in the developed countries, and elsewhere about reading and learning problems associated with reading. The past several years have brought major breakthroughs in the knowledge of how some children learn to read and why so many fail.

These new insights have been translated into techniques for teaching to beginning readers, including the many school children who would otherwise encounter difficulties in mastering this fundamental skill.

Teaching children to read by the end of primary three, or in some countries referred to as the third grade, is the single most important task assigned to primary schools, he said.

Starting in primary four, schooling takes on a very different purpose, one that in many ways is more complex and demanding of higher-order thinking skills.

Comprehensive and effective programme to achieve fluency in reading needed

Dato Dr. Haji Ahmad further stressed that Brunei Darussalam is yet to come up with a comprehensive and effective programme to ensure that all pupils become fluent and avid readers by the time they reach secondary education.

He noted that a major effort is already underway to raise the standard of teaching and learning in schools in this country. Improved reading instruction is crucial to this process, he added.

He pointed that his ministry embarked on two fundamental and structural changes in the system



The Acting Education Minister, Dato Seri Laila Jasa Dr. Awang Haji Ahmad Jumat says people are a most valuable asset.

of education recently to contain high percentages of educational wastages at primary level, namely the introduction of Special Education Unit aimed at providing Learning Assistant Teachers (LAT) in the primary schools; and the introduction of level II curriculum starting from form one, wherein children will sit the Junior Secondary Assessment Examination in 1999.

Teachers still not fully equipped for effective teaching of reading

The minister urged that the current teacher training at the faculty of education, University Brunei Darussalam, should be thoroughly researched and reviewed, and he called on the need for drastic overhaul in the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic. The vast majority of the local teachers are not being adequately prepared to be effective teachers of the three R's, he stressed.

"The faculty of education has to be made much accountable in its teacher training programmes so that undergraduates are fully

equipped and prepared to teach our children the basics of the three R's; the future quality of primary education depends on the very effectiveness of a well planned Teacher Training Curriculum," he stressed.

The seminar was organised by the Ministry of Education with the co-operation of the Brunei Association of Reading and Literacy, and the International Development in Asia Committee (IDAC).

The seminar aimed to raise public awareness on the role of the International Reading Association (IRA) in promoting the cause of literacy in Asia and raise awareness of educational communities to the important link between home and school.

Towards protecting and conserving the environment

Education plays a crucial role in moulding awareness to the young

Brunei Darussalam is intensifying efforts towards protecting and conserving its environment. These include the crucial role of education, and the effort to inculcate environmental awareness and the contemporary issues of conservationism among the school children, a senior government official has highlighted.

Use good strategies to teach reading skills

The Permanent secretary of the Education Ministry highlighted recently that it is the responsibility of educators to ensure that good teaching strategies are employed in the teaching of reading skills.

This, he said, must go hand in hand with regular reading practices, such as by emphasising perceptual activities, vocabulary development, comprehension and reading speed.

In his remarks at the closing of a seminar on 'Literacy In the School and In the Home: Research To Practice' conducted at the Universiti Brunei Darussalam on 18 June, Dato Paduka Haji Ali Hashim pointed that teachers need to set aside quiet reading time during class in which they can serve as a role model, and to teach students that reading is valued.

He said that a country's socio-economic groups and status have significant effect on literacy rate, and the more well read a group of people are, the higher the literacy rate.

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He said, through a carefully planned curriculum, our young people can be made clearly aware of the delicate balance of the earth's eco-system and the non-renewable nature of certain resources.

Dato Paduka Haji Ali Hashim, the Permanent Secretary at the Education Ministry made the remarks when he opened a three-day Environmental Education Workshop on 10 June. The workshop was organised by the University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD) with the cooperation of the Education Ministry, the United Nations Regional Programme and Australia's Griffith University.

The workshop, which was attended by school teachers as well as officials from various ministries and the private sectors, was aimed at focusing the role of education in instilling and moulding the community especially school children on the awareness and understanding towards protecting and conserving cleanliness and the quality of environment.

"The young are the future guardians of our environment and have to know what they are protecting and why. The effort must be sustainable, that is, carried forward into the 21st century and beyond," stressed the permanent secretary.

He added that learning about the environment is aimed at developing the knowledge of awareness, attitudes, values and skills that would enable students to participate in maintaining and improving the quality of the local, national, regional and indeed global environment.

Environmental education in schools has been infused across the curriculum and elements are included in Malay, English

language, science, the national MIB (Malay Muslim Monarchy), philosophy art and geography subjects.

In primary schools, science topics are covered in a progressive way. For example, pupils will start with personal hygiene and later be able to relate it to human and environmental health. Very importantly, social issues such as drugs are also included in the topics.

At the secondary level the importance is recognised of integrating ecological concepts into science courses, as well as issues relating to consumerism, energy and water use.

In geography, the curriculum considers the environmental effects arising out of human activity like agriculture and industry.

In civics, awareness of the built and natural environment are covered together with caring for the environment and maintaining it in a clean and healthy condition.

"These few examples indicate that environmental education now has a well established identity as a permeating element in the curriculum at both primary and secondary levels," the official pointed.

He added that environmental education should include as many experiences as possible that go beyond the classroom to provide opportunities for students to gain first hand experience of their environment and develop their skills in observation, data collection, practical enquiry, investigation and the use of special technology.

Programmes providing these opportunities are organised by government and non-government entities including the Ministry of Health (for environment health), the

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Audiences for visiting ministers, and diplomats.

Relations between Brunei Darussalam and the Republic of Maldives, especially in educational cooperation, are expected to be further enhanced.

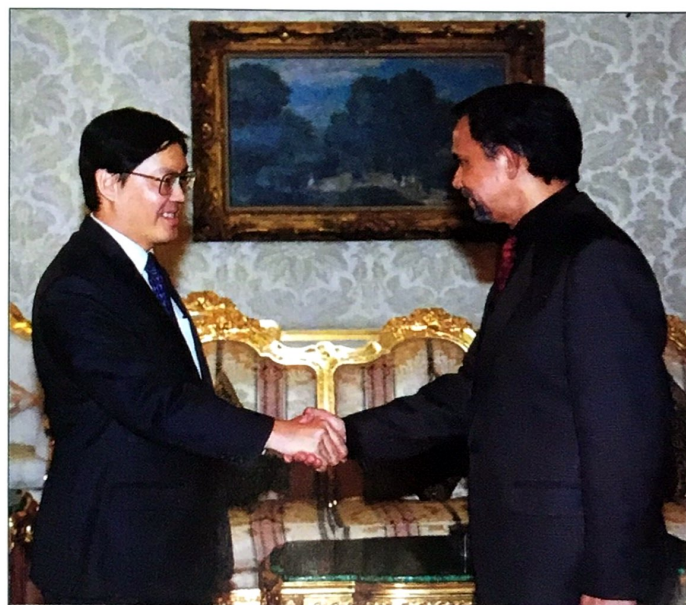
This follows a four-day working visit to Brunei Darussalam by Maldives' Education Minister, His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Latheef, who was granted an audience at Istana Nurul Iman by His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on 17 May.

During his stay, His Excellency exchanged views with his Brunei counterpart and education officials, and discussed bilateral relations in education between the two sides.

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Top: His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam receives the Maldives Education Minister, The Honourable Dr. Mohamed Latheef, and above, the outgoing Pakistani High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Major-General (R) Haji Saeed Uz Zaman Janjua. Below right: The ruler receives Singapore's State Minister for Defence, His Excellency Mr. Matthias Yao Chih, while picture below left shows the monarch with Greece's non-resident ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Constantine Ailianos.



• from page 5 (*Towards protecting and conserving the environment*)

Department of Forestry (for forest conservation), the Fisheries Department (for marine resources) and the Ministry of Development (for waste management),

The Ministry of Education also arranges field trips to the Temburong district namely to the Field Studies Centre at Kuala Belalong in the Batu Apoi National Park, to allow students to discover the full richness of their natural environment, the official said.

Individual schools, too, are promoting conservation initiatives through Environmental, Science and Geography Clubs.

The Co-Curriculum Department of the Education Ministry is also performing an important role in organising activities and competitions in conjunction with the Scouts, Girl Guides and Red Crescent on contemporary local, regional and global environmental issues.

All these approaches to environmental education are ensuring that our school children are sensitive to the environmental issues we are faced with, said the official.

He also noted that the general public in Brunei Darussalam needs to be more environmentally conscious and be encouraged to act in ways that are more responsible and hence, less damaging to the environment.

He cited that a particular local issue of some priority to government is waste disposal. Even though collection bins for household waste have been made available in many strategic locations for the use of the general public there are some who do not use the bins and continue to dump their waste illegally and indiscriminately.

"This is of particular concern especially at the new resettlement areas, and also in the waters surrounding Kampong Ayer." (Kampong Ayer: clusters of villages



The Education Ministry's Permanent Secretary, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Ali Hashim.

built on water with nearly 30,000 residents).

"The result of such illegal and unsystematic and disorganised dumping as in the case of the resettlement areas, apart from creating unpleasant ugly scenes, is also causing health hazards. In the case of Kampong Ayer, it makes children especially vulnerable to skin diseases and could destroy all forms of life in the surrounding, from the polluted water," he pointed.

"It has become increasingly clear to me that education to help safeguard the environment for all sectors of our population should be made a greater priority. This means involving the general public more in adult education programmes that will allow them to examine and think more about their ability to manage their immediate environment in a more responsible manner," the permanent secretary urged.

He also emphasised the need to constantly review curriculum materials for further improvement. In addition, we see a need to develop environmental education materials which take learners from

passive awareness more into the domain of action and problem solving, and he hoped that schools will give more time to examining these issues and contribute something, no matter how small, towards a solution.

"Support will also be forthcoming to further promote the continuing involvement of students in such local and regional studies as environmental health - including safe drinking water, waste disposal, sanitation and food and ecosystems and in relevant activities, linking these studies with services and research in our national parks, reserves, research centres and ecological sites."

The permanent secretary further hoped that more of these activities will be developed in partnership with industry, community groups, non-government agencies and so on to provide both students and teachers with real world experiences.

Brunei Darussalam has formulated the National Environment Strategy that will provide the basis for policies and action for the period 1996-2000 and

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Congratulatory messages on Independence Day of the Philippines

His Majesty Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has consented to send a congratulatory message to His Excellency President Fidel Ramos of the Republic of Philippines, on the occasion of the 99th anniversary of the republic's Independence Day, on 12 June.

In the message, His Majesty expressed his happiness over the warmth of the long-standing relations and close understanding which continue to develop between Brunei Darussalam and the Republic of Philippines.

His Majesty hoped that these relations and understanding would be enhanced and upgraded in the future for the interest of both countries and their peoples.

The monarch also hoped that His Excellency will always be in good health and that the people of the republic will continue to enjoy continuing peace and prosperity.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs, has also expressed his pleasure over the continuing development of the warm relations and close cooperation between the two countries.

In his congratulatory message to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, His Excellency Domingo L. Saizon also on the occasion of the republic's Independence Day, His Royal Highness was confident that such relations and cooperation will be



Her Royal Highness Princess Hajjah Masna, Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cutting cake at Philippines' Independence Day celebration, at which she was chief guest as representative of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's Government.

further strengthened during the coming year.

Meanwhile, Her Royal Highness Princess Hajjah Masna, Ambassador-At-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brunei Darussalam said that Brunei Darussalam appreciates the good, long-standing relations both countries share and the great value they place on bilateral cooperation, the core of which, according to Her Royal Highness, remains the excellent contribution made to the society and development by Filipinos working in the sultanate.

Her Royal Highness was speaking briefly at a dinner marking the 99th Anniversary of the

Republic of Philippines' Independence Day, held at the International Convention Centre near the Brunei capital, on 12 June.

She congratulated President Fidel Ramos and his people on the continued steady growth being achieved by the country, and for the positive contribution he is making to regional affairs.

In his message at the dinner, the Philippine Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Ramon A. Tirol said that Brunei Darussalam has exemplified a bond of economic and political cooperation with the Philippines, and demonstrates its hospitality to the Filipino community.

SSEAYP, a great learning experience to participants

Her Royal Highness Princess Hajjah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah has expressed her confidence in the Ship for South East Asian Youth Programme (SSEAYP) providing a great learning experience to the

participants.

She said that the programme has not only enabled the participants to exchange information and ideas, but also provided them an opportunity to

• *Continued on page 9*

• from page 8 (SSEAYP) a great learning experience to participants)

share experiences and outlook, given their different social-cultural background.

"Without doubt, the programme also provides an opportunity for the participants to learn more about other countries, and thus have a better appreciation of the traditions and values of other people, as well as forging a deep sense of solidarity and camaraderie among youths from ASEAN and Japan," said the Princess.

Her Royal Highness made the remark before she officially declared open the 10th Ship for South-East Asian Youth Programme International General Assembly (SIGA) and the presentation of SSEAYP International Award, at the International Convention Centre on 27 June.

One might say that SSEAYP is noble in motive and, more importantly, far reaching in benefit, she said.

In this respect, Her Royal Highness said, youths who have participated in the SSEAYP should see the programme only as a beginning, because while motivation is what gets them started, it is habit that keeps them going.

"And therefore, the idea of forming alumni associations in your respective countries and holding a conference or general assembly such as this, is certainly an endeavour worth pursuing to keep the spirit of friendship and solidarity alive and going," she stressed.

Touching on the theme of the assembly "Together We Move Forward", Her Royal Highness said that it was apt and well-chosen because as we move



Her Royal Highness Princess Hajjah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah, seen above presenting SSEAYP International Award, spoke of the benefits of SSEAYP.

closer to the new millennium, all the 10 countries of South-East Asia are moving forward to form an enlarged ASEAN.

The SSEAYP itself in a real sense of a word, is designed for 'moving forward together', particularly in moving the spirit of the young together towards a united future, for South East Asia and countries beyond the region, she said.

Her Royal Highness hoped that the General Assembly would achieve its objectives, and that the delegates will be able not only to enrich their knowledge, but also to fulfill the theme of the 10th SIGA.

BERSATU who organised the General Assembly for the second time for Brunei Darussalam was formed on 28 June, 1987, three years after Brunei Darussalam joined the SSEAYP, with the launching ceremony held in conjunction with the official opening of the Association's First Annual General Assembly. Brunei Darussalam first hosted the Assembly in 1990.

The emergence of BERSATU, a Malay word meaning united,

greatly signifies the dynamic spirit of Brunei exparticipating youths.

The activities successfully organised by BERSATU since then included a tea-party for handicapped children, a seminar participated by about 100 youths representing more than 40 associations throughout the country, and a cleaning campaign and distribution of dustbins held in conjunction with the Visit ASEAN Year in 1992.

Meanwhile, SIGA was founded in Tokyo in April 1987, an attempt made by the exparticipating youths to strengthen their information network. The First SIGA was held in Kuala Lumpur in 1987, the year in which SSEAYP International Charter was also drafted.

SSEAYP International achievements included the computer network which had been connected amongst some of the ASEAN countries, the Travel Network, the Rainbow Love Project and the recent discussion over the establishment of increasing the economy of SSEAYP.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam being given a detailed briefing at the start of his visit to the Ministry of Development, accompanied by a question and answer session.



Above and below: The ruler asking more questions while he toured various sections of the Development Ministry and looked at a science and technology exhibition being held at the ministry.



- from page 1 (Sultan takes a close look at the Ministry of Development)

optimal use of lands, providing basic infrastructures and public services such as roads, water and electricity supplies and technical consultancy services.

He said the ministry also manages lands and housing schemes, ensures continued protection and management of the environment, develop human resources in particular the standard and quality of officers and staff and provides guidance and training to Bruneian contractors.

He went on to say that the ministry continually gives encouragement to contractors, suppliers and consultant firms to strive to obtain recognition internationally such as the ISO 9000 certification for the quality of their management, products and designs.

The ruler began his visit to the headquarters of the Ministry of Development, followed by visits to the six departments under the ministry namely The Departments of Public Works,

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Officials responding to the ruler's enquiries as he took a close look at each section of the Development Ministry, during which he heard, among other things, aspects of constructions of housing and public facilities in the country.

• from page 10 (Sultan takes a close look at the Ministry of Development)

Electrical Services, Housing Development, Town and Country Planning, Lands, and Survey.

At the headquarters besides touring the various sections, His

• from page 6 (Audiences for visiting ministers and diplomats)

Also at Istana Nurul Iman last month was the out-going High Commissioner of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, His Excellency Major-General (R) Haji Saeed Uz-Zaman Janjua, who has come to the end of his assignment to Brunei Darussalam.

He has been his country's envoy in Bandar Seri Begawan since 1992. His farewell audience was on 20 May.

Two others who were granted audiences, both on 29 May, by the Brunei monarch were the Singapore State Minister for Defence, His Excellency Mr. Matthias Yeo Chih, and Greece's non-resident Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Mr. Constantine Ailianos, who is based in the Indian capital, New Delhi.

Brunei Darussalam and Greece established diplomatic relations early last year.

Majesty also watched an exhibition on science and technology, which will be on until August.

His Majesty's visit to the Development Ministry came within weeks of his visiting the Ministry of Communications

and the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources and various departments placed under the the two ministries, as well as to the Departments of Immigration and Labour under the Ministry of Home Affairs.



Concern over youths' lack of interest in traditional arts and culture: University students urged to make judgement and evaluation

The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports has called on university students of ASEAN countries to make mature judgement and evaluation of the concern of elder generation on youths' lack of interest in traditional arts and culture, and to work out the best strategy to address this concern.

The present leaders of ASEAN are concerned about the lack of interest shown by ASEAN youths today in that field, he said, at the official opening of this year's ASEAN Universities' Arts Festival on 28 June.

The festival deserves to be given strong endorsement and support from all parties involved in promoting traditional arts and culture, he said, while adding that the presence of several key personnel from ASEAN Universities' Arts Council (AUAC) and Brunei Darussalam's Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) was a clear manifestation of their strong commitment to cultural and arts projects.

Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Digadong Seri Laila Dato Seri Paduka Haji Awang Hussein believed that with the heightened awareness and level of appreciation of ASEAN cultural heritage and values, ASEAN youths would be much better prepared and equipped to face the relentless onslaughts of negative foreign influences via the electronic and non-electronic media.

He pointed that the traditional arts and culture can no longer be dismissed as a trivial item in the national development plan of a country.

"In recent years, there has been increasing trend among the economic authorities in ASEAN countries to place culture and arts at the forefront of their national economic development agenda. Indeed, in some countries, culture and arts have



The Culture, Youth and Sports Minister, Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Digadong Seri Lela Dato Paduka Haji Hussain hopes youths will uphold traditional arts and culture in the wake of onslaughts of various outside influences.

commercially and cleverly been packaged in their tourism industry to earn substantial national revenues," he asserted.

Touching on the festival, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Hussein said that it gave the participants ample opportunities to understand and appreciate the traditional arts and culture of their ASEAN counterparts as well as to further inculcate the ASEAN spirit of mutual respect, understanding and cooperation among ASEAN youths of today.

It also gave ASEAN youths the opportunity to get to know one another and make new friends while re-establishing the old and existing friendship.

In an effort to promote arts and culture, said the minister, the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta through the ASEAN-COCI also have positive programmes to be conducted in the forms of organised festivals, seminars and workshops in ASEAN member countries.

In this respect, he urged that the

programmes of the ASEAN Universities' Arts Council be coordinated very closely with those of the ASEAN Secretariat.

As future leaders of ASEAN, the participants are expected to carry on the torch of ASEAN friendship and solidarity which have contributed significantly towards the maintenance of regional stability, continuing economic progress, prosperity and social harmony of the member countries.

Gearing to become a top tourism destination

Brunei Darussalam is striving to make itself a unique tourist destination and gateway to tourism excellence in the region, a senior government official has said.

Dato Paduka Awang Haji Daniah, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources (MIPR) made the remark at the launching of a two-day seminar in Bandar Seri Begawan on Japanese Tourism, sponsored by the ASEAN Centre, Tokyo, on 9 June.

The official said: "We have many unique features in our country. We may not have one of the world's highest mountains to show off, or any huge cave to capitalise on."

He pointed that the 'Kampong Ayer' or water village is one of the country's top attractions to tourists.

Brunei Darussalam, he added, is the only country where people do not have to spend hours travelling

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A man and a woman who made up the more than 200 recipients of house keys and land grants in Belait district seen receiving either house keys or land grants from His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam during a ceremony held at the Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah Secondary School on 26 May, above.

Monarch presents housing lots, land grants and house keys to Belait district residents

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on 26 May visited Mukim Sungai Liang in Belait district to present residents of the district their housing lots, land grants and keys to new houses built under the Sultanate's two housing schemes.

This was the ruler's second visit to Belait district during May following an earlier one when he presented house keys to Muslim converts in Kampong Merangking in the district's interiors.

During the latest visit, some 116 families who have lived on Temporary Occupation Licence (TOL) lands in four villages, received grants for the lands from his Majesty, while seven government officials in Division II were granted housing lots, on which they can build houses of their own choices and designs.

• Continued on page 14



Enthusiastic villagers turned up in force to greet His Majesty during his latest visit to Belait district, during which he and His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah witnessed two Iban families embrace the Islamic faith.



• from page 13 (Monarch presents housing lots, land grants and house keys to Belait district residents)

At the ceremony which was held at the Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah Secondary School, His Majesty also handed over house keys to successful applicants of houses under the country's National Housing Scheme located at Kampong Pandan.

A total of 148 families received their keys for houses there.

Meanwhile, a further 72 families received the keys to houses under the housing scheme for Landless Indigenous Citizens in Kampong Mumong.

His Majesty, who was accompanied by his brother, His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah, later proceeded to have a closer look at students of the school at work. It was followed by a visit to a nearby mosque called 'Masjid Zainab', before the ruler went on to a mineral water processing establishment named 'Sehat', a joint-venture enterprise between a local company and an Indonesian counterpart.

The monarch also visited both Kampong Mumong and Kampong Pandan housing areas, during which he witnessed two non-Muslim families embracing Islam in ceremonies conducted by the State Mufti.



The monarch stopping to talk to some pupils of the Panaga Primary School and looking at some of their work, top, and stopping at a classroom while touring the Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah Secondary School, above.

• from page 5 (Use good strategies to teach reading skills)

"Therefore, it is our responsibility to ensure that we continue to produce more literate and educated students in Brunei Darussalam in order to have a more educated and productive labour force in the future," he said.

Besides handing to our children a safe economic future, said the official, we also want to impart to them the joys of worthwhile leisure pursuits, the chief of which should be reading.

Parents, too, should have the responsibility to extend reading

into their lifestyle, and make reading an integral part of their children's daily routine, he said, while adding that this will improve children's reading habits and practice.

In the effort to instil a love of reading, parents should get books for their children, including by taking them to the library on a regular basis and help them to select books and making books a gift-giving idea, he added.

Research also indicates many different ways of introducing children to reading, one of which is using newspapers and television.

Although this alone will not be the panacea for all the social ills we see in our society, the Permanent Secretary stressed, it will no doubt contribute much to building a more cultured and worthwhile society for our children to live in.

The Seminar on Literacy In the School and In the Home was jointly organised by the Ministry of Education, the Brunei Association for Reading and Literacy, and the International Development in Asia Committee (IDAC).

It was aimed at raising public

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Dato Paduka Awang Haji Danial, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, spoke of various moves and attractions that can make Brunei Darussalam a favourable tourist destination.

• from page 12 (*Gearing to become a top tourism destination*)

to see wildlife in its purest form.

The country's no air pollution problem, security and friendliness all contribute to this uniqueness.

Dato Paduka Haji Danial also emphasised that the country's philosophy is not to compete, but to complement and add value to the region.

"We do not intend to promote Brunei Darussalam as a sole destination, but as a joint promotion with our neighbouring countries. Tourism should be encouraged not only for its economic benefit but also for the close integration and relation it brings among us in the region", he said.

That is why the country embarked upon promoting Borneo as a single destination, together with both the East Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak.

The official also pointed that the governments of Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam are now committed to promote Borneo

Island as a single destination.

A continuing programme of the ASEAN Centre for all ASEAN member countries, the seminar was aimed at increasing knowledge and skills on how to promote the tourist destinations to the Japanese travel market.

According to the Director of Tourism Division of ASEAN Promotion Centre of Japan, Mr. Khalid bin Ibrahim, beginning next year, the ASEAN Centre will attempt to make the seminar more specific and more specialised on certain aspects of travel services.

In addition to the lecture on the current development in Japanese travel market, he said, it will include such lecture on how to become effective tourist guides for the Japanese tourists, customer and frontline services, shopping and merchandising eco-tourism, upgrading the quality of tourist information service for the Japanese.

The responsibility of developing the country's tourism sector has been undertaken by the

Tourism Unit of the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources as one of the many steps the government has been taking to promote tourism in Brunei Darussalam. The primary task of the unit is to coordinate the development of the travel and tourism industry, and promote the Sultanate as a unique tourism destination both in the BIMP-EAGA (Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines-East ASEAN Growth Area) and South East Asia as a whole.

The tourism industry in Brunei Darussalam has grown dramatically. While there were only about 340 thousand visitors to the country during 1991, the figure had almost doubled by 1996 - during the first nine months of which the country received more than 634 thousand visitors.

And through its comprehensive planning the Tourism Unit of the MIPR hopes that by the year 2000, some one million tourists will visit Brunei Darussalam annually.

Give due concern on the rational use of medicines

Doctors in the country have been urged to pay special attention to rational use of medicines so as to avoid drug-resistant problems and wastages. The Permanent Secretary of the Health Ministry, Pehin Orang Kaya

Pekerma Lela Dato Paduka Awang Haji Chuchu said doctors should also take the initiatives to get up-to-date information on medicines.

It is acknowledged that doctors

know the medicines for each disease, he said, but in this sophisticated era where the number of medicinal drugs has increased, doctors need to be especially selective in the choice of medicines.

• Continued on page 16

• from page 15 (Give due concern on the rational use of medicines)

By doing so, he explained, a doctor will know and better understand the systematic usage and ensure that more precise and effective medicines are selected and used.

Officiating at a national level workshop on the "Rational Use of Drugs" at the lecture theatre of the Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha Hospital on 18 June, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Chuchu said that besides ensuring the rational use of medicines, the Health Ministry also keeps on ensuring that the supply of medicines is sufficient and that they are of high quality.

For this purpose, the Ministry has kept aside sufficient financial allocation and carried out an appropriate measure to improve the system of medicinal supply and procurement, he said.

The official pointed that the occasional problem on the insufficiency of certain medicines faced by the sultanate today arises from the suppliers and producers of such medicines as those imported from overseas.

In the context of providing quality medicines, the Ministry through the Pharmaceutical Services, controls the quality of medicines from the early stage of selection until the receipt of the order.

The control of medicines in the Ministry is under the responsibility of the Committee of Medicinal Adviser, which has produced a National Standard Drug List, to be used by experts and doctors in all the government hospitals, health centres and clinics. However, the Ministry will be ready to supply medicines which are not in the list, if badly needed by patients.

The people of Brunei Darussalam are fortunate as medicines supplied by the Ministry for patients and consumers are of high quality, and made by

producers which are internationally recognised, he said.

The three-day workshop was aimed at providing knowledge, information and understanding on rational use of medicines, strengthening the compliance to rational prescribing policies, recommending strategies in the prescribing habits on irrational medicinal use, and working out a plan of action for rational medicinal use therapy programme.

The workshop, which was organised by the Pharmaceutical Services of the Ministry of Health, was conducted by a Consultant of



Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Orang Kaya Pekerma Lela Dato Paduka Awang Haji Chuchu called for careful and sparing use of medicines.

the World Health Organisation (WHO), Professor Dr. Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, and was participated by 44 medical doctors from government hospitals and clinics, the Royal Brunei Armed Forces, private clinic practitioners and members of government and private pharmacies.

It covered topics on Drugs in Developing Countries - An Overview, Introduction to Rational Drug Use, Essential Drugs Concept, Drugs Use in Brunei Darussalam: A Situational Analysis, Improving Drug Use in Brunei Darussalam and a plenary session covering topics on Drug Use in the 21st Century: Issues and Challenges.

Intellectual Property Rights Laws enforcement to woo foreign investment

Brunei Darussalam is to enforce laws on intellectual property rights, a move that will help to attract foreign companies and investors into the country, and encourage the transfer of knowledge and technical expertise, the Law Minister has announced.

Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Laila Kanun Diraja Pengiran Haji Bahrin, the Law Minister, also pointed that such enforcement will also help to contribute to the realisation of the SHuTT (Service Hub for Trade and Tourism) vision.

The Law Minister, who is also the Attorney General, made the remarks at the opening of a four-day Brunei Darussalam Information Technology Exhibition, BITEK '97, in the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan on 12 June. The theme of the BITEK '97 was 'Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights.'

Pengiran Haji Bahrin said that as a member of the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), Brunei Darussalam is obliged to apply the provisions of the agreement by 1 January 1999.

Towards this end, he disclosed, comprehensive laws to encourage and protect the intellectual property rights have already been drafted including new laws relating to trade

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The Minister of Law and Attorney-General, Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Laila Kanun Diraja Pengiran Haji Bahrin tours the BITEK Exhibition shortly after he announced imminent introduction of laws to protect copyrights and patents.

• from page 15 (*Intellectual Property Rights Laws enforcement to woo foreign investment*)

marks and patents.

He further disclosed that with the assistance of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), the Attorney General's Chambers through the Office of Registrar of Trade Marks and Patent is also conducting studies on the possibility of setting up a patent information

and document centre.

He said, the centre will act as a library to all registered patents of the world. And with 3.7 million patents throughout the world, the centre will obviously be able to accommodate researchers and students who follow the science and engineering subjects.

The minister also announced that new laws on copyrights were being drafted by the Attorney

General's Chambers which are presently being studied to ensure such laws meet the provisions of the TRIPS Agreement, as well as the norms and the existing international practices especially under the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1971).

Under the new copyright laws, he said, allocation has been provided for the protection of computer generated work including computer programmes. This is in line with the existing international practice in giving adequate protection on creation especially in the TRIPS Agreement and WIPO Copyrights Treaty. Thus, these rights in the new laws could be enjoyed by inventors in the country.

More than twenty computer firms, both from within and outside the country, took part in the display-cum-sale exhibition. The exhibition, organised by the Brunei Darussalam Computer Association, aimed at among other things, creating awareness among the people on matters pertaining to information technology, computers and telecommunications that could assist them in their respective fields.

ASEAN says 'NO' to drugs and is using children to spread the message

ASEAN's anti-drug abuse fight emphasised through children's posters and comic strips

The drive being undertaken by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) against drug abuse and other drug-related scourges intensified this month with the holding in Bandar Seri Begawan of a project involving school children entitled "ASEAN Schools Anti-Drug Poster and Comic Strip Exhibition and Publication".

A total of 42 primary, lower

secondary and upper secondary school children who were winners of the poster and comic strip competition at the national level in each of the ASEAN member countries, were in the Brunei Darussalam capital for the three-day exhibition, publication and workshop, whose objectives include creating an awareness in young people of ASEAN of the danger of drug abuse, encouraging

them to exchange viewpoints on the subject matter; and finally translating and reproducing these in the form of posters and comic strips.

The winning poster and comic strip entries of the national level competitions were exhibited in Bandar Seri Begawan and out of these, one each from the poster and comic strip entries was selected for

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• from page 17 (ASEAN's Anti-drug abuse fight emphasised through children's posters and comic strips)

Best ASEAN Award, which went to a participant from Thailand and The Philippines respectively.

The project was officially opened on 23 June by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health of Brunei Darussalam, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Chuchu bin PADP Haji Abdullah, who told the youngsters that they play an important role in conveying messages about the evils of drug abuse and other drug-related scourges.

"Let us hope that through the beautiful strokes of your pencils and brushes you could produce outstanding artistic works that can penetrate into the minds and souls of your counterparts and make them realise that drug-abuse is bad and killing.

Drug trafficking is inhumane and you must know how to say 'NO' to drugs and learn to lead healthy life styles, free from drug", he impressed upon the children.

The official said that for decades the ASEAN region has been infested by the menace of drug abuse which has caused hardships and sufferings threatening the lives of millions of people, ruining family lives and creating social problems.

"At the end the nation has to bear the burden by looking after the sufferers which will cost the relevant authorities of government a fortune", he stressed.

Pehin Dato Haji Awang Chuchu pointed that drug abuse, regarded today by many governments as 'public enemy number one', can weaken or demoralise the strength of a nation. It can also pose serious health problem because there exists every possibility for it to be compounded by HIV infection and AIDS.

He pointed that the involvement of school children in drug abuse and

the illicit trafficking of drugs has always been a major concern for all ASEAN countries, particularly parents, teachers, education authorities, health authorities, drug enforcement agencies, non-governmental organisations and indeed all the national leaders as it has been exhilarated due to the growing market for it.

"Due to the seriousness of the problem, the ASEAN Heads of Government Meeting in 1992 had manifested a declaration to fight against the increasing and serious problem of drug abuse and the illicit drug trafficking at all levels".

Following the declaration by the ASEAN Heads of Government, the ASEAN-COCI (Committee on Culture and Information) in its Global Thrust and priorities for the 1994-1997 period has outlined themes on children and drugs as one of its major concern for ASEAN cooperation. Exhibitions and publications have been largely successful in conveying ASEAN messages and ideas as well as in promoting artistic expressions. Therefore, the project ASEAN Schools Anti-Drug Exhibition and Publication has been launched as one of the projects of the ASEAN-COCI through its implementing arms - the ASEAN-COCI Working Group on Print and Interpersonal Media.

At the start of the workshop, the children heard talks by guest speakers on the drug issue. A speaker from the Narcotics Control Bureau of Brunei Darussalam spoke on the Drug Situation in Brunei Darussalam, while a cartoonist/illustrator from Malaysia touched on public awareness/influence through poster and comic strip on the anti-drug issue. A third speaker, from the Counselling and Career Guidance Unit of the Department of Schools of the Brunei Darussalam Education Ministry spoke on the role of students in anti-drug campaign.

Officials who accompanied the school children as heads of the respective delegations also presented country papers highlighting various aspects of the problems caused by drug abuse and their extent, and the measures being undertaken by the respective ASEAN countries to combat them.

The children also participated actively in discussions and practical sessions of the workshop, during which they intermixed to make up several groups and pooled their ideas and reproduced these into the form of posters and comic strips, with a view to conveying the messages on the evils of drug abuse and their consequences.

The three-day programme was officially closed on 25 June by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education of Brunei Darussalam, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Ali Hashim bin Haji Mohd, Daud. He said the effort, by way of the project, to further the artistic skills of students in the production of posters and comic strips for publicity campaigns will certainly help to create a much greater awareness among ASEAN students about the evils of drug abuse.

He urged for such an approach to be continued to be exploited so that the ASEAN community remains vigilant and thus protected from these harmful elements of drug abuse, illicit drug trafficking as well as the abuse of easily available substances such as inhalants.

Drug abuse, he said, has been recognised as a menace of global proportions for decades and in some countries it is getting worse.

"Unfortunately, young people are the most vulnerable to such dangers, so it is essential that we constantly re-inforce our efforts to highlight the devastating consequences of drug abuse, addiction and trafficking",

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• from page 18 (ASEAN's Anti-drug abuse fight emphasised through children's posters and comic strips)

He pointed that the advertising industry has a very important role to play in combating the consequences of substance abuse.

"Hence the importance of the project and workshop in enabling the design of creative and catchy posters and comic strips to effectively influence the minds of young people against all forms of substance abuse", he pointed, while adding: "I believe, however, that this work needs to be supported on a continuing basis through seminars, talks by substance abuse experts, exhibitions and other measures that you will have discussed in your working sessions".

The official also told the youngsters of the importance of keeping abreast with new technological advancements, and called on them to actively pursue their studies in science and technology in general, and computer studies in particular.

"Academic excellence will ensure that a country has the best brains that can serve as think-tanks.

"Therefore, our hope and future lie in our young people. It is youth who will take charge, ensure productivity and growth in our

respective economies and continue our culture and tradition", he impressed upon the ASEAN children.

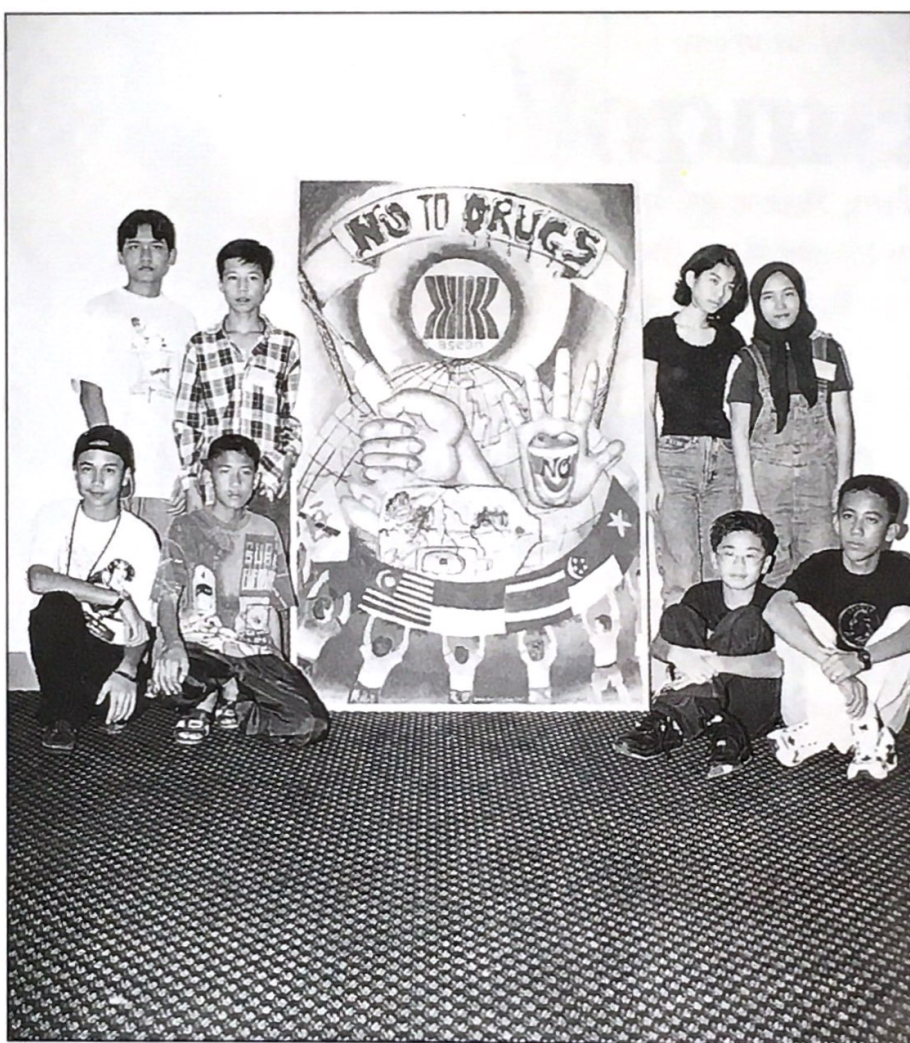
He also reminded the youngsters to be selective in their choice in making friends and the activities in which to participate.

"Friends who smoke, play truant, or disobey parents, teachers or elders will more often than not do their best to make you conform to their undesirable habits. However, if there is wisdom in your judgement, you will only make friends with those who spend their time wisely and who participate in

sports and other recreational activities", he said.

Brunei Darussalam hosted and coordinated the project - the first of its kind to be organised at the ASEAN regional level.

Many of the children said they had enjoyed the exercises of the project and would like to see it continued in the future. They said that they had learned much from it about the evils of drug abuse, and that they will make every effort to influence their peers from being involved in drug abuse or other illicit drug dealings.



Left: A group of children proudly poses with a poster they drew during the workshop after combining their ideas and resourcefulness, while picture below left shows another group on their hands and knees, working to reproduce and convey their ideas on the evils of drug abuse. The children's works also kept a group of judges busy when the time came to select outstanding works for the Best ASEAN Award, below right.



• from page 7 (Towards protecting and conserving the environment)

beyond. And some \$59.7 million has been allocated in the country's current National Development Plan for the implementation of environment-related projects which are consistent with the strategies, which among others, raise environmental consciousness; integrate environmental dimension in economic planning and development; enhance environmental quality; protect vulnerable eco-systems, habitats and biodiversity and strengthen regional and international cooperation.

• from page 14 (Use good strategies to teach reading skills)

awareness of the role of the International Reading Association (IRA) can play in promoting the cause of literacy in Asia, raising awareness of educational communities to the important link between home and school, providing opportunity for Asian leaders, educators and academics to lead discussions on literacy concern of their countries and facilitating discussions of the problems in implementing the Asian literacy programmes.

Sultan meets new British Prime Minister



His Majesty Paduka Baginda Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has had a meeting with the new British Prime Minister,

The Rt. Hon. Mr. Tony Blair, above. The meeting, on 26 June, took place at the British Prime Minister's official residence, No.10 Downing Street, London.

Brunei in Brief

Capital : Bandar Seri Begawan
Land size : 5765 sq. km.
Population : 296,000 (1995)
Official Language : Malay
Official Religion : Islam
June rainfall : 189.6 mm
(annual 2,818mm)

Brunei Malay in a minute

Readers have the opportunity to learn a new Brunei Malay word through each edition of this newsletter. The word introduced is particularly peculiar to Brunei Darussalam.

At this time we bring the word **iski** which means glad,

happy or joyful.

In standard Malay **iski** is merasa suka, gembira, riang or girang.

In a sentence: Dia **iski** apabila mengetahui yang ia lulus peperiksaan akhir tahun.

He was happy to learn that he had passed in his end-of-year examinations.

**THE TRAFFICKING IN AND THE ILLEGAL IMPORTATION OF
CONTROLLED DRUGS ARE VERY SERIOUS OFFENCES IN
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM AND THE PENALTY
FOR SUCH OFFENCES IS DEATH.**