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His Majesty receives special envoy from Sultan of Johor



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 receiving the Special Envoy of His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar, Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Johor Darul Ta'zim, His Royal Highness Tunku Ismail ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Crown Prince of Johor. Also present was His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 7

- 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 received in audience the Special Envoy of His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar, Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Johor Darul Ta'zim, His Royal Highness Tunku Ismail ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Crown Prince of Johor. The audience ceremony took place at the Istana Nurul Iman.

The delegation included His Highness Tunku Idris Iskandar Al-Haj ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Tungku Panglima of Johor.

Accompanying His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam were His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; and His Royal Highness Prince Haji Jefri Bolkiah.

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COVID-19: Two new cases recorded in September

BERAKAS, September 30 – One new import case was recorded bringing the total number of confirmed cases to 146 on September 24.

Case 146 was a local man, 29, who arrived on Royal Brunei Airlines (RB) flight BI4112 (seated at 26J) on September 18 from India.

The Minister of Health stated that case 146 showed no signs of infection and was being treated at the National Isolation Centre (NIC).

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Country's GDP records increase of 2.8% in Q2 2020

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 20 - In Q2 2020, Brunei Darussalam's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at current prices was estimated at \$4.0 billion compared to \$4.8 billion in Q2 2019. The Oil and Gas sector, comprising oil and gas mining and manufacturing of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), was valued at \$1.9 billion which accounted for 46.8 per cent of the total Gross Value Added (GVA).

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Letters of Credence and Audience Ceremony

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 present a Letter of Credence to the newly-appointed High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam and received Letters of Credence from newly-appointed foreign envoys to Brunei Darussalam at the Istana Nurul Iman on September 10.



His Majesty presenting a Letter of Credence to His Excellency Dato Paduka Haji Sidek bin Ali, High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam to the Republic of Singapore.



His Majesty receiving a Letter of Credence from His Excellency John Virgoe, British High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam.



His Majesty receiving a Letter of Credence from Her Excellency Tiffany Anne McDonald, High Commissioner of Australia to Brunei Darussalam.



His Majesty receiving a Letter of Credence from Her Excellency Gerda Winker, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Brunei Darussalam.

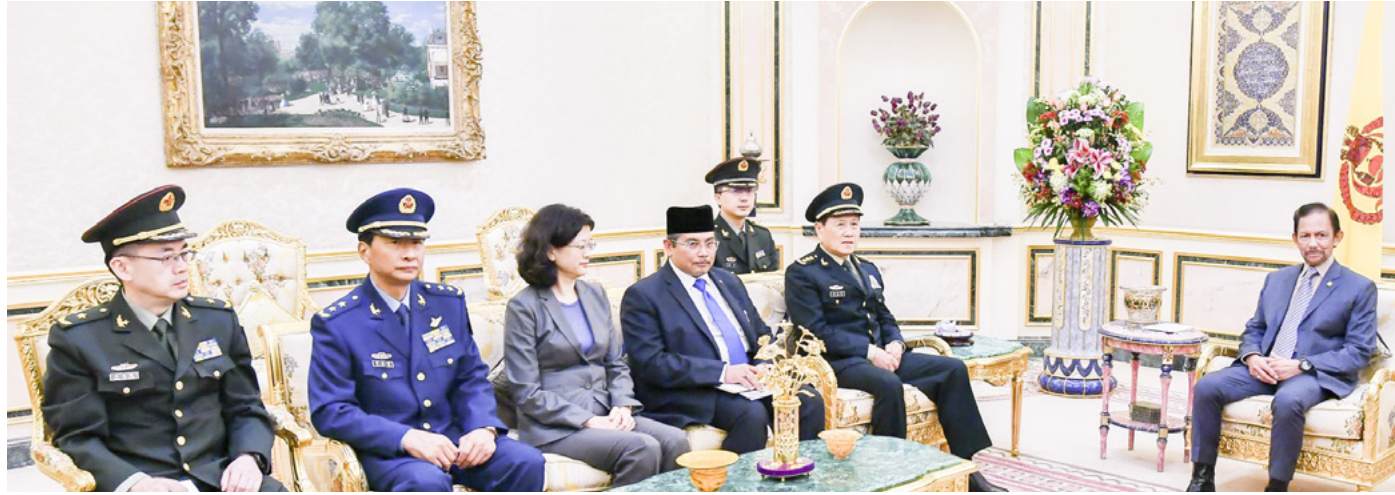
His Majesty receives audiences

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 received in audience at Istana Nurul Iman:

Major General Pengiran Dato Paduka Seri Aminan bin Pengiran Haji Mahmud, the former Commander of Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF), and Major General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat, the newly-appointed RBAF Commander on September 1.



His Majesty receives audiences



His Excellency General Wei Fenghe, State Councillor and Minister of National Defence of the People Republic of China General on September 9.

Her Majesty receives audiences

Her Majesty Duli Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha binti Al-Marhum Pengiran Pemancha Pengiran Anak Haji Mohamed Alam received in audience at the Istana Nurul Iman:

Datin Dayang Hajah Rasidah binti Haji Ibrahim, spouse of Major General Pengiran Dato Paduka Seri Aminan bin Pengiran Haji Mahmud, former Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF), and Datin Dr. Dayang Hajah Anita Binurul Zahrina binti Pehin Orang Kaya Laila Wijaya Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abdul Aziz, spouse of Major General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat, the newly-appointed RBAF Commander on September 1.



Her Excellency Gerda Winkler, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Brunei Darussalam on September 16.



Her Excellency Tiffany Anne McDonald, High Commissioner of Australia to Brunei Darussalam on September 16.



Her Excellency Mrs. Tuti Suwidjningsih, spouse of the British High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam on September 16.



Her Excellency Datin Dayang Mariaratnah, spouse of the High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam to the Republic of Singapore on September 16.

Crown Prince receives audiences

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 received audiences from Major General Pengiran Dato Paduka Seri Aminan bin Pengiran Haji Mahmud, outgoing Commander of Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) and Major General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat, newly-appointed Commander of RBAF at Qashr Al-Meezan on September 2.



Major General Pengiran Dato Paduka Seri Aminan bin Pengiran Haji Mahmud (middle), Commander of Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) and newly appointed Major General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat, Commander of RBAF.

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 Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Viet Nam and President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and His Excellency Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, as well as the government and the people of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on the occasion of its 75th National Day on September 2.
- His Excellency Yoshihide Suga on his appointment as Prime Minister of Japan following his recent victory in the Liberal Democratic Party's leadership election on September 16.
- His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosque, and members of the royal family, as well as the government and the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the occasion of its National Day on September 23.
- His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah on his occasion of His Highness appointment as the Emir of the State of Kuwait on September 30.

His Majesty sends condolence message

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 a condolence message to His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of Kuwait; His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of Kuwait; members of the royal family and the people of the State of Kuwait following the passing of His Highness the Emir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of Kuwait on September 30.

His Majesty receives special envoy from Sultan of Johor



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; His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; His Royal Highness Prince Haji Jefri Bolkiah; His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar, Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Johor Darul Ta'zim; His Royal Highness Tunku Ismail ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Crown Prince of Johor and delegation during the ceremony.

His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Johor presenting a *Warkah Perutusan* from His Majesty the Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Johor Darul Ta'zim to His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

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At the audience ceremony, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Johor presented a *Warkah Perutusan* from His Majesty the Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Johor Darul Ta'zim to His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

During the ceremony, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Johor also presented a *Warkah Perutusan* from His Majesty the Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Johor Darul Ta'zim to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office.



His Royal Highness the Crown Prince of Johor presenting a *Warkah Perutusan* from His Majesty the Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Johor Darul Ta'zim to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office.



Cabinet Ministers of Brunei Darussalam and delegation of Johor during the audience ceremony.

His Majesty appoints the 11th Commander of RBAF

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 1 - 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 presented the rank insignia of Major General to Brigadier General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat; and appointed him as the 11th Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF).

The ceremony took place at Istana Nurul Iman.

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

Major General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah previously held several key posts including the 14th Commander of Royal Brunei Air Force from August 15 to 28, 2020; the Joint Force Commander of RBAF and Chief of Staff (COS) of Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ).

Also present at the ceremony were Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji



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 presenting the rank insignia of Major General to Brigadier General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat as the 11th Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF).

Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yussof, Second Minister of Defence; and Major General Pengiran Dato Paduka Seri Aminan bin Pengiran Haji Mahmud, the former Commander of RBAF.

At the ceremony, a *Doa Selamat* was read by Commander Haji Ainolnizam bin Haji Ibrahim, from the Royal Brunei Navy, Head of the RBAF Religious Department (JAMA'AT).

MoRA comes under His Majesty's scrutiny



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) during His Majesty's unscheduled visit to the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

BERAKAS, September 16 - "MUIB bears the responsibility of managing Baitulmal, *zakat* affairs collection and distribution, and others. However, the role of the department is perceived to be not proactive enough in carrying out duties in assisting the underprivileged community," said 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 in a *titah* (royal speech) during an unscheduled visit to the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA).

Upon arrival, His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was welcomed by Yang Mulia Pengiran Dato Seri Paduka Haji Bahrom bin Pengiran Haji Bahar, Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs.

Also present were Yang Berhormat Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Haji Awang Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka Haji Awang Othman, Minister of Religious Affairs; and Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy.

The Monarch further highlighted the issue of *zakat*'s management and administration. The applicants and recipients are said to have made repeated trips to the MUIB office to settle matters. Apart from that, members of the public often encounter difficulties when contacting the department by telephone.

His Majesty also raised the need to rectify house rental payments under the Baitulmal scheme, whereby the landlords were paid in arrears after a two-year delay.

With regards to the role of the Syariah Affairs Department in the implementing Halal food control under the Halal Certificate and Halal Label Order, (which has been enforced since 2017), His Majesty addressed that more food control standards need to be applied, especially among Muslims.

The Monarch highlighted that there are not enough *imams* (the leader of mass prayers in a mosque) compared to the number of mosques in the country.

The Monarch also brought up the complaints of some *imams* not turning up for prayers.

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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 visiting the Finance Division; Islamic Legal Unit; Public Relations Division; International Division and MABIMS; Majlis Ugama Islam Brunei, Policy, Planning and Research Division; Administrative Department; Library; Information Technology Unit; and Zakat Distribution Counter (above and below).



His Majesty visiting the Designer Graduan Boutique at the Julangan Titah Graduan Bersepadu.



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Raising concerns on insufficient number of religious teachers, His Majesty questioned the effectiveness of the Religious Education Service Scheme in tackling teacher shortages.

"There seems to be confusion in the management and administration, whereby some teachers were pulled to carry out duties as imams and mosque officers, while issues on the lack of religious teachers are not being addressed," His Majesty said.

On the other hand, there are many religious teachers from the Seri Begawan Religious Teachers University College (KUPU SB) graduates who are still unemployed. The scarcity of *imams* should not be an issue when we have many religious graduates from local and overseas institutions who are still unemployed.

His Majesty emphasised that students from Arabic school are still far from mastering the Arabic language.

The Monarch stated that the country has seven Arabic schools and MoRA has a strategic plan to ensure its religious education is effective in producing intellectuals and professionals through Arabic language programmes.

"If the usual methods are no longer relevant, then why don't we create a new and relevant approach? This is an educational issue which needs consideration. This plan looks good on paper but we want the result to also be good or even better and getting good or better results requires thorough examination, including examining the teachers, teaching methods that fulfil the learning procedures, training and other related matters," stressed His Majesty.

Touching on the students' welfare, His Majesty said that school



buildings including Bruneian students' residencies in Egypt must be inspected and maintained to ensure that there are no health and safety issues.

During the visit, His Majesty was briefed on several departments and units under MoRA, beginning from the Hajj Management Department, which acts as the medium between the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and related agencies in facilitating Hajj and Umrah management matters.

During the visit, the Monarch went to have a closer look at the 'Taklimat Pembarigaan dan Bengkel Plan Tindakan Rancangan Strategik Kementerian Hal Ehwal Ugama 2020-2024' briefing. The two-day briefing was carried out by Muraqib Unit for Directors and Deputy Directors of the departments and Heads of Department as a guide in carrying out their roles and responsibilities.

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Afterwards, His Majesty continued the visit to Finance Division; Islamic Legal Unit; Public Relations Division; International Division and MABIMS; Majlis Ugama Islam Brunei, Policy, Planning and Research Division; Administrative Department; Library and Information Technology Unit.

His Majesty also took a closer look at the *Zakat* Distribution Counter located at the *Zakat* Collection and Distribution Section of MUIB.

The Monarch then made an unscheduled visit to Julangan Titah Graduan Bersepadu that was recently opened to public at Kampung Jaya Setia, Burong Pingai, Berakas. With the consent of His Majesty, the centre was established as an initiative to provide opportunity to graduates from different background to be in service to society through entrepreneurship.

The Julangan Titah Graduan Bersepadu consists of Pustaka Graduan, Designer Graduan, Sajian Graduan, Tutor Graduan and Pasaria Graduan.



His Majesty visiting Pasaria Graduan at Kampung Jaya Setia, Burong Pingai, Berakas (left and right).

Strengthen potential of the Digital Economy

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 21 - 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, chaired the First National Development Plan (NDP) Executive Committee Meeting for the Year 2020 at the Istana Nurul Iman.

Also present at the meeting was His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office.

Upon arrival, His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was greeted by Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance



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 during the First National Development Plan Executive Committee Meeting for the Year 2020 held at Istana Nurul Iman.



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 during the First National Development Plan Executive Committee Meeting for the Year 2020.

and Economy and by members of the First NDP Executive Committee.

The First NDP meeting was preceded by the recitation of Surah Al-Fatihah by Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Ir. Awang Haji Suhaimi bin Haji Gafar, Minister of Development followed by a welcoming speech from the Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy.

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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 during the First National Development Plan Executive Committee Meeting for the Year 2020 at Istana Nurul Iman.

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In his welcoming address, Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew, among others, welcomed His Majesty's presence in the meeting which reflected His Majesty's concern towards the implementation of projects under NDP.

He added that the efforts implemented in making the NDP a success in increasing the socio-economic growth of the country is also one of the platforms to achieve the target of Brunei Vision 2035.

At the meeting, His Majesty consented to deliver a *titah* (royal speech).

In the *titah*, His Majesty expressed his gratitude to His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office for his leadership, service, energy and thoughts during his tenure as the Chairman of the NDP Executive Committee.

His Majesty also congratulated all members on their re-appointment and new appointment in the NDP Executive Committee, and expressed appreciation and gratitude to the former members of the NDP Executive Committee for their past contributions.

"The changes in the position of Chairman and Members of the NDP Executive Committee is a strategic platform for a common change. It is hoped they continue to carry the responsibility in providing great thoughts or ideas for the benefit of the country's progress," added His Majesty.

All meetings, said His Majesty, should be based on careful research, supported by correct facts, and discussions should be more open focusing on issues relevant to socio-economic growth, especially in the oil and gas sector.

In His Majesty's *titah*, any plans under the upcoming NDP project, especially the 12th NDP will not only focus on the provision or construction of infrastructure, it is even more necessary to focus on projects that can contribute to efficiency and productivity. In implementing a programme, several factors should be taken into account, such as the sustainability of the project, its

contribution to the development of industry and economy as well as its ability to stimulate the country's fiscal sustainability.

His Majesty also stated that the plans include providing employment opportunities to locals by emphasising in-country value as well as skills enhancement.

As an independent and progressive nation, should not be too dependent on foreign labour. This method is not a solution achieving the Sustainable Development Goal, but locals need to be given exposure to all environments including construction and so on.

According to His Majesty, the method of share facilities should not be neglected and he urged every ministry to utilise any available facilities equally.

"It is important to remember that development does not mean the number of buildings owned by each ministry, but more important is the integration to achieve the objectives of the Whole of Government Approach. Planning should also be for the long-term to avoid wastage and duplication in the use of government resources", said His Majesty.

In the meantime, His Majesty reminded that the designs and building of 11th NDP projects that are still in the planning process should be re-examined to ensure that the projects are still relevant to be implemented.

"Along with the passage of time, government agencies need to strengthen the potential of the Digital Economy through the implementation of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and the Whole of Nation Approach which has already implemented in this country," His Majesty added.

His Majesty further highlighted that with the development of several applications, such as BruHealth, MOHcares, Smart Users, and TransportBN are important for to address the challenges ahead as an effort to maintain security, peace and prosperity.

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Cabinet Ministers at the First National Development Plan Executive Committee Meeting for the Year 2020 held at Istana Nurul Iman.



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Undoubtedly through the NDP, many achievements have been obtained.

The time has come for us to move forward to makereforms, as a continuation of the process of planning and project selection.

This is also what we consider as strategic planning, which is aligned as a guiding principle to make it easier for each agency to plan and prepare projects in a more orderly manner, urged His Majesty.

His Majesty explained, in this way, it will further strengthen cooperation between every interested agency, whether among the government sector or the private sector, including Government Link Company (GLCs), Public Private Partnership

(PPP) and Foreign Direct Investors.

His Majesty noted that the Economic Blueprint for the 3rd Goal in the Brunei Vision 2035 has been prepared.

In this regard, His Majesty further hoped to be able to see the existence of Manpower Blueprint for the Vision First Goal in which will be led by the Ministry of Education and Manpower Planning and Employment Council as well as the Social Blueprint for the 2nd Goal, which will be led by the Prime Minister's Office; and the National Council on Social Issues (NCSI).

The NDP Executive Committee Meeting is expected to be able to focus more on strategic matters for development and members are expected to be more open in giving their views without hesitation.

UN : Committed ensuring the world lives in peace

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 22 - Brunei Darussalam will continue its pledge to work together with all United Nations (UN) member states and carry out its commitment and responsibilities, as well as pay its dues, to ensure that the world and its people will continue to live in peace, to develop and progress.

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 highlighted the matter in a *titah* (royal speech) at the High Level Meeting to Commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the UN at Istana Nurul Iman.

His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam stated in his *titah*, "therefore, we must continue to make it better, more cost-effective and more empowered to support multilateralism, and a world order based on the universal rule of law, in ensuring this organisation remains relevant to us all."

It is certainly a remarkable achievement for any grouping, let alone a large organisation like the UN, to remain relevant for three quarters of a century.

His Majesty added that this global body has actively engaged and carried out its mandates on matters of significant concern to all. It reflects the commitment placed by UN members and the specialised bodies who want it to work, and make the world a better place.

"Over the years, we have faced many challenges and were able to resolve conflicts in Bosnia, Timor-Leste and remain closer to us in ASEAN, such as in Cambodia. However, the question of Palestine, terrorism, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and many others, remain work in progress," said His Majesty.

His Majesty added, "Now the world is facing new unprecedented challenges in lifetime like climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic."

His Majesty also stressed that if history has taught us anything, it is that, we could not have realised such achievements without the strong support and commitment from all nations.

Not by abandoning the UN when it becomes politically difficult, but by working together and by seeking convergence both at the national and international levels. Nonetheless, there is no other option available that can replace its role.



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) at the High Level Meeting to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations at the Istana Nurul Iman.

The UN is far from perfect, and the cost of maintaining it continues to rise every year.

Integral to this, His Majesty added, the commitment by all member states to ensure that every nation uphold and respect the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, as enshrined in the UN Charter, and where small countries like Brunei Darussalam can rely on and have our voice heard as equal among all nations, big or small.

His Majesty also reminded if the organisation fails, we would all fail, diminishing the hopes of more than seven billion people. It was in this spirit that Brunei Darussalam joined this family of nations more than 35 years ago.

His Majesty congratulated UN members on the momentous occasion and congratulated His Excellency Volkan Bozkir on his election as the 75th President of the UN General Assembly.

His Majesty also extended his best wishes to the UN from the government and the people of Brunei Darussalam in the spirit of peace and solidarity, and condolences and sympathies to all those affected by the COVID-19 virus.

The UN themed, 'The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism'.

Crown Prince hosts banquet for Johor Special Envoy



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 His Royal Highness Tunku Ismail ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Crown Prince of Johor with members of the royal family from both sides during the banquet.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 7 - 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 hosted a dinner on behalf 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 at Qashr Al-Meezan, in honour of the Special Envoy of His Majesty Sultan Ibrahim ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar, Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Johor Darul Ta'zim, led by His Royal Highness Tunku Ismail ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Crown Prince of Johor.

Also in attendance were His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; His Highness Tunku Idris Iskandar Al-Haj ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Tunku Temenggong of Johor; His Highness Tunku Abdul Rahman A-Haj ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Tunku Panglima of Johor; and His Royal Highness Prince Haji Jefri Bolkiah.

Also present were Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Lela Cheteria Sahibun Najabah Pengiran Anak Haji Abdul Aziz bin Pengiran Jaya Negara Pengiran Haji Abu Bakar, Yang Di-Pertua of Adat Istiadat Negara; Yang Berhormat Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Aminuddin Ihsan bin Pehin Orang Kaya Saiful Mulok Dato Seri Paduka Haji Abidin, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports; Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Seri Maharaja Dato Paduka Seri Setia (Dr.) Ustaz Haji Awang Abdul Aziz bin



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah conversing with His Royal Highness Tunku Ismail.

Juned, the State Mufti; Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Penggawa Laila Bentara Istiadat Diraja Dalam Istana Pengiran Haji Alauddin bin Pengiran Paduka Tuan Pengiran Haji Abu Bakar, Grand Chamberlain; Yang Berhormat Dato' Haji Abdul Rahim bin Ramli, Yang Di-Pertua of the Johor Council of Royal Court; Yang Berhormat Dato' Haji Azmi bin Rohani, Secretary of the State of Johor; Yang Berhormat Dato' Haji Abdul Latiff bin Yusof, Secretary of the Johor Council of Royal Court and Yang Berhormat Sahibus Samahah Dato' Haji Yahya bin Haji Ahmad, State Mufti of Johor.



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah with His Royal Highness Tunku Ismail ibni Sultan Ibrahim, the Crown Prince of Johor and members of the royal family.

AIPA : Strengthen solidarity, respond effectively to challenges

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 8 - Confidence in the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) will be able to help ASEAN to get through this challenging period and emerge as a more resilient community. The COVID-19 epidemic has changed government methods and the national parliament in tackling new norms and unprecedented challenges.

As a result of its volatile nature, it requires urgent action in order to protect the interests of the people, stressing the importance of integrity in the ASEAN Community.

The matter was highlighted in His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's *titah* (royal speech) in the content of His Majesty's message at in conjunction with the 41st General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), held from September 8-10, 2020 hosted by the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

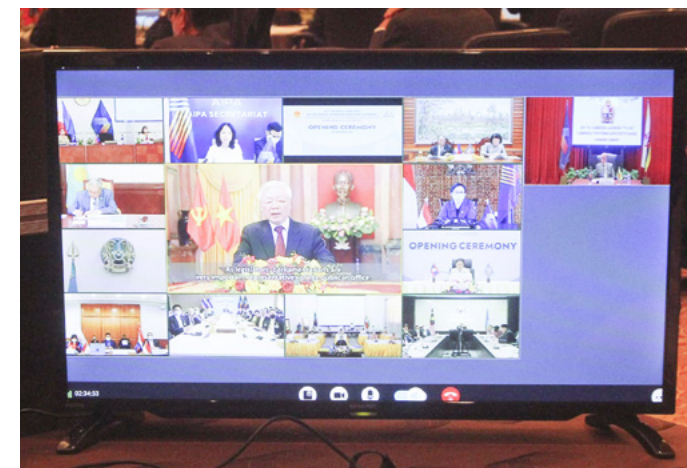
His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam also took note that the agenda for the 41st AIPA General Assembly will highlight recovery efforts as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic related to the economic, social security as well as peace and stability in the region.

His Majesty added that AIPA together with its strategic partners at the moment plays an important role in formulating and implementing effective strategies to foster a far-sighted ASEAN Community that is able to respond collectively and constructively to the problems of public concern.

"Together, we are able to create a more sustainable and resilient ASEAN with high capacity in accepting any positive change. Brunei Darussalam will continue to support AIPA's efforts towards the desired achievements," said His Majesty.

Earlier, in the *titah*, His Majesty said that the theme 'Parliamentary Diplomacy for Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN' for the 41st General Assembly of the AIPA is in line with ASEAN's vision towards a cohesive and responsive ASEAN. This matter has paid attention to the need in strengthening solidarity at the regional level to address the challenges more effectively as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter and also the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

In addition, His Majesty stated that parliamentary diplomacy could enhance AIPA's role in supporting ASEAN through increased understanding between countries and through better representation of the people.



His Excellency Nguyen Phú Trọng, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam delivering his speech during the virtual Official Opening Ceremony of the 41st General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly.



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib, Speaker of the Legislative Council at the virtual 41st General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly.

A total of 29 agendas will be discussed to be approved in the Joint Communique. Regional issues including the COVID-19 outbreak at the WAIPA (World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies) Committee level, Young Parliamentarians, Economics, Politics, Social and Organisations will also be discussed.

Brunei Darussalam was led by Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib, Speaker of the Legislative Council (LegCo) along with 19 LegCo Members.

The General Assembly was attended by 10 AIPA Parliamentary countries. Also present was Secretary to the Cabinet Ministers' Council and Clerk to the Council, Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Orang Kaya Pekerma Jaya Dato Paduka Awang Haji Judin bin Haji Asar.

The Official Opening Ceremony was officially opened by Her Excellency Madam Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, President of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam who is also the President of AIPA.

At the official opening, Her Excellency stated that although the COVID-19 pandemic had affected socio-economic and political life of countries around the world, the General Assembly proved the result of parliamentary efforts in cooperation with ASEAN in overcoming these difficulties and the pandemic.

Her Excellency also highlighted that this year's AIPA theme together with the ASEAN 2020 theme shows the full agreement of AIPA and members of parliament as well as the timely appreciation for the effort of ASEAN government and people in overcoming all difficulties, promoting unity, cooperation, for prosperity and a sustainable ASEAN Community.

As a parliamentary role, it is necessary to work closely with the National Government to find all possible ways to stop the COVID-19 pandemic immediately, initiate recovery and economic development, restore the stability of society and further enhance cooperation between ASEAN countries during and after the pandemic. Immediate and effective response from the ASEAN government, tireless effort and sacrifices from all parts of our society plays an important role in overcoming the pandemic and its spread in the ASEAN region.

Meanwhile, His Excellency Nguyen Phú Trọng, President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in his speech during the Official

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Opening Ceremony said that the General Assembly held online reflects the resolve of the National Assembly of Viet Nam and members of Parliament AIPA who stand shoulder to shoulder and work together in overcoming any challenges.

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, he said, the entire world, including the ASEAN region, was facing changes in the aspects of globalisation, international relations and integration that require adaptation to new conditions and norms.

According to His Excellency, ASEAN and AIPA Community should emphasise the importance of unity and resilience to respond to a situation in meeting the aspirations of the people, trade and international partners to continue to grow and develop.

As a legislator, a member of parliament is an important representative of society. For 43 years, AIPA has played a full role in joining ASEAN and making practical contributions to the pillars of ASEAN development.

His Excellency also reminded that the 41st General Assembly of the AIPA is important in realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2025. This General Assembly also gives us the opportunity to effectively face complex changes in global and regional situations as well as the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

His Excellency Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Chairman of ASEAN in his speech explained that ASEAN provides full support in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic and hopes AIPA and ASEAN parliament will continue to play an important role in strengthening peace and security in developing friendly ties among the ASEAN countries in the region. Thus, it will develop rapid growth and realise the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

At the meeting of the First Plenary Session chaired by the President of AIPA, the Speaker of the LegCo of Brunei Darussalam in his speech stated that the theme for this year's AIPA General Assembly this year is relevant in the context of facing new challenges and norms.

This theme emphasises the role of the ASEAN regional parliament as the voice of the people and the importance of solidarity and efficient response to pressing issues, in accordance with international law. The effects of the pandemic on health, education and economy have fundamentally changed the way society lives.

Although the country is facing a challenge, it is important to



Members of the Legislative Council at the 41st General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly.

maintain a forward-looking approach and ensure continuity of AIPA's work. By upholding the true spirit of ASEAN 'Unity in Diversity', AIPA will help ASEAN to overcome any challenge and respond promptly to the future.

In his speech, the Speaker of LegCo also stated that AIPA Member Parliaments should continue to foster cooperation between stakeholders by encouraging the exchange of information in reducing the impact of COVID-19, while acknowledging post-pandemic challenges and planning preventive measures in the interest of the people.

At the end of his speech, the Speaker of LegCo stated that Brunei Darussalam will continue to support the efforts of fellow AIPA in addressing global and regional challenges through partnership and diplomacy.

The AIPA General Assembly enters its 43rd year since its inception. AIPA was originally formed in 1977 as the ASEAN Parliamentary Association, (AIPO) by leaders of several national parliament consists of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand during the 3rd ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Manila, Philippines.

In the following years, Viet Nam, Lao and Cambodia became members of the organisation. At the 27th AIPO General Assembly held in Cebu City, Philippines in 2006, the organisation was transformed into AIPA to transform it into a more effective and integrated institution. Brunei Darussalam later became a member of AIPA in 2009 and for the first time hosted the 34th AIPA General Assembly in 2013.

AIPA also plays an important role in introducing the ASEAN Community to policies and realising the ASEAN Community Vision 2025.

Brunei Darussalam to host the 42nd AIPA General Assembly in 2021

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 10 - The 41st General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) hosted by the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam approved 26 resolutions after sitting for three days. The Second Plenary Session and the closing ceremony of the 41st AIPA General Assembly was held online.

Present to lead Brunei Darussalam was Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib, Speaker of the Legislative Council (LegCo) along with 19 members of LegCo. Also present was Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Orang Kaya Pekerma Jaya Dato Paduka Awang Haji Judin bin Haji Asar, Secretary to the Council Ministers' Secretary to the Cabinet Ministers' Council and Clerk to the Council. The online 41st AIPA General Assembly has approved the Joint Statement containing 26 resolutions signed by the Heads of the AIPA member representatives.

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Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib, the Speaker of the Legislative Council (LegCo) delivering his remarks.



The Second Plenary Session and the closing ceremony of the 41st ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) General Assembly.

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Among them are regional issues including issues related to COVID-19 at the Women Parliamentarian of AIPA (WAIPA), Political, Economic, Social and Organisational Committee Level. Meanwhile, the Brunei Darussalam's LegCo will host the 42nd ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly, AIPA after taking over from the National Assembly of Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.

The Transfer of Office ceremony witnessed the presentation of the Instrument of Transfer of Office which is the presentation of the Gavel to His Excellency Pengiran Haji Sahari bin Pengiran Haji Salleh, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Brunei Darussalam to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, as the representative of the Speaker of the LegCo.

Brunei Darussalam has been a member of AIPA since 2009 and will be hosting the AIPA General Assembly for the second time next year. At the Transfer of Office ceremony, the Speaker of the LegCo gave his acceptance speech as President of the 42nd AIPA. In his speech, the Speaker of LegCo stated that in a time full of these challenges, it is very important to further strengthen the partnership in AIPA, as well as strategic involvement of dialogue partners on issues of mutual attention in ASEAN and international regions.

The Speaker of LegCo also explained that Brunei Darussalam



The handing over of the gavel to His Excellency Pengiran Haji Sahari bin Pengiran Haji Salleh, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Brunei Darussalam to the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, as the representative of Yang Berhormat Speaker of the Legislative Council.



Legislative Council members attending The 41st General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA).

hopes to work closely with the AIPA Secretariat and also the Parliament Members to continue to build good work from the past in ensuring the realisation of the vision and aspirations of AIPA.

The Speaker of LegCo also added that Brunei Darussalam, will continue to strive to meet whatever means are available and appropriate in the future and will give the best commitment to make every effort as the host and as the 42nd President of AIPA. The Transfer of Office ceremony ended with a video clip presentation on Brunei Darussalam.

Job opportunities in the construction industry

BERAKAS, September 17 - The Manpower Industry Steering Committee (MISC) in Construction in collaboration with the Ministry of Development, Ministry of Education, Permanent Secretariat of Manpower Planning and Employment Council (MPEC) and JobCentre Brunei (JCB) held the Official Opening Ceremony of the Construction Industry Job Marketplace and ARMECS Bridging Programme Interview Session held at Dewan Betabur, Ministry of Development, Berakas.

Present to officiate the inauguration was Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Ir. Awang Haji Suhaimi bin Haji Gafar, Minister of Development.

The event was an important moment for MISC in Construction in making strides and strives to improve marketability as well as to ensure local job seekers to acquire relevant skills and competencies in the construction industry.

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Yang Berhormat Minister of Development officiating the opening ceremony of Construction Industry Job Marketplace and ARMECS Bridging Programme Interview Session held at Dewan Betabur, Ministry of Development, Berakas.

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Construction Industry Job Marketplace also provides an opportunity for local graduates, especially graduates of educational institutions and job seekers in general to interact with potential employers in the construction industry.

In his opening remarks, Ir. Awang Haji Amer Hishamuddin bin Pehin Orang Kaya Amar Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Zakaria, Permanent Secretary (Infrastructure, Housing and Professionals), as Co-Chairman of the council stated since MISC was established in March 2020, it is one of the Steering Committees established under MPEC where its establishment is to enhance the capabilities of the local workforce and ensure local graduates acquire relevant skills in the local construction industry.

He added that a total of 20 companies participated in the Job Marketplace, which offers about 200 vacancies related to the construction sector as well as other general positions.

The event also conducted the ARMECS Bridging Programme interview session specifically targeted for trainees who will be selected to undergo training in the construction industry majoring in Draughting and Construction Site Supervisor.

Trainees who are selected to participate in the ARMECS Bridging Programme in Drafts and ARMECS Bridging Programme in RCC-Visor (Resident Technical Officer, Company Site Representative and Clerk of Works as Supervisor) will be offered jobs under the i-Ready Apprenticeship Programme.

A total of 45 trainees has been accepted for industrial training in both fields which will run for six months in three different disciplines. Meanwhile, a total of 45 consulting firms in the field of architectural, mechanical and electrical as well as civil has been agreed and opted to give six months of training to the trainee.

Trainees consisting of local graduates from local and foreign technical institutions also have the opportunity to continue their field of employment for 12 months at construction companies under the i-Ready Apprenticeship scheme which is joined by 26



Yang Berhormat Minister of Development touring the exhibition.



Ir. Awang Haji Amer Hishamuddin bin Pehin Orang Kaya Amar Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Zakaria, Permanent Secretary (Infrastructure, Housing and Professionals) delivering his welcoming speech.

construction companies, after they have successfully completed six months of training.

ARMECS Draughting Bridging Programme is an industry-based training designed to equip trainees with skills and competencies in Computer-Aided Draughting namely architectural, mechanical and electrical civil and structural drawings to be trained by experts in the construction industry, while ARMECS Bridging Programme in RCC-Visor is an industry-based training formulated to equip trainees with skills and competencies in supervising and control the quality of work on construction sites that are also trained by experts in the construction industry.

Also present at the ceremony were Yang Mulia Dato Seri Paduka Ar. Awang Haji Marzuke bin Haji Mohsin, Deputy Minister of Development; Yang Mulia Datin Seri Paduka Dr. Hajah Romaizah binti Haji Mohd. Salleh, Deputy Minister of Education; Members of the Legislative Council, Permanent Secretaries, Deputy Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments, Managing Directors and representatives of consultant firms and construction companies.



Job seekers at the event.

Address issues of skills development, lifelong learning

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 17 - A special online ministerial conference session entitled 'ASEAN High Level Conference on Human Resource Development', organised by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, the Republic Socialist of Viet Nam was attended by Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sulaiman, Minister of Education.

The conference was jointly officiated by His Excellency Ngoc

Dung, Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of the Republic Socialist of Viet Nam; His Excellency Prof. Dr. Phung Xuan Nha, Minister of Education and Training of Viet Nam; and His Excellency Dato Lim Jock Hoi, ASEAN Secretary General.

The conference also saw the confirmation of the Roadmap for the ASEAN Human Resources for the Changing World of Work of the Ministers of Education and Labour ASEAN, followed by the launched of the ASEAN TVET Council.

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Yang Berhormat Minister of Education and Yang Berhormat Minister of Home Affairs during the 'ASEAN High Level Conference on Human Resource Development' online ministerial conference organised by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, the Republic Socialist of Viet Nam.

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The conference consisted of four panel sessions of ministers, where the Minister of Education had the opportunity to share the initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Education of Brunei Darussalam in addressing the issue of human resource development, especially in the development of 21st Century skills and lifelong learning.

The Minister among others also shared about capacity building of teachers and instructors by implementing the process of selection and recruitment of teachers as well as the strengthening of training programmes.

Among those present at the conference were Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs; ASEAN Minister of Education and Labour; ASEAN Dialogue Partners; as well as representatives from the International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the ASEAN Business Advisory Council.

Prior to the special session of the conference, an online session for senior officials was held on September 15, 2020.

Among those present at the special session of the conference were the Dr. Shamsiah Zuraini Kanchanawati binti Haji Tajuddin, Permanent Secretary (Core Education), Ministry of Education; senior officials from the ASEAN Education and Labour sector; ASEAN Dialogue Partners; and representatives from the ILO, World Bank, UNESCO, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Economic Forum.

During the special conference session at the senior officer level, ASEAN Senior Officers from the Education and Labour sector reviewed and confirmed the Roadmap document for the ASEAN Human Resource Development for the Changing World of Work.

The special conference session also witnessed the partnership from senior officials and representatives from ASEAN and colleagues to share on their respective priorities and areas of interest for cooperation related to human resource development.

More reduction in social distancing

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 30 - With the consent of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Haji Mohd. Isham bin Hai Jaafar, Minister of Health informed the public on the changes in the reduction of social distancing measures such as the operating capacity for arcade and playground (indoor and outdoor) will be increased to 80 per cent of normal capacity at one time.

On September 7, reduction in social distancing measures has also been extended to activity centres for the elderly

in particular Pusat Kegiatan Warga Emas (PKWE), moving from Level 3 to Level 4. Meanwhile, the capacity for mass gathering has been increased from 200 to 350 people which includes all the guests, organiser's family members, committee members, catering staff and anyone present at the event. Premise owners are required to print and display QR code at their respective entrances.

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Yang Berhormat Minister of Health during the press conference.



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The Minister reminded the public to comply with all regulations and directives related to the reduction of social distancing measures that have been issued and are still in force at the moment. The public are also required to use the BruHealth application and scan the QR Code when they enter and exit premises, especially at public areas such as shopping malls, retail shops, restaurants, beauty establishments, barber shops and others.

The public are urged to take the usage of the BruHealth application seriously, especially in scanning the QR Code as it is used by the MoH for contact tracing purposes in the event of an outbreak of infection.

The public are also required to practise their social responsibilities by maintaining personal hygiene, practice proper cough and sneeze etiquette, are recommended to wear a face mask in crowded public places and to not go to public places and attend social gatherings if feeling unwell. The public especially those attending the Friday prayers are reminded to wear a face mask when they are within the compound of the mosques, before and after the Friday prayers, and are to bring their own prayer mat and to scan the QR



Social distancing being performed at a mass gathering.

Code when entering the mosque or *surau*.

Any individual found to be in violation of or disobey any order issued shall be an offense under the Infectious Diseases Act (Section 204), which if found guilty can be issued compound fine up to \$5,000 or can be prosecuted in court carrying a fine up to \$10,000 or imprisonment up to six months or both. The ministry will not hesitate to take legal action against anyone who does not comply with the directives issued.

Since the enforcement of the directives issued during the pandemic in June 2020 until at present, a total of 891

business premises have been inspected nationwide, where 540 violations have been found and compound fines issued.

Among the common offences are that food handlers are not wearing face masks while working and premises do not perform temperature check on customers and visitors.

The Ministry of Health will continue to monitor the situation of the outbreak at the national as well as regional and global level and carry out ongoing risk assessments to consider further mitigation measures. If the outbreak situation becomes alarming yet again, the Ministry of Health will not hesitate to tighten the social distancing measures that need to be taken to control the outbreak. The MoH will notify the public of any changes to this situation, if necessary from time to time.

The Ministry of Health would also like to inform the public who wish to make payment for the SARS-CoV-2 test or swab test for the purpose to enter Brunei Darussalam, the payment can be made online via the link: (<https://www.healthinfo.gov.bn/entry-payment/#/user/login>).



Food handlers wearing face masks while handling food.



COVID-19: Two new cases recorded in September

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On September 3, one new imported case was detected through the COVID-19 swab test screening programme for individuals arriving in the country from abroad. He showed no sign of infection and is being treated at the National Isolation Centre (NIC). Case 145 is a 33-year-old man who arrived in Brunei Darussalam via Kuala Lumpur from Indonesia on Royal Brunei Airlines flight BI 874 (seated at 32H) on August 28, 2020.

At present, a total of 6,244 individuals have completed their mandatory self-isolation at the monitoring centers.

Furthermore, 441 individuals that have just arrived in this country after traveling from abroad are undergoing mandatory self-

isolation at the monitoring centres provided by the government. Case 146 is still being treated at the National Isolation Centre and is in stable condition. The total number of recovered cases remains 142 individuals.

In the past 24 hours, a total of 320 samples have been tested for the SARS-CoV-2 virus that brings the total number of laboratory tests conducted since January 2020 to 58,914 tests.

For further information and latest updates, members of the public can visit the official website of the Ministry of Health at www.moh.gov.bn or by contacting the Health Advice Line 148 or through the BruHealth application.

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Yang Berhormat Minister of Health (centre) during the media conference on the country's latest update of the COVID-19 situation.

COVID-19: Foreigners entering Brunei for essential purposes allowed

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 3 - With 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's consent, special consideration can be made for foreign travellers needing to enter Brunei Darussalam.

Brunei Darussalam is entering the first phase of removing restrictions on entry and exit into the sultanate.

Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy made the announcement during a press conference at Al-Afiah Hall, Ministry of Health.

The conditions include official duties and essential travel; foreign students studying in the sultanate under government or private scholarships; foreigners undergoing medical treatment in Brunei Darussalam; and any special consideration given in a case-by-case basis subject to governmental evaluation.

In addition, travellers must be guaranteed or sponsored before entering Brunei and application for Entry Travel Pass must be made through the Prime Minister's Office portal on (www.pmo.gov.bn/travelportal).

The guarantor, either from a government agency, private company or individual can make the application; the guarantor must enclose supporting documents; the application will be considered based on the category and requirements of travel to Brunei Darussalam as well as the risk assessment of the country they are in; and if the application is approved, the guarantor is required to pay for the COVID-19 (RT-PCR) swab test which will be conducted upon arrival.

For instance, travellers travelling from countries that are moderate or high risk, will need to stay for up to 14 days where they will be swabbed again. If they come from a low-risk country, a negative COVID-19 (RT-PCR) swab test result within 72 hours is required before departure and they can enter the country and stay at a hotel for two days where they will be administered another test. If the second test is negative, they are permitted to leave the hotel.

The guarantors are required to book accommodation in selected hotels for mandatory self-isolation.



Travellers arriving in Brunei Darussalam.

The cost of these hotels are according to their respective hotel rates which include meals, transportation from the airport to the hotel and transportation from the hotel to the COVID-19 (RT-PCR) swab test site. The transportation should be in accordance with the standard operating procedures (SOPs) outlined by the Ministry of Health such as the use of face masks for drivers.

The Minister added that hotel booking confirmation is among the supporting documents required for entry application and the period of self-isolation is between two to 14 days depending on MoH's risk assessment.

The conditions and procedures for the entry of foreigners into the country will be effective starting September 15.

The Minister also stated that the green lane travel arrangement with the Singaporean government is a reciprocal arrangement. Bruneians entering Singapore are only required to be swabbed at the airport, and if the result is negative, then they are allowed to leave the isolation area.

Currently, Singapore is considered a low-risk country, therefore, individuals will stay in hotels for two nights, and then will be swabbed and may leave if the test results are negative.

Additionally, the Minister announced that citizens and Permanent Residents of Brunei Darussalam are encouraged to get a swab COVID-19 (RT-PCR) in the last 72 hours before departure to Brunei Darussalam.

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Upon arrival, they are required to undergo a second COVID-19 'swab' test and will undergo self-isolation for a period of two to 14 days according to the guidelines of the MOH.

Local passengers who did not take a pre-departure COVID-19 test must be tested for the COVID-19 five days after returning to the country. They are also required to isolate for seven to 14 days at selected hotels.

For Brunei Darussalam's residents returning after 'essential' travel, such as on official business, following school graduation abroad and medical treatment at the expense of the government will be housed in designated hotels funded by the government.

The cost of the COVID-19 swab test (RT-PCR) will also be funded

by the government.

Brunei Darussalam's citizens and residents who are returning from non-essential visits need to pay for their accommodation, meals and transport from the airport to hotel, which includes the cost of accommodation, food and drink, transportation from the airport to the hotel and transportation from the hotel to the COVID-19 (RT-PCR) swab test site. However, the cost of the COVID-19 swab test (RT-PCR) will be covered by the government.

The residents of the country intending to return are advised to complete the Arrival Declaration starting September 15 to facilitate logistics management during their arrival. The declaration form and guidelines can be found on the website.

COVID-19: New features for BruHealth Apps

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 24 - Describing the system as the future of healthcare, Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy said using the BruHealth app will be able to raise the quality and efficiency of healthcare services in the country during a press conference held at Al-Afiah Hall, Ministry of Health.

The mobile application will have new features which include personal health history. Users will be able to make a doctor's appointment, book a consultation with doctor via video call and make online payment.

"From then onwards, whatever information received will be fed through the artificial intelligence behind the application to improve the quality of healthcare in the

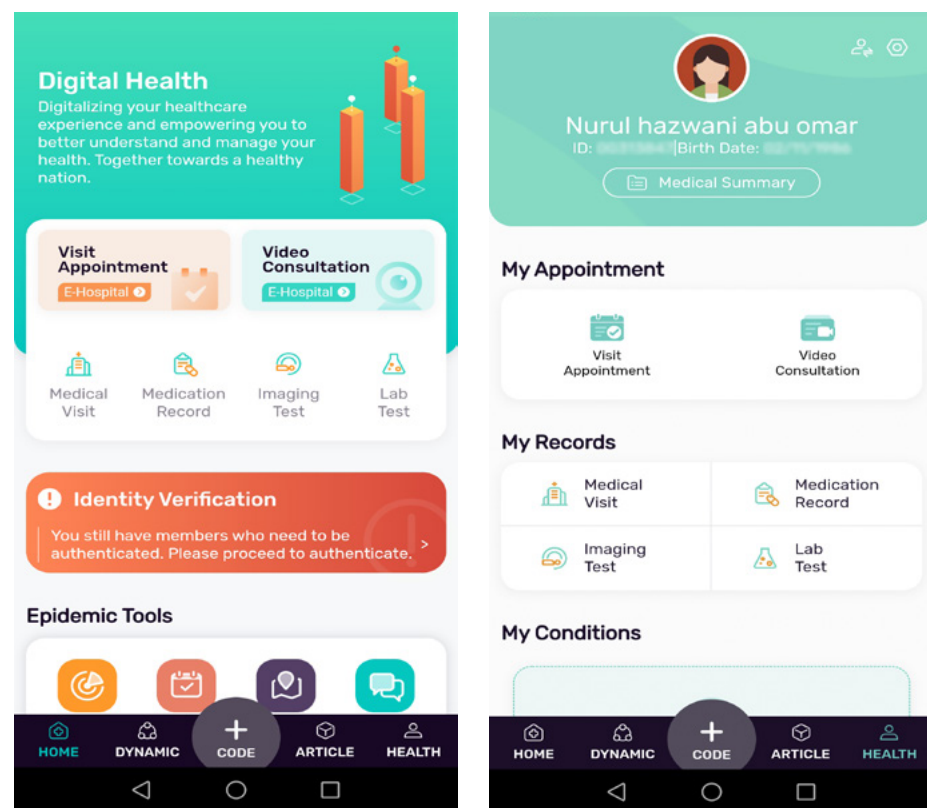


Yang Berhormat Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy during the press conference.

country. We are going for value-based healthcare and further reducing the risks of chronic diseases with data obtained through the BruHealth application", said the Minister.

Since its inception on May 14, the application has drawn a total of 436,047 registrations. It serves as a pandemic response and a population engagement platform to assist the Ministry of Health in carrying out contact tracing in the event of a community spread of COVID-19 in the country.

Meanwhile, Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Haji Mohd. Isham bin Haii Jaafar, Minister of Health added that the new features on the application will be particularly helpful in finding out personal health history, such as disease diagnoses, laboratory tests undertaken, visits to hospital and clinics, and medical prescriptions by public and private clinics will also be listed.



New features in the BruHealth application such as personal health history, doctor's appointment, consultation with doctor via video call and making online payment.

COVID-19: October 1, Exit and Entry Charges Order comes into effect

BERAKAS, September 30 - By the command of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Finance and Economy will execute the Exit and Entry Charges Order 2020, starting October, 1 2020, announced Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin

Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy at the media conference.

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All citizens including Brunei Darussalam citizens who intend to exit or enter Brunei Darussalam through the land control posts either via vehicle or as a pedestrian will be charged a fee of \$3 per person for each one-way trip.

The exemption also applies to several categories, including children aged two and below; consular officers and staff, as stated in Article 1 in the First Schedule to the Consular Relations Act (Chapter 118) and their family members; and diplomatic agents. As stated in the Schedule to the Diplomatic Privileges (Vienna Convention) Act (Chapter 117).

All citizens who are planning to exit or enter the country through land immigration control posts may register and submit their application via the Exit and Entry System (EES) of the Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED), which can be

accessed at www.bdnsw.mofe.gov.bn. Applicants must enter the driver and passengers information and payment can be made online.

For the Frequent Commuters Pass (FCP), applications can be made via the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) portal at www.pmo.gov.bn. FCP applicants who have obtained permission from the PMO are required to register their passes online at www.bdnsw.mofe.gov.bn.

The application procedures for the FCP in the EES can be accessed at the RCED website.

For information, contact the RCED at the Ministry of Finance and Economy +6732382361 or +6738323741 during office hours. Queries can also be addressed to info@customs.gov.bn.

COVID-19: MTIC issues vehicle pass stickers

BERAKAS, September 30 - The Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications (MTIC) through the Land Transport Department (LTD) in collaboration with other government agencies: the Prime Minister's Office; the Royal Customs and Excise Department (RCED); the Royal Brunei Police Force (RBPF), as well as Immigration and the National Registration Department, with advice and directives from the Ministry of Health, will implement the use of vehicle pass stickers to control foreign vehicles in the country during the current COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Abdul Motalib bin Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Setia Dato Paduka Haji Mohd. Yusof, Minister of Transport and Infocommunications, the visitor vehicle pass and commercial vehicle pass for foreign vehicles will be introduced to identify: 1) foreign vehicles which have received approval from RCED to remain in Brunei Darussalam; and 2) foreign vehicles entering the country for the purpose of transportation of agricultural, agri-food and fisheries goods with approval from the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism (MPRT) respectively.

The matter was stated by the Minister of Transport and Infocommunications during a press conference held at Al-Afiah Hall, Ministry of Health.

The use of these vehicle pass stickers will be enforced from October 1, 2020 with a grace period of two weeks. The Overseas Registered Vehicle Pass Sticker can be applied via online through Android mobile application, TransportBN or the LTD's website: www.jpd.gov.bn. The application for the vehicle pass stickers will take three days with a fee of \$30.00 for each foreign vehicle for a period of three months. The foreign vehicle pass



Yang Berhormat Minister of Transport and Infocommunications explaining the vehicle pass stickers during a press conference.

stickers can be obtained from special counters at the Driving Test and Training Circuit Complex in Sungai Akar.

The Minister added, through enforcement agencies, MTIC will not hesitate to take strict action against any vehicle owners who do not comply with the regulations, which is an offence under the Infectious Diseases Act (Chapter 204), where if found guilty can be sentenced to a fine of up to \$10,000 or imprisonment of up to six months or both. It is also an offence under the Penal Code (Chapter 22), if any individual is found to have made false documents.

Complaints on any foreign vehicles that have no vehicle pass stickers and found to have made stops or transits while in the country can be submitted to the RBPF emergency line 993 for appropriate investigation and action.



Two types of vehicle pass stickers for private and commercial foreign-registered vehicles issued by the Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications.



COVID-19: Organising individual sports competitions permitted

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 24 - Competitions for six individual sports are allowed to be organised as part of the updated guidelines for sports starting from September 28.

The allowed sports are badminton, squash, tennis, table tennis, sepak takraw and golf.

Yang Berhormat Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Awang Haji Aminuddin Ihsan bin Pehin Orang Kaya Saiful Mulok Dato Seri Paduka Haji Abidin, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports announced the matter during a press conference at Al-'Afiah Hall, Ministry of Health.

Competitions are limited to a single or double match. Organisers must provide an orderly match schedule to avoid crowds. Participants must leave the facility upon completion of the match or the prize presentation ceremony.

Organisers must ensure that only the participants, coaches, managers and members of the organising committee are allowed to attend the competition. Meanwhile, supporters are not allowed.

Organisers must obtain approval to organise a competition from the government agencies. They must also present plans for COVID-19 control measures in line with the MoH's guidelines.

Meanwhile, de-escalation for swimming pools has moved from the third to the fourth stage.

The capacity has been increased from 80 per cent to 100 per cent, not exceeding 100 people at one time subject to the capacity of the swimming pool.

Statistics showed over 480,000 individuals have used the sports facilities since opening. The figure did not include hiking and running activities.



Yang Berhormat Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports during the press conference.

With the revision of social distancing guidelines, the public are reminded to not be complacent and to continue to follow the guidelines set by the Ministry of Health.

COVID-19: Entering through land control posts requires swab test

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 30 – His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddin Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented through the Prime Minister's Office that foreign nationals are required to undergo SARS-COV2 laboratory tests RT-PCR before entering the country through land control posts.

The test results must be presented to the Immigration and National Registration Department at the border posts.

A negative test result is valid within seven days from the date

the test is conducted. This is applicable for every entry of foreign nationals including transit passengers and drivers as well as passengers of commercial vehicles (Transport Operators).

The Ministry of Health will conduct random SARS-COV2 screening tests among drivers and passengers using commercial vehicles entering the country through land control posts.

Travel entrance for foreign commercial vehicles through land control posts are limited to three times a week which is every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Integrated action for a better healthcare system

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 24 - Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Haii Mohd. Isham bin Haji Jaafar, Minister of Health stressed the need for an empowered health system around the world where Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies must continue to work together in an integrated manner to support all walks of life to achieve greater peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Minister made the statement at The 10th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation on Health and The Economy held virtually on September 23, 2020.

Also present were Haji Maswadi bin Haji Mohsin, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Policy and Management) at the Ministry of Health and senior officials.

The annual meeting is a forum between governments at ministerial level to discuss issues related to health and economy.

The meeting involved health ministers from APEC economies, senior government officials, researchers, academia, the private sector and businesses to facilitate integrated action, exchange



Yang Berhormat Minister of Health during The 10th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation on Health and The Economy virtual meeting.

of best practices and sharing of innovative approaches against cross-border health threats.

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The 10th meeting was organised by the Ministry of Health of Malaysia.

The meeting carried the theme 'Building a Resilient Asia-Pacific in a COVID-19 World' which discussed the proposals to make a health investment that can be beneficial to sustainable economic growth, in addition to establishing mechanisms to strengthen the health system and support digital economy as well as health innovation in tackling the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Minister of Health also expressed Brunei Darussalam's support to the APEC leadership and its efforts is in line with the

Focus on post COVID-19 economic outlook

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, September 19 - Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr Awang Haji Mohd Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy recognised the importance of technology and digitalisation as enablers for economic recovery and growth in his remarks at the 23rd ASEAN Plus Three Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting (AFMGM+3) via video conference on September 18, 2020.

In his intervention, the Minister welcomed the ongoing cooperation amongst the ASEAN Plus Three countries to strengthen the region's financial resiliency and stability and called for enhance collaboration in fostering conducive environment to reinvigorate business and trade activities.

The Minister further encouraged officials to explore regional initiatives that enable ASEAN Plus Three countries to harness the benefits of technological developments.

The ASEAN Plus Three Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting is a ministerial level platform where representatives from ASEAN Member States, People's Republic of China, Japan and Republic of Korea discuss ways to strengthen regional financial cooperation.

At the virtual meeting, the ASEAN Plus Three Head of Delegations exchanged views on the global and regional economic developments and outlooks as well as policy responses to the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The President of the Asian Development Bank, the Director of the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, and the Director of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the International Monetary Fund also shared their perspectives during the Economic Review and Policy Discussions segment of the Meeting.

The ASEAN Plus Three Head of Delegations also reviewed the ongoing ASEAN Plus Three financial cooperation, including the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM), Asian Bond Market Initiative (ABMI) and the strategic directions of the ASEAN Plus Three cooperation.

Among others, they welcomed the continuous improvements of the CMIM, including enhancing its operational readiness and relevance, and the progress made on ABMI that aims to encourage the development of local currency bond markets to address currency and maturity mismatches and to mobilise the region's savings to finance long-term investment across the region.

On the discussions related to the future of the ASEAN Plus

World Health Organization (WHO) approach.

The meeting agreed on the APEC High-Level Meeting on Health and the Economy Joint Statement which highlighted the need to invest in health and focus on evidenced-based interventions and response to COVID-19 pandemic waves which will help in economic recovery, and reduce the likelihood of occurrence of pandemics in the future.

The statement elaborated on an agreement to take action in strengthening the health system, further enhancing efforts to collaborate to obtain accessible vaccine and continue efforts to addressing other health issues in member countries in the Asia-Pacific.



Yang Berhormat Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and Economy; ASEAN Plus Three Head of Delegations and officials during the video conference of the 23rd ASEAN Plus Three Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting (AFMGM+3).

Three financial cooperation, the Head of Delegations welcomed the establishment of five Study Groups to explore potential areas for new initiatives on "Local Currency Usage Promotion in ASEAN+3", "Infrastructure Financing", "Instruments for Macro-critical Structural Issues", "Strengthening Financial Resilience against Climate and Natural Disasters" and "Enhancing Policy Coordination to Harness Benefit of Technological Advancements While Minimizing Risks".

The Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN+3 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' Meeting was adopted by the Head of Delegations and is available for download via the ASEAN Secretariat website <https://asean.org/joint-statement-23rd-asean3-finance-ministers-centralbank-governors-meeting/>.

Also in attendance at the meeting were officers from Ministry of Finance and Economy (MOFE) and Monetary Authority of Brunei Darussalam (AMBD).

Country's GDP records increase of 2.8% in Q2 2020

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Meanwhile, the Non-Oil and Gas sector, which now includes downstream activities such as the manufacturing of petroleum and chemical products, contributed 53.2 per cent with a GVA of \$2.1 billion.

At constant prices, GDP recorded a positive growth of 2.8 per cent year-on-year in Q2 2020. The growth was contributed by the increase in the Non-Oil and Gas sector by 8.1 per cent. Meanwhile, the Oil and Gas sector recorded a decrease by 1.3 per cent.

The growth in the Non-Oil and Gas Sector was mainly due to the downstream activities including a new production of petroleum and chemical products, with a GVA of \$294.9 million.

Meanwhile, the decline in the Oil and Gas sector was mainly due to the decrease in the LNG production from 984,343 MMBtu per day in Q2 2019 to 910,974 MMBtu per day in Q2 2020. In addition, natural gas production also recorded a decrease from 34.34 million cubic metres per day to 34.30 million cubic metres per day in the same period of time. By kind of economic activity, the positive growth year-on-year in Q2 2020 was due to an increase in the Industry Sector by 6.6 per cent following the new production of petroleum and chemical products.

However, the Services Sector decreased by 3.6 per cent due to the decrease in the Subsectors such as Education, Government Services, and Air Transport. A contraction in the Education Subsector by 18.4 per cent was in line with the decrease in government and private education services. On the other hand, following the COVID-19 outbreak has led to a decline in some service activities such as Air Transport Subsector by 93.1 per cent due to reduced travel operations. The outbreak of the pandemic also affected

services such as hotel and restaurant, where during the second quarter, the government has implemented several preventive measures to reduce the risk of transmission such as barring the entry of tourists into the country, prohibiting from serving food in eateries and limiting the number of customers allowed to dine in at one time.

Although the overall Services Sector recorded a decrease, several subsectors under this sector have showed an increase such as Finance (11.8 per cent), Water Transport (33.2 per cent), Real Estate and Property Ownership (2.4 per cent), Communication (2.5 per cent) and Wholesale and Retail Trade (0.3 per cent). The growth in the Finance subsector was attributed to the increase in investment income related to banking services activities.

Meanwhile, the increase in the Wholesale and Retail Trade Sub-Sector was in line with the travel ban from exiting the country due to the spread of COVID-19 infections.

The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Sector also recorded a decreased by

4.4 per cent following the decrease in the production of Fishery, Livestock and Poultry, and Forestry.

On the positive side, the Vegetables, Fruits and Other Agriculture Subsector expanded by 7.6 percent.

By expenditure approach, GDP growth was attributed to an increase in the external demand (exports of goods and services) by 16.5 per cent, in line with the new exports of petroleum and chemical products. On the other hand, domestic demand registered a negative growth of 15.9 per cent due to a decrease in capital expenditure and government final consumption expenditure. However, this was moderated by the increase in the household final consumption expenditure by 2.7 per cent.

GDP is a measure of the total value of goods and services produced in a particular period after deducting the cost of goods and services used up in the process of production. The GDP full report for the Second Quarter of 2020 is available from DEPS's website: www.deps.gov.bn.

GDP By Expenditure At Constant Price:

	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	% Growth
Domestic Demand	3,922.4	3,300.4	(15.9)
Government final consumption expenditure	890.1	844.7	(5.1)
Household final consumption expenditure	860.8	884.5	2.7
Gross capital formation	2,171.5	1,571.3	(27.6)
External	2,927.2	3,409.9	16.5
Export	2,927.2	3,409.9	16.5
Import	2,113.1	1,765.7	(16.4)
GDP	4,623.1	4,752.8	2.8





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