



برونئي دارالسلام

Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam newsletter

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Call to strengthen religious education

BERAKAS, May 28 – Flaws in religious education's policy and system that caused the young children to be hindered from learning the Al-Quran and religion should be quickly overcome.

His Majesty said that the question of children not being literate in reading the Al-Quran and the religion should not arise as religious schools in this country have existed for about 50 years. Should there be people within the 50-year generation who are still illiterate, then question 'why' should be asked. His Majesty further said that this is a vital question as it is linked to the religious education's policy and system.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said at the prize presentation for the National Al-Quran Reading Competition for Adults 1430 Hijrah / 2009 Masihi held at International Convention Centre.

At the event, His Majesty also



PHOTO: MASRI OSMAN

The winner of *qariah* (female) category receives a trophy from His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

consented to award the prizes to the winners of the competition.

The *qari* (male) category was won by Awang Haji Muhammad Fahmie bin Haji Awang Metussin; first runner-up was Ak. Mohd. Adibul Amin bin Pg. Haji Marzuki and second runner-up was Awang Haji Ismail bin Haji Sulaiman.

Meanwhile, in the *qariah* (female) category, it was won by Dayang Hajah Nurulakmalina bin Haji Yahya; first runner-up was Dayang Nurfaezah binti Haji Emran; and second runner-

up was Dayang Norezah binti Haji Md. Deli.

The first place in each category received \$5,000; *umrah* package sponsored by Darussalam Holdings Sdn. Bhd; a trophy; book prize; and a certificate.

Accompanying His Majesty to the event were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah; His Royal Highness Prince Haji 'Abdul 'Azim; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen.

48th anniversary of Royal Brunei Armed Forces

GADONG, May 31 – From being conventional armed forces, the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) has become an entity that is able to contribute to nation building, international peace and security through peacekeeping and humanitarian missions abroad.

These were said by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei

Darussalam who is the Minister of Defence and Supreme Commander of RBAF in his *titah* (royal speech) to mark the 48th anniversary of the RBAF.

Also present at the celebration were His Royal Highness Prince General Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office; His Royal Highness Prince Haji 'Abdul 'Azim, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul

Mateen.

His Majesty added, its small size does not hinder RBAF to move forward and to be on par with other nations. It can be an encouragement for RBAF to be competitive befitting a force that will celebrate its Golden Jubilee in two years time.

His Majesty hopes the Ministry of Defence and RBAF will continue to improve their efforts in line with the



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His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

❶ The Honourable, Gong Sung-Jin, Special Envoy of the President of the Republic of Korea, His Excellency Lee Myung-Bak on May 14.

❷ Yang Amat Mulia Tunku Besar Seri Menanti Tunku Ali Redhauddin Ibni Tuanku Muhriz and delegate from royal envoy of Negeri Sembilan Darul Khusus on May 18.

❸ Her Excellency Virginia H. Benavidez, the outgoing Ambassador of the Republic of Philippines to Brunei Darussalam on May 30.



PHOTO: ABDULLAH HAJI AWANG DAMIT



PHOTO: PG-HAJI BAHAR PG-HAJI OMAR



PHOTO: RAMLI TENGAH



PHOTOS: AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGAH



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

❶ Her Excellency Virginia H. Benavidez, the outgoing Ambassador of the Republic of Philippines to Brunei Darussalam on May 14.

❷ Madam Maria Fenanda Bruns, the spouse of the Ambassador of the Republic of Germany to Brunei Darussalam on May 14.



PHOTO: MASRIOSMAN

Their Royal Highnesses receive audience

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah received in audience Her Excellency Virginia H. Benavidez, the outgoing Ambassador of the Republic of Philippines to Brunei Darussalam on May 21.

The audience took place at Istana Nurul Iman.

Royalty visits King of Kelantan

KELANTAN, May 23 – His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Wadaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Azrinaz Mazhar visited the King of Kelantan, Duli Yang Maha Mulia Tuanku Al-Sultan Ismail Petra ibni Almarhum Al-Sultan Yahya Petra.

Duli Yang Maha Mulia King of Kelantan was hospitalised at the Universiti Sains Malaysia's hospital.

Also present were His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah and Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Bini Hajah Faizah, His Royal Highness Prince Haji `Abdul `Azim, Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna and Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Lela Cheteria Sahibun Najabah Pengiran Anak Haji Abdul Aziz.

Thanksgiving prayer marks RBAF's 48th anniversary

BERAKAS, May 30 – His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and General of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) attended a thanksgiving prayer held in conjunction with Royal Brunei Armed Forces' (RBAF) 48th Anniversary.

The ceremony was held at the prayer hall of Ministry of Defence in Bolkiah Garrison.

RBAF celebrates its anniversary every May 31 since its establishment in 1941.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam sent congratulatory messages to

- President of the Republic of Poland, His Excellency Lech Kaczynski in conjunction with Constitution Day of the republic on May 3.
- His Majesty King Harald V, The King of Norway in conjunction with Norway's 'Constitution Day' on May 17.
- His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, the King of Jordan in conjunction with Jordan's Independence Day on May 24.

HM sends condolences message

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam sent a message of condolences to His Excellency Dr. Haji Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the President of the Republic of Indonesia due to a Military Air Crash at Madiun, East Java on May 21.

MIB is not a slogan

BERKAS, May 19 – The concept of Melayu Islam Beraja - MIB (Malay Islamic Monarchy) is not a slogan but a system that guides our way of life. It is with this concept, Brunei lives, develops, progresses and also under it people receive justice.

These were stated by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam in his *titah* (royal speech) at the official opening of the Special Forum on Malay Islamic Monarchy Concept.

His Majesty also expressed his confidence that the concept is well-understood and sincerely upheld by all citizens.

His Majesty also said that he was aware that at the earlier stage of the concept, there were public doubts. However, that was temporary as with new things that was too early to understand deeply then. Today, the nation is more mature and able to fathom down to the bottom, until we manage to bring the precious pearls to be worn.

His Majesty said we are now wearing it comfortably and happily while other people watching us wear it also regard it as good and attractive. What we are wearing is none other than our very own system that is the axis of national well-being and prosperity – MIB.

The target audiences of the Special Forum on the Malay Islamic Monarchy Concept are the young people and government employees who are the mechanism of the public sector's management and administration.

The special forum was organised by a group of dignitaries bestowed with titles in conjunction with Brunei Darussalam's National Day Silver Jubilee anniversary. The ceremony took place at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.



PHOTO: MASRI OSMAN

His Majesty delivers his *titah* (royal speech) at the Special Forum on Malay Islamic Monarchy.

* From frontpage

(48th anniversary of Royal Brunei Armed Forces)

current situation and against threats by providing a balanced focus on all aspects and elements of defence.

His Majesty in his *titah* also said with concerted and well-balanced efforts, RBAF will continue to become an effective and dynamic Armed Forces. However, besides contributing to the nation and international security, the Ministry of Defence and the RBAF must not forget their responsibilities in strengthening internal security at the present army camps.

His Majesty in his *titah* also reiterated the importance of leadership factors in all organisations, including the Ministry of Defence and RBAF. His Majesty stressed that leadership must be resolute and authoritative because weak leaders would cause the organisation to collapse. As such, His Majesty hopes leaders and senior officers will maintain leadership qualities in securing management and administration as a whole. In this regard, His Majesty took the opportunity to voice his support toward efforts by the Ministry of Defence and RBAF in producing quality leaders. This can be achieved through the establishment of Cadet Officers School, last August. His Majesty acknowledges the school has recruited its second intake and is



PHOTO: MASRI OSMAN

His Majesty as the Supreme Commander of Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) and His Royal Highness Crown Prince General Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah at a celebration to mark the 48th anniversary of RBAF.

waiting for the first historic sovereign parade in July.

At the event, His Majesty watched a Special Arena Performance of 'an assault on a bus' by the Special Force Regiment. His Majesty also consented to watch a static display inside Hangar A. The exhibition showcased military equipments and weaponry for all RBAF units. For the very first time, RBAF Cadet Officers School took part in the exhibition as well as retired

armies who showcased some of their successful achievements in business and agriculture.

At the function, His Majesty also consented to cut a cake marking the 48th anniversary of the RBAF. The theme for this year's celebration is 'Strengthening Defence in Supporting the Mature Nation'.

Royalty graces Girl Guides Quran Reading Competition

JALAN KEBANGSAAN, May 29 – Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Azrinaz Mazhar graced the prize presentation of Girl Guides Quran Reading competition held at the Banquet Hall, Legislative Council Building.

Also present were Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah, Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Majeedah Nuurul Bulqiah, Her Royal Highness Princes Hajah Masna and Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Noor Ehsani.

The competition was divided into four categories, brownies; girl guides and ranger; young and adults leaders; and council and commissioner members.

The winner in the young and adult leaders' category was won by Dayang



Her Majesty The Raja Isteri and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri at the Prize Presentation Ceremony of Girl Guides Quran Reading Competition.

Hajah Nurhafidzah binti Haji Hassan.

In the council and commissioner members category, it was won by the Assistant Commissioner of Brunei Muara District, Dayang Muliana binti Haji Umar.

In the girl guides and ranger category, it was won by Dayang Nur Rasikah binti Mohd. Dahani. And in the brownies category, Dayang Siti Waznah binti Major (Rtd) Haji Abdul Rahman emerged as the winner.

Quranic generation needed to overcome shortcomings

BERAKAS, May 27 – Various shortcomings in the community and economic system faced by mankind can be overcome with the creation of a Quranic generation that adheres dearly to the teachings, reminders and warnings and study the secrets contained therein.

His Royal Highness Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office said in his *sabda* (royal speech) at the opening of the finals of the National Al-Quran Reading Competition for Adults 1430 Hijrah / 2009 Masihi held at the International Convention Centre.

His Royal Highness also said that it is important for the teachings of the Quran to be understood by every Muslim in order to produce a Quranic generation. The Islamic generation has been taught entirely based on the Al-Quran as guidance of life every since the times of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

This year's competition saw 56 participants taking part in the quarter-finals, where participants who scored 80 per cent and above would move into the semi-finals. Twenty-six were eligible to compete in the semi-finals.

Meanwhile, the best of eight, comprising four *qari* (male) and four *qariah* (female) competed in the finals. They comprised of three *qari* and *qariah* chosen to compete in the final along with the defending champions from both categories.

The *qari* were Ak Muhammad Adibul Amin bin Pg Hj Marzuki (Defending Champion), Haji Ismail bin Haji Sulaiman, Haji Muhammad Fahmie bin Haji Metussin and Mohammad Zul-Hafiz bin Haji Tengah.

Meanwhile, the *qariah* were Dayang Nurfaezah bte Haji Emran (Defending Champion), Amal Nazirah bte Haji Asmat, Norezah bte Haji Md Deli and Hajah Nurulakmalina bte Haji Yahya.



His Royal Highness delivers a *sabda* (royal speech) at the opening of National Level Quran Reading Competition 1430/2009.

His Royal Highness observes 'Thermal Scanner' machine

BERAKAS, May 2 – His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office as Chairman of National Disaster Council conducted a visit to the Brunei International Airport to take a closer look at the 'Thermal Scanning' machine based at the airport.

The 'Thermal Scanning' machine is placed at the airport as one of the efforts to trace passengers with high body temperature arriving in Brunei Darussalam.

This is due to Influenza A (H1N1) epidemic where the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the influenza is now at phase 5 that means human to human infection has occurred.



His Royal Highness observes the Thermal Scanner placed in the arrival lane at Brunei International Airport.

Brunei Darussalam prepares to face Influenza A



The Special Meeting of the National Disaster Council discuss Influenza A H1N1.

BERAKAS, May 2 - His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office as the Chairman of the National Disaster Management Council said that the role of the public is important in shouldering the responsibilities together in preventing the virus Influenza A H1N1 from spreading more seriously in the country.

The call was made by His Royal Highness at a special meeting of the national disaster council held at the Fire and Rescue Department in Berakas.

His Royal Highness said that the success of all efforts made by His Majesty's Government will not be achievable without the involvement and cooperation from every level of the community.

Amongst the effort that is appropriate to be taken is the stressing of self-isolation for those infected and its closest contacts besides practicing responsible attitude and unselfishness to curb the more critical spread of the infection.

His Royal Highness further stated that there is also a need to always be ready to face the worst case scenario considering that there are no stronger

preventive measures such as vaccine that have been proven effective.

His Royal Highness also urged the government and private sectors to be always ready to face the situation that is threatening their respective working scope should the possibility of its officers and staff get infected with the disease. Every agency should prepare a business continuity plan that could secure the implementation of respective activities.

His Royal Highness added that the research and screening procedures are also needed to ensure that the public are not doubtful towards the treatment and medical steps that need to be taken as well as the optimal use of ICT services such as the use of SMS, internet and media.

Such steps, said His Royal Highness, can ensure that citizens and residents will be more aware and ready to practice preventive measures in maintaining personal hygiene, lessen the risk of exposure from infections and obeying the quarantine orders to those involved.



His Royal Highness views some of the exhibits.

HRH on working visit to RBAF's Training Institute

TUTONG, May 4 – His Royal Highness Crown Prince General Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office conducted a working visit to Training Institute of Royal Brunei Armed Forces (TIRBAF) based at the Penanjong Garrison.

At the institute, His Royal Highness received a briefing on TIRBAF's roles; followed by a visit to the Clerical Training Wing; Course Company Signal Training Wing; Evolution Centre; Recruit Company; and to the Penanjong Garrison's Blue Tower.

This was His Royal Highness' second working visit, the first was made in 2004 when the institute was still called Training Centre RBAF. The visit provided His Royal Highness the opportunity of an indepth knowledge of the different wings and departments that have not been viewed.

PHOTOS: AMPURIAN HAJI MAHMUD, AMPURIAN HAJI TENGAH



One of the recipients receives his diploma from His Royal Highness.



His Royal Highness delivers *sabda* (royal speech).

His Royal Highness attends ITB's Convocation Day

BERAKAS, May 16 – His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office presented graduates from 22nd intake with their Higher National Diploma certificates held at the International Convention Centre.

A total of 270 graduates received their certificates at the 18th ITB Convocation Ceremony. From the total graduates; 19 graduated in Accountant; 11 graduated in Banking; 39 in Management; 47 in Public Engineering; 12 in Management and Building Engineering; 34 in Mechanical Engineering; seven in Electrical Engineering and Building Services; 33 in Communication Engineering and Computer; 40 in Computer ;and 28 in Information System.

Among the recipients at the convocation ceremony.



PHOTO: HERNIE SULLIANA HAJI OTHMAN

PHOTO: AK AMIRUNIZAM PG HAJI MOHD ALI



One of the winners receives his trophy from His Royal Highness.

PMO wins golf tournament

JERUDONG, May 3 – His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office presented prizes to the winners of the 9th Golf Tournament among the ministries in conjunction with the 15th Civil Service Day.

The ceremony was held at the Royal Brunei Golf and Country Club.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) 'A' team emerged as the overall winner in the tournament, meanwhile the Ministry of Home Affairs won the second place and PMO 'B' in the third place.

Individual winner was won by Awang Seruji bin Haji Setia. The second place was Awang Ahmad Yani bin Haji Md. Noor and the third place was Awang Murni bin Haji Ahmad.



PHOTOS: PG.HAJI BAHAR PG.HAJI OMAR



His Royal Highness at one of the sessions.

His Royal Highness attends OIC meeting



Bilateral meeting with the United Arab Emirates' Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

SYRIA, May 23 - His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade attended the Opening Ceremony and the General Debate of the 36th Meeting of OIC Foreign Ministers at Omayyad Conferences Palace, Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic.

The conference was opened by

Ugandan Foreign Minister, Sam Kutesa, the Chairman of the 35th Session, following which President Bashar al-Assad of Syria delivered a keynote address and Foreign Minister, Walid al-Moualim of Syria was elected Chairman of the OIC FM for the coming year.

His Royal Highness delivered a statement during the General

Debate, in which he emphasised the importance of ensuring that the current world financial crisis did not slow down the work of implementing the OIC Ten-Year Plan of Action. His Royal Highness also held a bilateral meeting with UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Mohammed Gargash.



His Royal Highness with other OIC Foreign Ministers prior to the Opening Session and General Debate of the 36th Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers.

9th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting

HANOI, VIETNAM, May 25 - His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade attended the 9th ASEM Foreign Minister's Meeting held at the National Convention Centre in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, His Excellency Mr. Nguyen Tang Dung in his opening keynote address said that ASEM Foreign Minister's Meeting was held at a time when the economic and financial crisis is causing huge losses that push the world into an extremely difficult and uncertain period.

His Excellency stressed that while managing to deal with the negative, political, economic and social impacts of the crisis, at the same time ASEM was facing numerous global challenges, namely climate, pandemic, energy security and terrorism.

In the last two decades, His Excellency stressed that, the world has witnessed profound and far-reaching changes. Asia and Europe, once

the cradled of humankind civilisation are undergoing cooperation arrangements at different levels, making great contribution to peace, cooperation and development. Asia continues to be the most dynamic reign while Europe experience enormous progress in its integrations.

After the opening ceremony, His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah and 44 others ASEM Foreign Ministers attend the closed session. In the close session, ASEM members discussed two agendas, the business agreement and the cooperation on global financial crisis.



His Royal Highness at one of the sessions.

PHOTOS: HERNIE SULIANA HAJI OTHMAN



His Royal Highness during the closed session meeting.



Bilateral meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland.

ASEM's initiative to fight influenza

HANOI, VIETNAM, May 25 - The government of Japan ASEAN- Europe Foundation sponsored ASEM's initiative to control the Influenza epidemic especially A H1N1 which currently has become the attention of World Health Organisation (WHO).

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade attended the launching of the initiative held in conjunction with the 9th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting held at the National Convention Centre, Hanoi.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, His Excellency Hirofumi Nakasone said that international community should prepare to face the worst scenario of Influenza A H1N1 case.

In this regard, the government of Japan voiced its willingness to tackle the epidemic which became the global concern with propose the project of 500-thousand stocks of anti-virus pill.

HRH holds bilateral meetings

HANOI, VIET NAM, May 26 - His Royal Highness held separate bilateral meetings with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, His Excellency Vygaudas Usackas and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, His Excellency Radoslaw Sikorski.

Both meetings were held in conjunction with 9th ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting.

His Royal Highness also joined other ASEM Foreign Ministers and Heads of Delegation at a Working Lunch during which they exchanged views on the future of ASEM.



His Royal Highness at the opening ceremony of the 17th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting.

PHOTOS: HERNIE SULIANA HAJI OTHMAN



His Royal Highness at one of the sessions.



His Royal Highness at the closed session ASEAN-EU meeting.



Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Finland.

His Royal Highness attends the ASEAN-EU Dialogue

CAMBODIA, May 28 – His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade attended the opening session of the 17th ASEAN-European Ministerial Meeting held at the Chaktomuk Conference Hall.

The Prime Minister of Cambodia, The Honourable Hun Sen in his keynote address among others has outlined six cooperation fields with the priority for the ASEAN-EU Action Plan, especially Phnom Penh Agenda to implement the action plan which was discussed in the meeting.

The Honourable Hun Sen stressed that ASEAN-EU need to strengthen cooperation in the regional and international forum, where as ASEAN and EU play an important role such as ASIA-European Meeting.

His Royal Highness attends close session ASEAN-EU Meeting

CAMBODIA, May 28 - His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade held a bilateral meeting with His Excellency Alexander Stubb, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland.

The meeting was held at the Intercontinental Hotel.

Soon after, His Royal Highness attended the Close Session of the 17th ASEAN-European Ministerial Meeting. At the session, His Royal Highness led the discussions on 'Future Direction', highlighting the successful, longstanding cooperation between the regions and stressing the future need to strengthen ASEAN in order to meet modern challenges.

Did you know that...

- Brunei's Tobacco Order 2005 and its regulations was enforced on June 1, 2008 is provisioned by law (Section 1):
 - i. Prohibit advertisements relating to smoking
 - ii. Control the use of tobacco product
 - iii. Control the sale, promotion, packaging and trade description of tobacco productions
 - iv. Prohibit smoking in specified places and vehicles
 - v. Provide for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto
- There are four local newspapers namely Pelita Brunei (government owned newspaper), Borneo Bulletin, Media Permata and The Brunei Times.
- Thirty one point six per cent of local rice production in year 2008 was produced by Temburong District.
- Brunei Darussalam has more than 300 resident bird species out of the 390 species recorded for the whole Borneo. A great majority of these are exclusively forest dwellers.

>> BRUNEI IN BRIEF

- Official name is Negara Brunei Darussalam.
- Capital is Bandar Seri Begawan.
- It is located on the north-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia.
- Land size is 5765 sq. km
- Population is estimated at 398,000 people (2008).
- It is divided into four districts – Brunei Muara, Tutong, Kuala Belait and Temburong.
- Malay is the official language but English is widely spoken.
- Islam is the official religion and it allows other religions to be practiced.
- National carrier is Royal Brunei Airlines.
- It has an equatorial climate, a uniform temperature, high humidity and heavy rainfall.
- Public Warning: The trafficking of controlled drugs carries the death penalty in Brunei Darussalam

>> HOW TO GET TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM?

There are a number of ways to reach Brunei.

- By air - Brunei's national carrier, Royal Brunei Airlines travels to more than 20 destinations around the world. The airline also has worldwide office for you to book a return flight to Brunei (to know the nearest RBA's office at your place, please log to: www.bruneiair.com)
- International airlines such as Singapore Airlines, Malaysia Airlines and Thai Airways also fly frequently to Brunei. Beginning July 2006, Air Asia, the Malaysia's lowest airfare carrier also has direct flight from Kuala Lumpur to Brunei.
- Arrival by plane would land you to Brunei International Airport (BWN), the sole airport in the nation.
- For those who enjoy journey by sea, you can reach Brunei by boat or ferry. The main ferry terminal in Brunei is the Serasa Ferry Terminal at Muara. You can catch a ferry from Labuan, Sabah or Lawas and Sundar, both in Sarawak, a state of the neighbouring country, Malaysia. Another option is via a boat from Limbang, Sarawak which will arrive at the jetty around Jalan Residency area in the Capital.
- You would have two options of entry point to Brunei by land transport. You can enter through the Sungai Tujoh Immigration Control Post in Belait District or the Kuala Lurah Immigration Control Post in Brunei Muara District. The Sungai Tujoh Immigration Control Post in Belait is the entry point for those from Miri, Sarawak. While the Kuala Lurah Immigration Control Post is the entrance for those coming from Limbang, Sarawak; Kota Kinabalu; and Kalimantan.

Luncheon for members of ABAC

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 14 - His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade hosted a luncheon for members of APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) at the Balai Penghadapan Bukit Kayangan.

Also present was Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna, Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

His Royal Highness delivered a statement stressing the importance of the Council's work in helping business succeed well in today's world, especially small and medium enterprises.

ABAC was formed in November 1995 by APEC Leaders, and consists of members from the private sector of each APEC economy. It is responsible for advising the government on business-related matters, especially trade and investment.

The members are in the country for a five-day meeting.



His Royal Highness hosted the luncheon for the members of ABAC.

PHOTO: MOFAT

Guides IT Centre

BERAKAS, May 15 - As one of its development project, the Brunei Darussalam Girl Guides Association has launched its Guides IT Centre where it is a follow-up of the projects stated in its Action Plan for the year 2007 to 2009.

Present to launch the Guides IT Centre was Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Majeedah Nuurul Bulqiah held at association's headquarters in Kampong Anggerek Desa.

Also present were Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna who is the President of the association and Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Anak Khairul Khalil bin Pengiran Syed Haji Jaafari.

It is hoped that the Guides IT Centre will facilitate and give early exposure on information-communications technology to its members. Guides IT Centre project was implemented with cooperation from Eles Academy.



The Guides IT Centre is launched by Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Majeedah Nuurul Bulqiah.

PHOTO: HAJI MASMALEH HAJI MOHD. ALI



Their Royal Highnesses visit one of the booths at the carnival.

PHOTO: HAJI MASMALEH HAJI MOHD. ALI

Bazaar and carnival to raise fund

BERAKAS, May 3 - The Brunei Darussalam Special Olympic has organised a bazaar and carnival in the bid to raise its fund.

Present to launch the bazaar was its royal patron, Her Royal Highness Princess 'Azemah Ni'matul Bolkiah held at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium.

Also present was Her Royal Highness Princess Fadilah Lubabul Bulqiah.

A number of activities were organised which include 40 booths for the bazaar; and an eight-kilometre walkathon that started from Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddin in the capital and ended at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium. The walkathon was participated by some of 200 people.

Ten per cent from the total sales of the bazaar and carnival would be donated to the Brunei Darussalam Special Olympic's fund.

HRH presents books to library

SENGKURONG, May 29 – Her Royal Highness Princess 'Azemah Ni'matul Bolkiah, the daughter of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam presented 123 books of various genres to the Sengkurong Library.

Among the books presented were adventures, fictions, biographies of world leaders and many more.

The Sengkurong Library is ninth library of the Language and Literature Bureau and the fourth in the Brunei-Muara District.

Her Royal Highness presents the books to a representative of the library.



PHOTO: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAIMAN

An example employer award injects worker's enthusiasm



Among the guests at the Labour Day 2009 celebration.

BERAKAS, May 2 – The celebration to commemorate the Labour Day 2009 organised by Labour Department was held at the International Convention Centre.

Labour Day is celebrated every 1st of May. Brunei Darussalam celebrates it to appreciate the deeds and services contributed by workers, especially those working in the private sector. Like other public service employees, they too play the role in helping activate and strengthening development as well the country's socio-economic growth.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Adanan, in his speech at the Labour Day 2009 celebration ceremony, said the globalisation and technology

development process has not only changed the conditions of people's work and their workplace, but also needs relevant adaptation in the affairs of safety, health and well-being of the workers. Besides the Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the employers and employees must take serious attention to and care for the safety of workers and protect them from any accidents and other undesirable incidents. The minister's speech text was read by the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, Pehin Dato Paduka Awang Haji Dani.

Four categories comprising Industries of Hospitality, Food, Supermarket and Automotive Sales

received the Exemplary Employer Award.

The category for Industry of Hospitality was won by The Empire Hotel and Cpunry Club; Sheraton Utama Hotel and Rizqun International Hotel.

In the category of Industry of Food was won by Jollibee Brunei; KFC (B) Sendirian Berhad and Royal Brunei Catering Sendirian Berhad.

Meanwhile, Ben Food (B) Sendirian Berhad and Soon Lee Megamart won the category of Industry of Supermarket.

And the category for Industry of Automotive Sales won by Jati Transport Sendirian Berhad and NBT Brunei Sendirian Berhad.

BEDB focuses on three main economic drives

ANGGEREK DESA, May 7 – The government's national strategic initiatives; attracting foreign direct investments; and exchange of skills including local companies and small-medium-enterprises (SMEs) by encouraging trade and enhancing local skills are the main economic drives for the Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB) to diversify the nation's economy.

Through these drives, BEDB wish to achieve its objective to create quality job opportunities, widen business opportunities through economic pie and enhancing economic values.

Info-communications technology (ICT) is also seen as the main enabler to drastically change Brunei's economic landscape.

These were stated by Mr. Vincent Chong, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

of BEDB at media briefing held at iCentre.

According to the CEO, size in ICT is not the main issue and local SMEs who possess innovative ideas and technology could compete in the global arena.

The objective of the briefing was to voice transparent issues and create a better understanding on the overall development strategy implemented by BEDB.



Minister of Development, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdullah launches the ministry's Customer Day and celebration of World Water Day.

Consume water wisely

BERAKAS, May 2 – Members of the public are advised to consume water wisely. Overall, the nation use 495,000,000 cubic meters of clean water daily where 90 per cent is for domestic usage. Other portion goes to businesses, hotels and restaurants, storage and agriculture.

The matters were stated by Minister of Development, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdullah at the ministry's Customer Day and celebration of World Water Day.

On this matter, cooperation and joint effort from the public are really required in the bid to minimise domestic usage, said the minister.

He further added that, the ministry plays a role in deciding the amount of raw water required to be drained from the existing dam areas; and later to be supplied as untreated or raw water to fulfill the business and agricultural requirements, and an amount of clean water are supplied to power stations and petrochemical industry. But all of these are done after considering the domestic need.

The theme for World Water Day 2009 is "Transboundary Waters – Shared Waters, Shared Opportunities".

The term shared opportunities in this context is the distribution of water evenly or equally.

Motorcyclists heavily involved with road accident in ASEAN



The ASEAN-ADB Road Safety Workshop and the 15th ASEAN Land Transport Working Group Meeting officially opened by Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 5 – A large number of road accidents in ASEAN countries are from motorcyclists. They dominate about 60 to 75 per cent of total road accidents including injuries.

The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications, Awang Haji Alaihuddin stated the matter at the opening ceremony of the ASEAN-ADB Road Safety Workshop and the 15th ASEAN Land Transport Working Group Meeting.

According to the Permanent Secretary, the conducting of the meeting is timely as there is an increase in road accidents in each ASEAN country. It is through this meeting that various causes have been identified and programs towards preventing the causes would be introduced.

In this regard, it is important for all agencies to make an effective action plan for road safety. The Permanent Secretary believed that the workshop held in Brunei Darussalam is a direct indicator of commitment and continuous effort in promoting the initiatives for road safety.

The three-day meeting is held at the Sheraton Utama Hotel.

Protecting children in cyberspace

JERUDONG, May 18 – As an effort to increase public awareness and understanding on cyber security especially in protecting the children, the Authority of Info-Communications Industry (AiTi) held the Telecommunication and World Information Community Day.

The ceremony was launched by the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar at Indera Kayangan Ballroom, The Empire Hotel

& Country Club.

Speaking on this year's theme - 'Protecting Children in Cyberspace', the Chief Executive Officer of AiTi, Pengiran Haji Mohd. Zain said that it is a global issue which not only needs global resolution but also at the national level.

In order to support the theme, AiTi has arranged several activities which hoped to raise awareness among the public in the bid to protect their

children in cyberspace. One of the activities organised is essay writing competition for students which is hoped to increase awareness among them to be more careful in accessing the cyber world.

At the ceremony, the minister also presented a pamphlet entitled 'The Protection and Security in cyberspace' to the principals of government and non-government schools in Brunei-Muara district.

Brunei – Sarawak ink pact on energy sector

JERUDONG, May 7 – The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the energy sector would establish a cooperation to study the development of interconnecting the power system between Brunei Darussalam and the Malaysian state, Sarawak.

Hence, the MoU was signed between the Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Sarawak. Present as signatories on behalf of Brunei Darussalam was Awang Haji Osman bin Haji Tamin, the Director for the Department of Electrical Services; while his counterpart was Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Datuk Amar, the Group Management Director for Tenaga Sarawak Berhad.

The study for the interconnecting power system will take in account a comprehensive analysis of the power system from the economical, financial point of view and matters raised through institutional and legal perspectives.

The first phase for the interconnecting of power system from Miri, Sarawak to the western part of



Representatives of Brunei Darussalam and Sarawak shaking hand after the signing of the MoU.

Brunei Darussalam is expected to commence its operation in 2012.

A study will also be carried out for direct interconnecting from Limbang, Temburong and Lawas where 400 megawatts of electric will be exported

to Brunei.

While the second phase will witness interconnecting from the northern Sarawak, Brunei Darussalam and Sabah expected to commence in 2014.



New dialysis centre

BELAIT, May 11 – The Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam is always on the go to provide better health care to its citizens and residents. One of the latest facilities provided is a new dialysis centre based in the Belait District.

Construction works began on September 28, 2007 where it is one of the projects under the National Development Plan (2007 -2012). The building is at an estimated value of \$2.7 million where among the facilities available include haemo dialysis services; peritoneal dialysis; procedure room; administration; office, surau (worshipping hall), waiting room as well as a supply of treated water.

Present to officially open the centre was the Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Suyoi.

With this facility, patients residing in the Belait District no longer need to commute to the capital to receive a treatment where it brings convenience and comfort for the patient.

Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Suyoi mingles with one of the patients at the dialysis centre.

Health Ministry inks pact on training

UNITED KINGDOM, London, May 22 - Brunei's Ministry of Health signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UK's Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP).

Singing on behalf of Ministry of Health was its Permanent Secretary, Dato Paduka Haji Abd. Salam while his counterpart was Dr. John Howard,

RCGP International Director of Medical and Board of Chairman Members.

The signing ceremony took place at RCGP building at Hyde Park, London.

With the signing, local doctors at the Primary Health Care Services Division now have the opportunities to enhance their expertise through

Advanced Specialist Training. The training will commence in September this year.

Also present at the ceremony was Brunei Darussalam's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, His Excellency Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Maidin bin Pengiran Hashim.

Brunei Darussalam participates in Arafura Games 2009



PHOTO: HATRAL HAZMI ABD. HAWID

Brunei Darussalam contingent on arrival at the Brunei International Airport.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 17 - The Brunei Darussalam contingent to the ARAFURA Games 2009 in Darwin, Australia made the country proud by bringing home two gold, three silver and seven bronze medals.

The gold medals were won through athletic 1500 meters under 18 years old by Awangku Hafiy Tajuddin bin Pengiran Rositi; and Shari bin Haji Jumat through javelin event with a distance of 22.49 meters.

Meanwhile Amanda Liew Jia Xin

won the silver medal in the women's 15-16 years old 100 meters breaststroke swimming event; Hirdan bin Haji Abdul Kadir through the javelin events with a distance of 22.11 meters; and Mohd. Aiman bin Abdullah through the open tennis men single.

The seven bronze medals were won through women's high jump; women's 100 meter; men's 800 meter; men's shot putt; long jump; breaststroke swimming; and open double tennis.

The games were held from May 9 to 17 where it is a biannual sporting activity which started in 1991 in Darwin, Australia. This year is the eighth year for Brunei to participate in the games.

Brunei Darussalam's contingent for this year's games comprised of 36 athletes including officers and athletes from the 'Special Need People'. They participated in three sports events namely athletic, tennis and swimming.



PHOTO: AK. AMIRULINZAM PG. HAJI MOHD. ALI

Minister of Energy at the Prime Minister's Office, Pehin Major General (Rtd) Dato Haji Awang Mohammad launches the bicycleton.

Energy Day 2009

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 24 - More than 150 people took part in a bicycleton held from Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium to Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddin to celebrate Energy Day 2009.

The event was jointly organised by Energy Section, Petroleum Unit and Electrical Services Department.

Among those participated in the event was the Minister of Energy at the Prime Minister's Office, Pehin Major General (Rtd) Dato Haji Awang Mohammad.

BEDB and SLA sign agreement on methanol export

JERUDONG, May 25 - Brunei Economic Development Plan (BEDB) and Sungai Liang Authority achieved another milestone in their effort towards the development of the global competitive petrochemical centre at the Sungai Liang Industrial Park (SPARK) with the signing ceremony of an agreement related with the methanol export facilities.

Singing on behalf of BEDB was its Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Vincent Chong while BSP was represented by the Managing Director, Doctor Grahaeme Henderson and Brunei Methanol Centre (BMC) was represented by its Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Kinya Tsuji.

The agreement signed were the 'Pipeline Crossing Agreement'

between BEDB and BSP and Methanol Export Facility Lease Agreement between BEDB and BMC.

The signing ceremony was held at Banquet Hall, Royal Brunei Polo and Riding Club. Present at the ceremony was the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade II, Pehin Dato Awang Lim Jock Seng.

Belait District produces 392 ton metric paddy in 2008

LABI, KUALA BELAIT, May 26 – The Department of Agriculture, the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources (MIPR) held a launching ceremony for paddy planting towards achieving self-sufficiency national paddy production in Belait District.

The ceremony was launched by the Minister of MIPR, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Yahya at Sengkuang Lot in

Labi.

This is the continuity to the launching of paddy planting in Wasan by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on April 27, 2009.

The minister said that in 2008, Belait District produced a total of 392 ton metric paddy and contributed some

28 per cent to the country's paddy production, where as Sengkuang Lot site produced some 192 ton metric.

MIPR has set a target for an increase in local rice production in 2010 to 20 per cent self-sufficiency and continue to increase to 60 per cent in the year 2015 to ensure the country's food security.



Deputy Minister at Prime Minister's Office, Dato Seri Paduka Eusoff Agaki launches the e-Government Strategic Plan 2009-2014.

Bill payment through e-Government

GADONG, May 30 – Some e-Government services such as renewal of vehicles license, e-passport and others will be accessible for the public, meanwhile electrical and water bill payment will be made easier.

The Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, Awang Sa Bali bin Abas stated the matter at the launching of e-Government Strategic Plan 2009-2014 at the Rizqun International Hotel.

According to Awang Sa Bali, in the public services sector, the Government Employees Management Systems – GEMS will make ease of the process of civil servants management and improve productivity the civil servants.

Awang Sa Bali said that the newly launched strategic plan was to implement the projects to improve integration among government agencies as well to implement projects on e-government services.

At the launching ceremony, the Deputy Minister at the Prime Minister's Office, Dato Seri Paduka Eusoff Agaki as the guest of honour launched the newly upgraded website of the Prime Minister's Office's www.pmo.gov.bn.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI)

The Customer Price Index (CPI) in March 2009 remained the same as February 2009.

The cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages fell by 0.6 per cent over the previous month due to lower prices of meat and meat products; seafood and seafood products; and cooking oils and fats; vegetables; and fruits.

However, the cost price and cereal products; dairy products and eggs; sugar preserves and confectionery; coffee, tea and cocoa; non-alcoholic beverages; other foods; and food/drink away from home increased.

Some food items which recorded notable price increases in March 2009 over February 2009 such as cauliflower, mackerel (temenung), lady's finger, bean curd stick, bitter gourd and carrot. Meanwhile, some food items showed notable price decreases such as kangkong (water convolulus), pumpkin, spinach, sawi hijau and small prawn.

Higher prices of ready-made clothing and accessories, material for male and female and footwear led to 0.2 per cent increase in the cost of clothing and footwear.

Housing, water, electricity and maintenance cost went up by 0.2 per cent due to higher prices of maintenance and minor repairs.

The cost of household goods, services and operation increased by 0.2 per cent as a result of higher prices of floor covering, household furnishings, kitchen appliances and utensils, crockery and cutlery and household operation.

The education cost rose by 0.1 per cent resulting higher prices of stationery and magazine.

Cheaper prices of proprietary medicines and supplies lowered the cost of medical and health by 0.1 per cent.

Higher price of holiday packages increased the cost of recreation and entertainment by 0.3 per cent.

The cost of miscellaneous goods and services went up by 1.1 per cent due to higher price of ladies personal care and personal effects.

The cost of transport and communications remained the same.

The CPI in March 2009 was 2.4 per cent higher than that of the same month in 2008.

For the first three months (January – March 2009) of this year, the average CPI rose by 2.5 per cent compared to the same period.

UBD offers new degree program next August

GADONG, May 2 - The Faculty of Business, Economics and Policy Studies (FBEPS) and Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) with others faculty in Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) will start the new degree program commencing next august.

The program named the 'Generation Next' is a current trend worldwide towards the degree liberalisation where as the graduates will be provided with opportunities to widen their knowledge and skills with undergoing 'Discover Year' in the third year of their oversea study.

These matter was stated by the the Director of Public Relation and International Department of UBD, Datin Rosnah binti Haji Ramly in the press conference held at the UBD.

Any graduates which have opportunity in 'Discover Year' will continue their study abroad as United Kingdom; Australia and Malaysia in the third year for one year and complete their study at UBD in the fourth year.



PHOTO: AK. AMIRULNIZAM PG. HAJI MOHD. ALI
His Royal Highness launches the Family Day Celebration 2009.

Family Day Celebration 2009

BERAKAS, May 17 - His Royal Highness Prince Haji 'Abdul 'Azim launched the Family Day Celebration 2009 organised by the Department of Community Development (JAPEM), Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

The event was held at the Indoor Stadium Hassanal Bolkiah National Complex.

The Family Day Celebration themed 'Mothers and Family: Challenges in World Changes' was in conjunction with the International Family Day celebration declared every May 15.

Family Day among others aimed to increase awareness to the community on the importance to strengthen family institution.

More than 300 families were invited for the celebration where each family comprised of four members - father, mother and two children.

In conjunction with the celebration, a promotion of the HELPLINE 141 was also held. It was in conjunction with 'Child Helpline International Day' celebrated every May 17.

Singasari Hasausin Zan museum gallery

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 13 - Kampong Tamoi Tengah which is better known as Traditional Village now has another museum gallery as a new addition to village.

Singasari Hasausin Zan was launched by the Acting Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hamdillah.

The project's owner, Awang Hasan Zan said that with the launching of the museum gallery, it will develop the economy of the villagers and at the same time to eradicate unemployment.

Singasari Hasausin Zan among others exhibits a collection of cameras, souvenirs, local press collection, music equipments such as violin and photos.

Kampong Tamoi since 1989 has undergone a project to turn it into a traditional village which aimed to develop the village. Today, some 46 houses are taking part in the project where the project provides foster families, tourism, cultural, exhibition and visit to interesting places.

8th Ministers Conference on Waqaf and Islamic Affairs

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 21 - The 8th Ministers of Endowments (Waqaf) and Islamic Affairs Conference was held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from May 23 to 25.

Brunei Darussalam was represented by the Minister of Religious Affairs, Pehin Dato Dr Ustaz Haji Awang Mohd. Zain.

The conference discussed various related issues on the importance of Muslims that includes purity of thinking and lifestyle awareness, dialogue between religious and its civilisation, mosque affairs and waqaf.

A total of 62 Islamic countries under the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) attended the two-day conference. This year's conference carried the theme 'Intellectual security, role of ministries of Islamic affairs, endowments, call and guidance in its achievements'.

Brunei will continue to give top priority on public health security

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 27 - Brunei Darussalam will continue to give top priority on public health security and committed to achieve Millennium Development Goals, MDGS despite world economic downturn.

The Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Suyoi made the remark at the 62nd World Health Assembly in Geneva. The 62nd World Health Assembly was held from May 18 to 22.

According to the minister, the government has increased health allocation 8.5% for the Fiscal Year 2009/2010. Meanwhile, Health Ministers also attended the Health Ministers Meeting on Influenza A H1N1. The meeting discussed issues on ASEAN+3 Health Ministers Joint Statement that has been adopted during the Special Meeting.



For year 2008, Brunei Darussalam registered a number of 6, 424 live births and from the number, 3,332 are male. Brunei Darussalam Key Indicator (2009) recorded that Life Expectancy at birth (year) of males is 76.6 while females is 79.8.



PHOTOS: SASTRA SARINI HAJI JULAINI