



بروني دارالسلام

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

newsletter

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His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam presenting the challenge trophy to Mudim Haji Metassim bin Haji Metussin and Hajjah Siti Noor Dzuhairah binti Haji Awang Damit who were the respective winner of the men and women's categories of the annual National Koran Reading competition on 3 July.

Proficiency in Jawi writing key to the holy Al-Quran

Brunei Muslims have been urged to master skills in Jawi writing as this is the key to being able to read and fully appreciate the holy Al-Qur'an (Koran).

Making the call, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam also urged his Muslim subjects to instill love for the holy book and proving it so by absorbing and practising its teachings.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang

Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was speaking on 3 July at the close of the annual National Koran Reading Competition held for two consecutive nights at the International Convention Centre at Berakas near the Brunei capital, Bandar Seri Begawan.

"I have tirelessly reminded the importance of the Al-Qur'an and for Muslims at all levels in the country to be able to read and understand it", said the ruler.

The Jawi writing is very closely interrelated with the Al-Qur'an, His

Majesty pointed, because Jawi writing is derived from Arabic alphabets and Arabic is the language of the Al-Qur'an.

"It is therefore important for those who wish to master reading of the Al-Qur'an properly to also have a command of the Jawi writing, and reading it in any other way such as in Romanised letters would not guarantee proper and accurate reading".

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam

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YOUR TURN

The next issue of the Brunei Darussalam newsletter will appear on 31 July 2001. If there are events relating to our country you would like featured in this newsletter please call us on Tel: 02-383400/ext.BDN Division or better still, send us a report with a picture, if possible. All editorial rights reserved.



Brunei Darussalam's ambassador designate to the Russian Federation, His Excellency Dato Paduka Mahadi bin Haji Wasli receives his letter of appointment from His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam while the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Ali Daud looks on.

Brunei ruler presents a letter of appointment and receives credentials of foreign envoys

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on 10 July at Istana Nurul Iman, consented to present a letter of appointment to a Brunei diplomat and receive the credentials of two foreign envoys.

His Majesty first presented a letter of appointment to Brunei Darussalam's new ambassador to the Russian Federation, His Excellency Dato Paduka Mahadi bin Haji Wasli. His Excellency, aged 49, was previously the sultanate's ambassador to the Federated Republic of Germany and while at the same time served as non-resident ambassador to the Russian Federation and Swiss Confederation.

His Excellency joined the diplomatic service in September 1982 and was appointed acting Deputy Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in

1986. He was also the Deputy Secretary-General at the ASEAN Secretariat from 1994 to 1996.

His Majesty later consented to receive the credentials of the ambassador of the People's Republic of Lao to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Bounthong Vongsay, and the ambassador of the Federated Republic of Germany, His Excellency Adalbert Rittmuller.

His Excellency Bounthong Vongsay, aged 54, was previously the Director General of the Department of Law and Agreement of the Foreign Ministry in Vientiane from 1993 – 1996, and the Director General of the Department of Counselor at the Foreign Ministry of the People's Republic of Lao.

Meanwhile, His Excellency Adalbert Rittmuller, 61 years old, was

** Continued on page 3*

* From page 2
(credentials)

previously his country's ambassador to Gabon. His Excellency has also served the German Embassies in Conakry, Jakarta, Vientiane and Manila.

His Majesty also consented to grant separate audiences to the new envoys.



The Lao People's Republic's new ambassador to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency Bounthong Vongsaly and the new ambassador of the Federated Republic of Germany, His Excellency Adalbert Rittmuller, above and left respectively, presented their credentials to His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam upon their taking offices in Bandar Seri Begawan.

ASEAN'S PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SUPPLY

Energy issues ranks high on ASEAN's priority list. It is one of the stipulated prerequisites for ASEAN's on-going economic integration process, in addition to enabling member states to ride out the economic crises that began in 1997. The conclusion of the 19th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) held in Brunei on July 5 resulted in member states' determination to secure reliable energy supply through the construction of inter-connecting energy infrastructure in phases, private-public partnership, and environment-friendly collaborative strategies. The meeting was also supported suggestions for the development, application, and commercialisation of new and renewable energy that bear non-polluting attributes.

All comply with ASEAN's "blueprint" for economic integration: the Hanoi Plan of Action's (HPA) Energy Action Agenda and the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation 1999-2004 that included pledges to establish inter-connecting arrangement in the field of energy and utilities for electricity, natural gas and water within ASEAN through the ASEAN Power Grid and a Trans-ASEAN

* Continued on page 7



ASEAN's Energy Ministers with His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at Istana Nurul Iman (palace) in Bandar Seri Begawan.

HM Sultan receives in audience ASEAN Ministers on Energy and Supreme Commander of Royal Thai Armed Forces



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam greets Thailand's Armed Forces Commander, General Sampo Chooisri on the latter's arrival at Istana Nurul Iman for an audience with the Brunei monarch.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to receive in audience the ASEAN Energy Ministers at Istana Nurul Iman on 5 July.

In the ceremony, His Majesty welcomed the ministers to Brunei Darussalam and was briefed on the result of the 19th Meeting of ASEAN Ministers on Energy held in Bandar Seri Begawan from 5 July.

Also present at the audience were the Brunei Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Abd. Rahman, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Yahya and Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Ibrahim, Permanent Secretaries of the Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources respectively.

A day earlier, His Majesty granted an audience to General Sampo Chooisri, the Supreme Commander of the Royal Thai Armed Forces, also at Istana Nurul Iman.

General Sampo was accompanied by His Excellency Mr. Thinakorn Kanasuta, the Thai Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam and senior officials of the Royal Thai Armed Forces.

His Majesty and Commonwealth Secretary General discuss several issues on Commonwealth

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and the Commonwealth Secretary General, His Excellency Don McKinnon have exchanged views on several issues on the Commonwealth, including preparations being made for the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The meeting will be held in October this year in Brisbane, Australia.

The exchange of views was held during an audience His Majesty granted to His Excellency Don McKinnon at Istana Nurul Iman on 12 July.

Present at the audience were His Majesty's Special Adviser at the Prime Minister's Office cum the Home Affairs Minister, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Isa, Permanent Secretary of the Prime Minister's Office, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Yahya and Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and His Excellency Don McKinnon, Secretary General of the Commonwealth greet each other before getting down to discussions on matters pertaining to the commonwealth.

Face-to-face with the Commonwealth's Secretary General

International politics is replete with contentious issues such as frontier disputes. States engaged in such dispute find this political scenario difficult to come to terms with in the best of times, even between friendly neighbouring ones. The predicament is acute when the discord is between states of different territorial sizes with diametrically opposed national interest to match.

In a brief interview with this Newsletter's correspondent the Right Honourable Don McKinnon explained how the Commonwealth exercises its institutional weight in championing small member states. When small member states endure political difficulty during interactions with their larger counterparts, the Commonwealth's discreet involvement surfaces in the form of moral support to the beleaguered states.

Case-study examples befitting this

"big-meets-small" context: Belize (a small member state) meets Guatemala. Guyana meets Suriname and Venezuela. Small states meet the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

By exercising its role as "filling in strategic gap" the Commonwealth helps its members in areas of non-high politics too, such as supporting small member states' missions to the United Nations.

The Commonwealth's constant interactions with international organisations such as the World Bank, for example, prompted the need to understand and accommodate small states' unremitting constraints based on a political reality that "a small state is a small state".

When asked how Brunei Darussalam benefits from its Commonwealth membership, Mr. McKinnon said: "We helped Brunei draft its legislation for oil and gas, and insurance."

The secretary general also recalled Brunei Darussalam's participation in Commonwealth's international activities. "I've been working over the years with Brunei in ASEAN and APEC meetings. Brunei looks at the issues and can really add some value to the meetings and give a solid contribution," said His Excellency.

The Right Honourable Mr. Don McKinnon assumed office as the fourth Commonwealth secretary general at the beginning of April 2000. The appointment of Mr. McKinnon, former deputy prime minister and foreign minister of New Zealand, was announced by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their summit in Durban, South Africa last November. He succeeds Chief Emeka Anyaoku of Nigeria.

The Commonwealth has a membership of 54 developed and developing states, 32 of which are small states. Collectively the group houses 1.7 billion people.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam is briefed about the exhibition on achievement of Brunei Darussalam's Koran readers at both national and international levels by Awang Haji Mashod bin Haji Damit who won in the International Koran Reading Competition in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1977, right. Below: Hands upturned to the reading of the blessing-seeking do'a at the conclusion of the two-day Koran Reading competition at the Brunei International Convention Centre.



* From page one
(Koran)

urged that the foundation of Jawi writing be strengthened from an early stage, for example, from early schooling right up to further education through a firm and continued policy.

In this way, His Majesty further pointed, the culture of Jawi writing would remain alive and would in turn bring about generations fortified by knowledge from the Al-Qur'an.

The competition was officially opened the previous evening by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Biullah, also with a reminder that the holy Al-Qur'an must not be neglected either in its reading or in the practices of its teachings.

His Royal Highness reminded at the same time, however, that when one reads the Al-Qur'an, it should not be just for the sake of reading while one's thoughts wander about on worldly matters but rather should be focused

only to Allah (God) The Almighty.

Muslims are a fortunate people, said His Royal Highness, especially in this globalisation era which is characterized by various ills and challenges.

The holy Al-Qur'an, he pointed, is a remedy for various ills that are plaguing mankind today such as anxiety, fears and greed for power and position. These can lead one to doing deeds that are not blessed by the Almighty. But those who are close to the Al-Qur'an will surely not be plagued by such destructive ills, the Crown Prince further said.

Eight Koran readers – four each in the men and women's categories took part in the competition and His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam presented prizes to the winners. Mudim Haji Metassim bin Haji Metussin emerged champion in the men's section with Dayang Hajjah Siti Noor Dzulhairah binti Awang Damit winning the category for

women. They each received a challenge trophy, a certificate and B\$5,000 cash prize and will go on to represent the country at the international Koran Reading Competition to be held later this year in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

After the prize presentation, His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam who was accompanied by Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Prince Mohamed Bolkia, Prince 'Abdul Malik and Prince 'Abdul Mateen viewed an exhibition on the achievements of Brunei Koran readers at both national and international levels.

In 1977, the Brunei representative in the male section, Awang Haji Mashod bin Awang Haji Damit beat other readers from around the Muslim world to emerge champion of the International Koran Reading Competition held annually in the Malaysian capital.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam in a group photo with senior members of Universiti Brunei Darussalam and Australia's Queensland University after being awarded an honorary doctorate of law degree by the latter institution.

** From back page
(HM/Honorary)*

law by the University of Aberdeen, and the President's Gold Medal from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Scotland in 2000.

Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) and the University of Queensland (UQ) have established cooperation in education through a Memorandum of Understanding for Bio-Medical Science. To this end, 23 students have undergone the programme beginning April this year at UBD. They have also established cooperation in commercial courses.

In health, UQ has recognised the Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha Hospital (RIPAS) as the university's educational hospital under the school of medical graduates since October 2000.

At the presentation ceremony, His Majesty and Sir Liew

Edward exchanges views on higher education.

The University of Queensland was established in 1910 and has been recognised as one of the outstanding universities in Australia. To date, it has produced more than 100 thousand graduates, including students from Brunei Darussalam. The university offers more than 400 programmes and 5,000 quality courses, which include communication multi-media and information technology (IT).

Present at the presentation ceremony of the honorary degree to His Majesty were the Minister of Education and acting Health Minister, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Abdul Aziz, Permanent Secretary of the Education Ministry, Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar, UBD's Vice Chancellor, Dato Professor Dr. Awang Haji Mahmud Saedon, Secretary and Registrar of the University of Queensland, Australia's High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam, UBD's Registrar and Chairman of HRD Services.

** From page 3
(ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting)*

Gas Pipeline and Water Pipeline. The "blueprint" also pledged cooperation in energy efficiency and conservation plus the development of new and renewable energy resources. The meeting's chairman was Brunei Darussalam's minister of industry and primary resources, Pehin Dato Haji Abdul Rahman.

ASEAN, said AMEM's news release, anticipates a secured energy supply and trade by eventually fulfilling three "stepping stone" criteria: the ASEAN Power Grid, the Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline Project (TAGP), and the EU-ASEAN Energy Cooperation Programme.

This year's meeting served as a follow up to HPA's Medium Term Programme of Action of 1995-1999 that required preparation of policy framework and implementation modalities by 2004 for the early realisation of the trans ASEAN energy networks covering the ASEAN Power Grid and the Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline Projects. ASEAN Council of Petroleum's (ASCOPE) approval for the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for TAGP's implementation was a response to this requirement. The draft MoU is subject to ministerial approval at the next AMEM in 2002.

One of the most tangible evidence befitting this context is the commissioning of three ASEAN power inter-connection projects that will be fully operational in three years time: the so-called Stage II links between Thailand and Peninsular Malaysia, between Thailand and Cambodia, and between Viet Nam and Cambodia. Also announced was the progress of the ASEAN Inter-connection Master Plan Study (AIMS) scheduled for completion by July 2002 under the stewardship of the Forum of Heads of ASEAN Power Utilities/Authorities (HAPUA).

** Continued on page 10*



Long lines of members of various women's associations affiliated to the Brunei Women's Council greet Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam on their arrival at the Brunei International Convention Centre for a gathering in conjunction with the birthday anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Royalty attends Women's Special Gathering

Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam joined women in the country at a special gathering to celebrate Prophet Muhammad's, (peace be upon him), birthday. The ceremony took place at the International Convention Centre on 7 July.

Datin Hajjah Yukmas, the co-adviser of the special gathering welcomed Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness on arrival at the International Convention Centre. Also present were Their Royal Highnesses Princess Hajjah Masna and Princess Hajjah Amal Umi Kalthum Al-Islam.

The ceremony began with the reading of the verses of the Al-Qur'an by Dayang Hajjah Siti Noor Dzulhairah binti Awang Damit, winner in the women's section of the National Koran Reading Competition held recently. This was followed by a forum entitled 'Akidah Kukuh Negara Selamat', and a joint presentation of nasyid and zikir marhaban by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Department of Medical



Her Majesty The Raja Isteri and Her Royal Highness The Pengiran Isteri being briefed by an official as they toured an exhibition on achievements and progress made by Brunei Muslim women.

and Health of the Health Ministry and Brunei Darussalam's Women Council.

Before leaving the ceremony, Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness toured an exhibition on the progress and achievement of the Muslim women. The exhibition also displayed women's health, various achievements of women in business and economic progress, achievement of Brunei's Koran readers, as well as on women's special gathering for the past six consecutive years.

The ceremony was attended by women government officers and members of women's associations affiliated to the Women's Council of Brunei Darussalam.

BIT official Website launched



Above: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah officially launches the Brunei Darussalam National Information Technology (BIT) Council's official website while the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Haji Zakaria looks on. The Crown Prince afterwards toured an exhibition on current technology developments put up by both the public and private sectors.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah has launched the Brunei National Information Technology (BIT) Council's official Website at the Development Ministry in Berakas on 9 July.

The launching of the Website would enable further strengthen and broaden the activities interrelated to the council, especially in channeling

information and interactive participation of the public.

One of the major initiatives being carried out by the BIT is the implementation of a strategic plan of action to encourage the usage of IT among ministries as well as government departments and agencies. The plan also aims to achieve the vision of Brunei Darussalam's Civil Service in the 21st

century.

The Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Zakaria in his remarks said, the development of information and communication technology in the sultanate has broadened, particularly with the use of the Internet in the management of both the public and private sectors. Thus, His Majesty's

** Continued on page 11*

Her Royal Highness Princess 'Azemah Ni'matul Bolkihah has officially launched the Al-Ameerah Al-Hajah Maryam Ehsan Centre's open day in Bengkurong, on 8 July.

The open day was aimed to encourage interactions between members of the society and the less fortunate and the physically disabled. It was also hoped to give the society an awareness of the existence of a special centre for the less fortunate and disabled, as well as to be able to prove that they too, had the ability to conduct recreational activities and could become productive members of the society.

Accompanied by her sister, Her Royal Highness Princess Fadzilah Lubabul Bulqiah, Her Royal Highness toured the 30 booths of exhibition, which displayed and sold varieties of foods and handicrafts, a static exhibition from the Royal Brunei Armed Forces, and an equestrian show.

The Al-Ameerah Al-Hajah Maryam Ehsan Centre is equipped with various facilities to meet its objective to improve and upgrade the standard of life and welfare of its mem-

Al-Ameerah Al-Hajah Maryam Ehsan Centre's Open Day



Her Royal Highness Princess 'Azemah Ni'matul Bolkihah, centre, takes a walk about of the exhibition and sales stalls after she had officially opened the Al-Ameerah Al-Hajah Maryam Centre's open day. The Princess was accompanied by her sister, Her Royal Highness Princess Fadzilah Lubabul Bulqiah, slightly behind to HRH's right.

bers.

Its members, comprised of the less fortunate and physically handicapped, are trained in various activities, such as handicrafts, hydroponics and orchid's cultivation and sewing. They

also learn religious knowledge, English and Malay languages as well as music.

To date, the centre has about 300 members and more than 100 volunteers.

** From page 7
(ASEAN Ministers on Energy meeting)*

Stressing the importance of non-State funding, ASEAN energy ministers strongly insisted the private sector to invest in commercially viable ventures that fall within the remit of ASEAN Energy Cooperation.

ASEAN's attempt to venture into renewable energy will be put to the test with the maiden launch of the five-year EU-ASEAN Cooperation Programme. According to AMEM's news release, the programme covers technical assistance to five energy sectors: electricity, natural gas, clean coal technology, energy efficiency and conservation, and renewable energy.

Other long-term measures to secure energy supply involving the engagement of other international institutions have been mobilised. AMEM's news release mentioned ASEAN's deployment of its Senior Officials on Energy (SOE) to attend the SOME-METI Energy Work Programme 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 – that's ASEAN-speak for Senior Officials Meeting on Energy (SOME) and Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI). Also involving SOE was the ASEAN-US Business Council consultation – the first of its kind. The scope of discussion with their American counterparts revolved on issues the likes of borderless energy market, regional de-

regulation, energy security, and the environment.

In any event, there are signs that AMEM harboured a few other options in response to today's pressing needs to secure reliable energy flow for this region: ASEAN energy ministers were resolved to intensify collaborative efforts to improve energy efficiency and conservation. The news release spoke of progress of ASCOPE's joint activities and opportunities in exploration and production, processing and refining, trading and marketing, and in technology and services. It also spoke of TAGP's Master Plan Study that identified seven new possible gas pipeline inter-connections in ASEAN.

While acknowledging member states' disparate levels of development and rate of post-1997 economic recovery, Pehin Dato Haji Abdul Rahman nevertheless assured his audience: "What does not vary is the fact that the availability of energy is a central theme to achieving our interrelated economic, social, and environmental aims of sustainable human development. Equally essential is the adequate and affordable access to energy that will determine the quality of our daily lives, drive economic development, and increase the living standard of our peoples."

Emphasising the primacy of energy to ASEAN's progress, the minister continued: "Energy services play a cru-

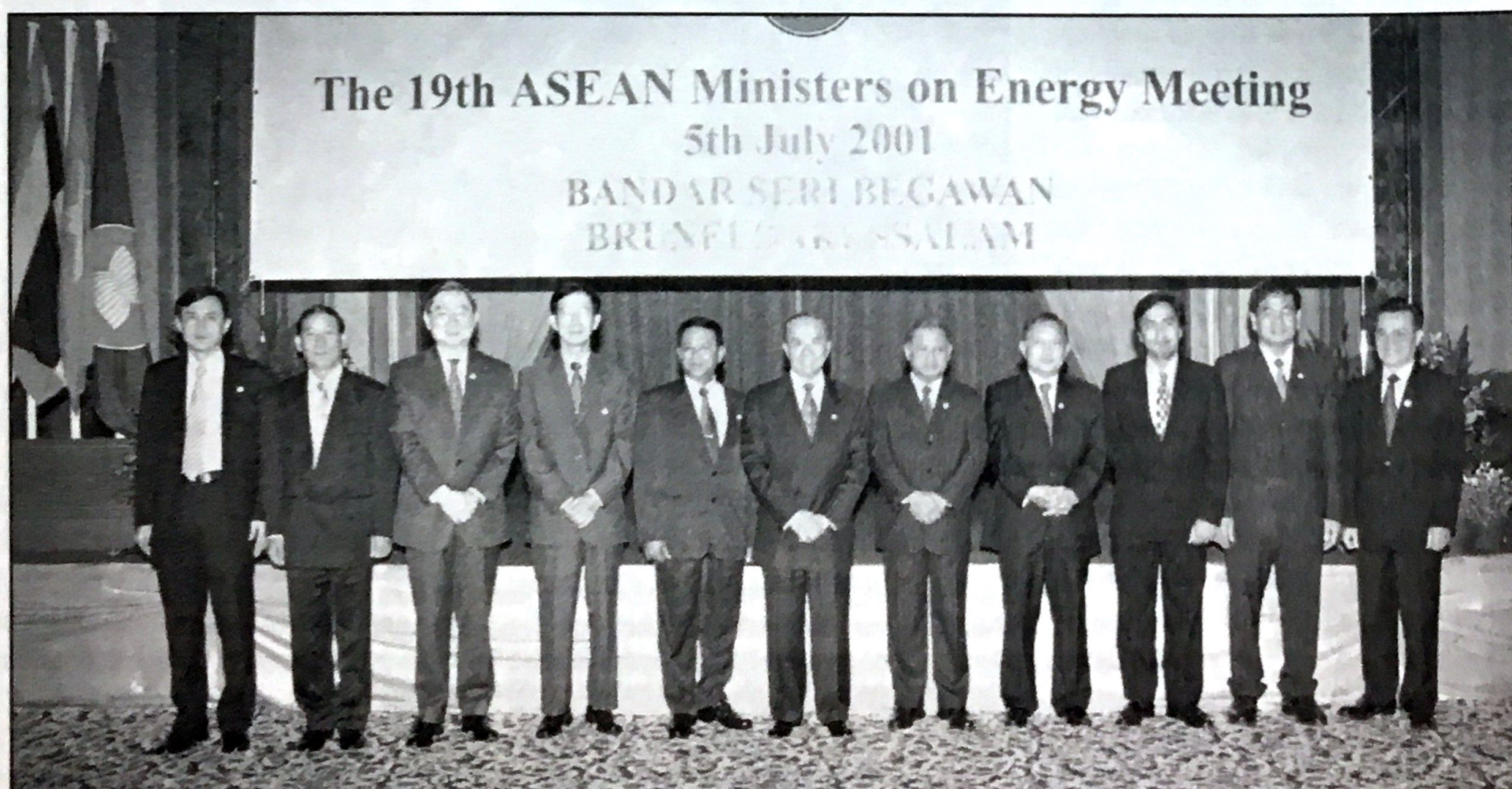
cial role in providing efficient access to energy in support of development. These services not only serve as conduits for access to energy, but also in themselves represent a significant part of the business landscape in each of our economy."

Pehin Dato Haji Abdul Rahman concluded his speech with a word of caution for his audience. He spoke of proposals to include energy as one of the attributes of services negotiations for the fourth WTO ministerial meeting in Qatar. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), he said, is leading this discussion. A preliminary paper, he added, was published and an Experts Group meeting was mooted.

The specific inclusion of energy services in such negotiations, the minister argued, will have implications for ASEAN member states' domestic energy policies.

"It is particularly relevant for those of us who are WTO members to understand the issues on energy services that are being discussed and to keep in mind that the outcomes of these negotiations may be binding upon us regardless of our domestic sentiments," concluded the minister.

ASEAN's competence in areas concerning energy was institutionalised in the ASEAN Vision 2020 and the Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA).



The Chairman of the 19th AMEM, Brunei Darussalam's Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdul Rahman, centre, with his counterparts from the ASEAN member countries.

University helps to meet Brunei's human resources requirement

The University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD) is taking preparatory measures to fulfil one of Brunei's prerequisites of becoming an offshore Islamic banking centre: qualified human resources.

"The University is intensifying its bilateral link with foreign universities by offering twinning programmes, matriculation, and credit transfers and at the same time offering students optional programme on Islamic banking and finance," said UBD's vice chancellor, Dato Professor Haji Mahmud Saedon bin Awang Othman during the opening ceremony for a seminar titled: "The concept of trade in accordance with Islam" at the University on June 16.

"With the cooperation of the Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Institute of Islamic Studies (IPISHOAS), the University's Faculty of Business, Economics, and Policy now offers minor subject in Islamic banking and finance. This subject is opened to students who are interested in deepening their knowledge in Islamic banking and finance. In the foreseeable future, the University plans to upgrade the option into a major subject or convert it into a BA Islamic banking and finance," said Professor Haji Mahmud Saedon.

The vice chancellor added that the University is obliged to review its current courses and programmes by fostering Islamic values in response to the worldwide development and change.

"Mobilisation of this purpose is already enforced progressively with the introduction of courses such as principles of Islamic business ethics, Islamic jurisprudence, Islamic economics, Islamic finance, and Islamic accounting and auditing," explained Professor Haji Mahmud Saedon.

The convergence of such courses, he argued, can produce thinkers, researchers, and business policy makers that are compatible with Brunei's needs.

"The University will participate totally in helping Brunei to realise its ambition of becoming an offshore Islamic banking centre," said the vice chancellor. According to Professor Haji Mahmud Saedon, assistance will manifest in the form of supplying human resources to man the banking, financial, insurance, and Islamic insurance sectors. Other forms of assistance, he said, are given in the form of facilities enabling academic research for new products through concepts mooted by the financial architecture whereby synergy between Islamic legal experts and economists seek to unravel more Islamic knowledge.

"Consequently, the University plans to establish an Islamic Financial and Management Centre. The University anticipates the Centre to function as meeting point for experts, researchers and academics, and serve as a niche actor to overcome Brunei's technical impediment by providing resource and academic expertise for the country's development," concluded the vice chancellor.

To date, the University's Entrepreneurship Development Unit is currently preparing programmes for those interested in small-and-medium-sized businesses.

It should be

The chief editor of BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER wishes to correct the inaccuracy pertaining to details of His Excellency the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. His Excellency's name is IBRAHIM MUHAMMED MOSLY, not Ustaz Ibrahim Muhammad Musili as printed previously. His Excellency's career with the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs began in 1963, not 1950.

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER wishes to emphasise that His Excellency is Saudi Arabia's first resident ambassador to Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam. The previous article published in the Newsletter's May 15th, 2001 edition that stated His Excellency as Saudi Arabia's non-resident ambassador to Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam was incorrect.

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER wishes to express its apology for the factual inaccuracy.

** From page 9
(Bit's official website)*

government has recently introduced an enactment called 'Electronic Transaction Order 2001 (ETO).

"The enactment is an important instrument to encourage the use of electronic media in the management of government administration and business," he said.

He further said that, the enactment was a measure to ensure security in the implementation of official duties, or business dealings through the Internet. The step was also in line with the objective of BIT to encourage the use of IT in the civil service through e-government and in the private sector through e-commerce.

BIT was formed to guide and ease strategic development and instillation of an up-to-date information technology nationwide, and to fully pioneer its usage potentials for the country's peace and prosperity.

BIT plays a vital role as a body supporting in the implementation of national strategies and programmes of action, and guide the public and private sectors to interact coordinately in the usage of information technology. It also acts as a motivator to achieve the vision, mission and objectives of the 'IT Strategic Plan 2000 and Beyond'.

His Majesty receives honorary doctorate of law from UQ

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has been awarded the honorary doctorate of law by the University of Queensland, Australia.

The honorary degree was presented to His Majesty by the Chancellor of the University of Queensland, Sir Liew Edward, at Istana Nurul Iman on 11 July. Prior to the reading of the citation, a doa selamat was read by the State Mufti, Pehin Dato Ustaz Hj. Awang Abd. Aziz.

The degree was the fourth awarded to His Majesty. In 1989, His Majesty was awarded the honorary doctorate of letters by Universiti Brunei Darussalam. His Majesty also received an honorary degree in law by the University of Malaya and honorary doctorate of law by Diploma by Oxford University in 1992.

In 1995, His Majesty was awarded the honorary doctorate of

** Continued on page 7*



The Chancellor of the University of Queensland, Sir Liew Edward, presented the honorary doctorate of law degree to His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam during a ceremony at Istana Nurul Iman.

A Kingdom Of Unexpected Treasures

What's happening this month in Brunei Darussalam?

July
Celebrate with parades, traditional and cultural performance and sporting events such as tug-of-war and kite flying competitions, and boat races in conjunction with His Majesty The Sultan of Brunei from 15 July till end of the month. Visit Brunei's historic Kampong Ayer dubbed as 'Venice of the East' which is highlighting activities such as fishing, weaving, handicraft and food preparation during the month of July.

Visit www.visitbrunei.com or email bruneitourism@brunet.bn for more details.

Brunei In Brief	
Official name: Negara Brunei Darussalam Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan Land size: 5675 sq. km Geographical Position: North-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia Population: 336,376 (July 2000 estimate) National Carrier: Royal Brunei Airlines	Official Language: Malay Official Religion: Islam Official Website: www.brunei.gov.bn June Rainfall: 386.5 mm

The Trafficking and illegal importation of Controlled Drugs are very serious offences in Brunei Darussalam and the penalty is death.