



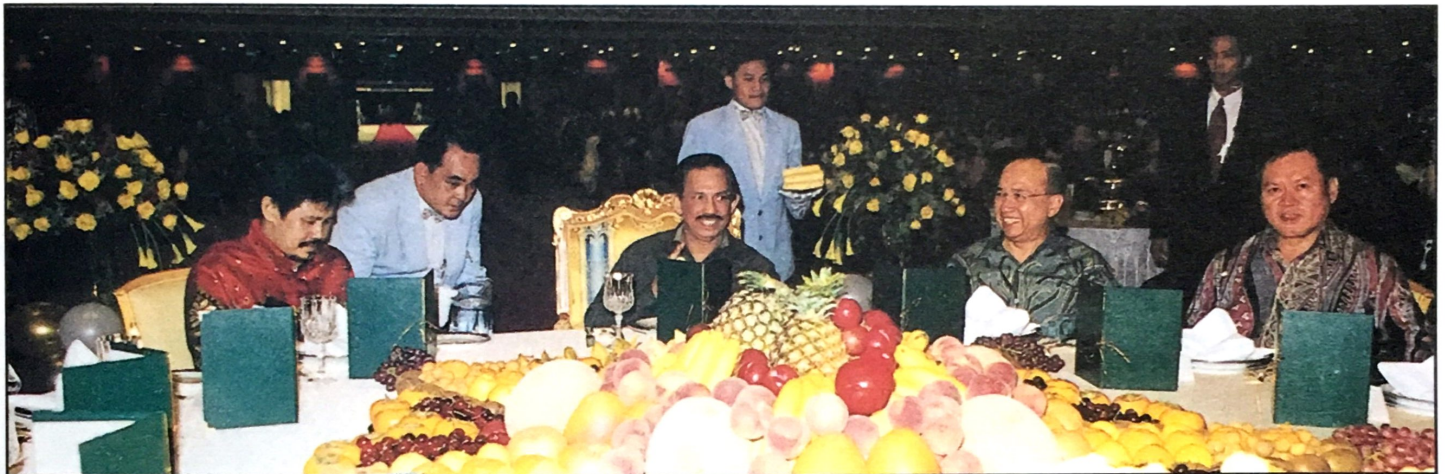
# بروني دارالسلام

## BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

newsletter

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Above: His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Pehin Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, Industry and Primary Resources Minister share a light moment during the APEC appreciation dinner. On far left is His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Foreign Affairs Minister. Below: His Majesty and His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah being greeted by some of the 6,000 people attending the function.

## HM attends APEC 2000 appreciation dinner

**H**is Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has attended a reception in appreciation of the APEC Summit 2000.

The function was held at the International Convention Centre, Berakas on 26 January.

Upon arrival at the International Convention Centre, His Majesty was greeted by the Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Setia Pahlawan



Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abdul Rahman, Chairman of the APEC 2000 National Committee.

Also in attendance were His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Her Royal Highness Princess Hajjah Masna, Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

More than 6000 officers, government staff, volunteers and students involved in the APEC 2000 attended the dinner.

Highlight of the occasion was a variety cultural show performed by school children from the Brunei International School, as well as artistes from the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

The Royal Brunei Armed Forces and Royal Brunei Police Force bands also provided music.

The APEC 2000 summit, held on Nov 15 and 16 last year, was lauded a success by both delegates and the international media.



## **BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER**

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### **YOUR TURN**

The next issue of the Brunei Darussalam newsletter will appear on 15 February 2001. If there are events relating to our country you would like featured in this newsletter please call us on Tel: 02-383400 or better still, send us a report with a picture, if possible. All editorial rights reserved.

# **Audience for Malaysia's Minister of Defence**



*His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Dato Seri Mohammad Najib in discussion during their meeting on January 29, at Istana Nurul Iman in the Brunei capital, Bandar Seri Begawan.*

**H**is Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam granted an audience to the visiting Malaysian Minister of Defence, Dato Seri Mohammad Najib at Istana Nurul Iman, on 29 January. The Minister, accompanied by his wife, was on a three-day official visit.

Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia have enjoyed close relations, which are constantly further upgraded through exchanges of visit. Relations are also further strengthened through joint efforts in the field of defence, such as between the naval forces of both countries. They have also signed a memorandum on cooperation in military technology and facilities.

Meanwhile, the minister's wife, Datin Sri Rosmah binti Mansor was granted separate audiences the same day by Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah

Mariam, at Istana Nurul Iman in Bandar Seri Begawan and Istana Nurul Izzah in Jerudong respectively.

On 20 January, Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha granted an audience to members of the Puspanita Women's Association of Sabah, Malaysia, led by Datin Dayang Jamaiah binti Pengiran Alli, and to wives of the Sultanate's ambassadors taking up new postings overseas, also at Istana Nurul Iman.

Datin Hajjah Norhani Haji binti Mohamed, wife of Brunei Darussalam's Ambassador to Indonesia, Dayang Rafiah binti Ariff, wife of the Permanent Representative of Brunei Darussalam to the United Nations in New York, and Dayang Hamidah binti Haji Adinin, wife of the Brunei Darussalam's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, were also granted an audience by Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam at Istana Nurul Izzah in Jerudong, on 25 January.





Above left, Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha granting an audience at Istana Nurul Iman to Datin Sri Rosmah, who also had an audience with Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam, above right, at Istana Nurul Izzah.



In group photos, members of the Puspanita Women's Association of neighbouring Malaysian state of Sabah with Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha at Istana Nurul Iman, above left, and with Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam at Istana Nurul Izzah, above right. Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha, left below, and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam, right below, granting audiences to the wives of the country's new envoys to Jakarta, the UN in New York and the UN in Geneva.





# Women Council plays part in community building

**H**er Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam attended a hari raya aidilfitri gathering organised by the Brunei Darussalam's Women Council, held at a hotel in Berakas on 19 January.

Also there were Their Royal Highnesses Princess Hajjah Masna, Princess Hajjah Nor'ain and Princess Hajjah Amal Umi Kalthum Al-Islam.

Datin Hajjah Masni binti Mohd. Ali, President of the Women's Council, in a welcoming remarks said the Council plays a part in community building, in a role which is directly related to women's interests and family.

Such role has been officially recognised by the Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam especially so since the council has been appointed as a member of the national committee in the Management of Social Problems, Health Promotion and Children National Council.

She also underlined the council's involvement with international bodies, such as the International Council of Women (ICW) based in Paris, in handling issues on women and family. The ICW is an international body with a position in the United Nations, whose aim is to upgrade women's status in order to achieve more benefits.

Before leaving the ceremony, Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness mingled and received hari raya greetings from members of women associations which come under the umbrella of the Women's Council.



*Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam in humorous mood while attending a Hari Raya Aidilfitri celebration, above, and below, a dance performance presented by members of various women's associations affiliated to the Brunei Women's Council at the function.*



**H**er Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam in a group picture with wives of foreign envoys to Brunei Darussalam, who conveyed birthday greetings to Her Royal Highness. The 22-member delegation led by the Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Lao to Brunei Darussalam, Madam Nongsy Singhavong, was granted an audience at Istana Nurul Izzah.



# Children pillars of nation

Brunei Darussalam's policies on welfare, education and health of children remain in top priority as the country continues to provide free education and health services to all its citizens and residents. Such attention is justified because children represent continuity of a family, race and nation. They are the pillars for a rising nation.

"Parents, families, members of the society and the state play very important roles in the physical, mental and spiritual development of the children. The process should start from early stages of a child's life and lead towards a wholesome being with quality, knowledge, compassion, and piety," says Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam during the official opening of the Brunei Darussalam Children National Council on 18 January 2001.

Her Royal Highness arrived at the launching accompanied by Their Royal Highnesses Princess Fadzilah Lubabul Bulqiah, Princess Hajjah Masna and Princess Hajjah Nor'ain.

The idea of such council was first introduced in HRH's opening speech



Above: Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam views an exhibition shortly after she launched the Brunei Darussalam Children National Council at the Hassanal Bolkiah Indoor Stadium Sports complex in Berakas near the Brunei capital.

for a Regional Consultative Meeting on Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): The Challenge of Implementation held in Brunei Darussalam in 1996. This was just a year after Brunei Darussalam became a member of the

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on 23 December 1995. The convention, among others, highlights and upholds the primary importance of families and parents in particular, in protecting children's rights.

To that Her Royal Highness says, "Such responsibilities must be maintained with utmost commitment, especially, the present time which sees a rise in cases involving physical and sexual abuses as well as negligence towards the welfare of children, and - these incidents are becoming wide-

*\* Continued on page 10*



Left: Some of the handicapped children making a singing presentation at the ceremony, while an orchestra from a private school entertained those present with a few renditions.





# CROWN PRINCES VISIT REAFFIRMS BRUNEI DARUSSALAM - UK RELATIONS

Brunei Darussalam's heir to the throne, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah rounded off a four-day official visit to the United Kingdom on January 18, in Wales, where he visited three institutions.

The visit, at the invitation of the British government, had given fresh affirmation to the warm and cordial, longstanding relationship between the two countries.

In a brief statement at a lunch reception hosted in his honour the day before by Britain's Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs, Mr. John Batten, His Royal Highness The Crown Prince said: "Brunei Darussalam's relationship with Britain extends far back in history and Britain will remain a close friend to Brunei Darussalam and will continue to work together to expand that relationship".

Accompanied by a brother, His Royal Highness Prince Haji 'Abdul 'Azim and a cousin, Prince Abdul Qawi throughout the visit, the Crown Prince also expressed his appreciation for the fine arrangements made for the visit.

The reception took place at Lancaster House in London.

His Royal Highness had earlier made a courtesy call on the Right Honourable Tony Blair, at the Prime Minister's official residence at 10 Downing Street, London. During the meeting, His Royal Highness expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the British government for inviting him to visit the United Kingdom.

The status of the Brunei Darussalam-United Kingdom ties was reiterated when the Crown Prince called on the Minister of State for Defence, the Right Honourable Geoffrey Hoon the same day. The minister described the relations as "excellent, particularly in the areas of defence cooperation".

His Royal Highness also expressed appreciation for the assistance given by Britain in education. This he made known during a call, also on January 17 on Baroness Blackstone and Mrs Smith, both Ministers of Education and Employment. The ministers also



lauded the existing relationship between the two countries in the field of education.

His Royal Highness' itinerary the same day also included a visit to the House of Parliament, and the English National Badminton Centre, where he paired up with former world number one player, Rexy Mainaky for a friendly game against a top British pair. His Royal Highness told the BBC: "North-east afterwards that he was impressed by the facilities at the centre."

A dinner hosted in his honour by the Brunei Darussalam High Commissioner to Britain, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Yusof Hamid capped His Royal Highness' busy schedule for the penultimate day. The dinner was held at the Brunei Darussalam High Commission in Belgrave Square, London.

The Crown Prince began the official visit to the United Kingdom on January 15. Thereupon he first called on the Mayor of London at Mansion House – the Mayor's official residence. The Right Honourable Lord Mayor Alderman David Howard briefed His Royal Highness and encourage on the functions of the office of the Mayor, including his own role as a representative of the business and financial community.



Opposite page, top: His royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah and His Royal Highness Prince Charles of Wales pose to photographers as they greet one another at the doorsteps of Saint James' Palace in London. Looking on are His Royal Highness Prince Haji 'Abdul 'Azim and Prince Abdul Qawi. The Brunei royal visitors also met with British Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Tony Blair at his official residence, opposite page bottom. Above: His Royal Highness The Crown Prince views exhibits during his visit to the Royal Geographical Society, and above right, poses for a group photograph with Brunei Darussalam's High Commissioner in London and a number of students studying in the United Kingdom. Right: The Crown Prince at the financial firm Schroders Saloman Smith Barney and below, with officials and players of the Liverpool Football Club.



Visits to two other institutions followed – the first to Schroders Saloman Smith Barney, one of London's biggest financial groups and to a leading London newspaper, The Independent. At the former His Royal Highness was briefed on the role of the City of London as the global financial centre and on the global oil market. Likewise, there was a briefing by The Independent on its role as one of the city's leading newspapers.

His Royal Highness Prince Charles of Wales hosted a luncheon at Saint James' Palace – his official residence in honour of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah following the morning's visit programmes. In between the luncheon and dinner in the evening given by the host government in his



national airport, Wales, for the final leg of the visit. His Royal Highness was welcomed by the First Secretary of the Welsh National Assembly, the Right Honourable Rhodri Morgan. In the Welsh capital, The Brunei Crown Prince first had a first hand look at coins manufacturing at the Royal Mint. The 1,100-year-old Royal Mint first began in London before being moved to Llantrisant, Cardiff. Apart from manu-

facturing and issuing British currency coins and receiving orders from overseas, the Royal Mint also makes military logos and symbols, commemorative medals and official stamps and royal seals.

At the Welsh National Assembly, the next stop, His Royal Highness was briefed on various aspects of the assembly and attended a session of the house.

Meanwhile, arriving at Cardiff inter-



# Downstream Export: Future of Oil and Gas

A report on a feasibility study on downstream oil and gas industries in Brunei Darussalam may already be out even as we read. And if the result is positive, the country looks set to establish export oriented refineries to produce petrochemical by-products for exports to other countries in the region.

According to Pehin Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, the Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, the master plan which was taken up by the Brunei government last year, will act as a guideline in planning, positioning and developing the downstream oil and gas industry including incentive provisions. The report was due to be released in February.

“The oil and gas industry continues to play an important role in supporting the country’s economic development,” says the minister, “the high oil and gas prices represent an opportunity for us to implement steps to diversify our economic base.”

“The extra revenue from the sale of oil and gas has enabled the government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam to improve the socio-economic development of the nation by implementing the capital credit fund, boosting human resource development in the tourism industry and infrastructure projects.”

The minister of industry and primary resources made the remarks at a oil and gas directors’ night on 27 January 2001. Pehin Dato Haji Abdul Rahman attended the function as the guest of honour as well as in his capacity as the Director of the Brunei Oil and Gas Authority (BOGA). He is also chairman of the board of directors of Brunei Shell Petroleum Sendirian Berhad (BSP) and Brunei Liquefied Natural Gas Sendirian Berhad (BLNG).

The oil and gas directors’ night was also a welcoming dinner for Mr. Chris Finlayson, replacing Mr. John Darley as the new managing director of Brunei Shell Petroleum (BSP) and Brunei Shell Tankers. Dato Paduka Dr. Hj. Mat Suny, deputy managing director of BSP, Dato Paduka Hj. Hamdillah, CEO of Brunei Liquefied Natural Gas (BLNG), Dato Paduka Hj. Ahmad, director of Petroleum Unit of the Prime Minister’s Office were among the distinguished guests at the dinner.

“The government has for the very first time approved the exploration of a new deposit area measuring 10,000 sq. km offshore for the purposes of exploitation and development,” said Pehin Dato Haji Abdul Rahman in highlighting the government’s earnest effort to encourage growth in the exploration and production sector in the oil and gas industry.

The new exploration he disclosed was first announced in July last year during a signing of agreement between the Petroleum Unit and Petroleum Geo-Services of the United States, - awarded to do the 3-D seismic survey work. The survey is due for completion in the second quarter of this year.

“I also welcome the Local Business Development Framework which features guidelines of Brunei Shell Petroleum in awarding its contracts to local companies,” he said, “this is inline with the government’s initiatives to make sure of a sustainable growth for the oil and gas industry.”

The Brunei government has stressed on all the four major players in the oil and gas industry namely, Brunei Shell Petroleum Company Sendirian Berhad (Limited) (BSP), Brunei Liquefied Natural Gas Sendirian Berhad (BLNG), Brunei Shell Tankers Sendirian Berhad (BST) and Brunei Shell Marketing Sendirian Berhad (BSM) to encourage the participation of local SMEs in the industry and help boost their credibility. Fig. 1 below shows the percentage shareholder for each of the companies.

**Fig. 1 Percentage shareholder for Brunei Shell Group of Companies**

Shareholders (%)	BSP	BLNG	BSM	BST
Brunei Government	50	50	50	50
Royal Dutch / Shell Group of Companies	50	25	50	50
Mitsubishi Corporation	-	25	-	-

Currently, Brunei Shell Petroleum through its oil refinery produces unleaded gasoline (ULG), diesel, jet fuel and liquefied petroleum gas for domestic consumption. Other oil derivatives such as lubricants, bitumen and chemicals are imported from abroad.

For links on oil and gas industry in Brunei Darussalam, please visit: [www.petroleum-unit.gov.bn](http://www.petroleum-unit.gov.bn) [www.shell.com/bn](http://www.shell.com/bn)

## BOGA

When Established - 1 January 1993

Role - to advise and provide recommendations to His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on all matters pertaining to oil and gas including policies and their implementations.

Secretariat - the Petroleum Unit, Prime Minister’s Office. Its director is appointed as Chief Executive Officer and main spokesperson for BOGA.



## **Foreign Affairs Minister grants audience to Australia's new envoy, and Deputy Secretary of State (Political) of Hungary**

**H**is Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Brunei Darussalam's Minister of Foreign Affairs, has granted audiences to the newly appointed Australian High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam, and the Deputy Secretary of State (Political) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary. The audiences took place at the Balai Penghadapan, Bukit Kayangan in Jalan Tutong, near the capital on 17 January.

His Royal Highness first granted an audience to His Excellency Sir Allaster Edward Cox, Australia's new High Commissioner, during which they discussed bilateral matters.

His Royal Highness then granted an audience to the Deputy Secretary of State (Political) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary, Mr. Denes Tomaj. They discussed bilateral matters and exchanged views on a number of regional and international issues.

Mr. Denes Tomaj was on a three-day familiarisation visit, aimed at enhancing bilateral relations between Brunei Darussalam and Hungary..

### **Policy makers urged to implement plans for youths**

**P**olicy makers need to ensure that whatever plans they have for youths are put into action, so as to achieve the aspiration for youths in the national, regional and international development, said the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

"Only with positive and deliberate action by policy makers and implementers can our youth achieve the goals that we have set for them," he said.

Officiating at the Asia Region Planning Workshop on Youth Development Index (YDI) at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports on 15 January, Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Digadong Seri Lela Dato Seri Paduka Haji Awang Hussain stressed that the need for an integrated approach to youth affairs is of prime importance as youth cuts across all sectors of society, and as they grow and develop, they face different challenges and require different forms of assistance and support in a variety of areas.

Towards this, all stakeholders would need to work together in a holistic and multi-disciplinary manner to effectively address these needs, he pointed, while adding that, the challenge which the government and youth agencies would face in this respect, is

to design and implement specific youth programmes and incorporate a youth perspective or sensitivity in mainstream policy development.

Youth constitutes the country's greatest asset and the core resource for prosperity and progress, particularly in addressing the challenges of rapid global and regional integration arising from more intensive trade liberalization and expanding use of Information Communication Technology (ICT), said the minister.

Statistics show that the number of young people in the developing world will reach 1.16 billion by year 2050, while approximately 700 million of them will enter the labour market in developing countries between now and the year 2010.

Thus, meeting the needs of this sector of society over the coming years and ensuring that they are empowered to fulfill their own personal development and contribute to the development of families, communities and societies are of paramount importance, the minister said.

Meeting the needs of youth involve, among other things, providing accessible information and services and for policy makers to access information so that they would be able to draw up in-

novative and relevant policies and programmes, maintain and promote increasing opportunities and challenges by taking into account youth's capacities, potentials and vulnerabilities, he added.

The Workshop and Youth Development Index was, therefore, most appropriate and timely as it provided a monitoring and evaluation instrument based on scientific and empirical studies, to allow policy makers to formulate their targets realistically.

The workshop aims to develop a working model for effecting the Youth Development Index, identify the tasks required, the institutions to undertake these tasks, the resources required, the methods of providing feedback on the interpretations of the YDI measures, mechanisms to take policy and program action to remedy situations indicative in the YDI measures, to identify data collection, processing, synthesizing and interpretation techniques relevant in the context of YDI.

The YDI would provide policy makers with a mechanism for continuous measurement to evaluate changes in the status of youth development levels, which will then be extremely useful for further monitoring and revision of policy directions.



# *Sultanate steps up bid to become regional air cargo hub*

Under a joint venture, Royal Brunei Airlines, Circle Freight International Sdn Bhd and Royal Brunei Technical Services Sdn Bhd have come together to form BIACC (Brunei International Airport Cargo Centre) Sdn Bhd. A second accord, the Tenancy Agreement, was signed between the Department of Civil Aviation and BIACC Sdn Bhd. Following this agreement Brunei Darussalam has intensified its bid to become an air cargo hub for the region.

The signing ceremony was held on January 18 at the Ministry of Communications. The chief guest was the Minister of Communications, Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Amar Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Zakaria bin Datu Mahawangsa Haji Sulaiman.

The BIACC aims to put Brunei on

the map as the service hub of East Asia where the cargo volume exceeds 6.4 per cent growth annually.

In his keynote address, the Minister hoped that the BIACC would be able to introduce more transshipments and cargo distribution activities and increase cargo services at the Brunei international airport.

He also added that, the BIACC should be able to start its shifting and distributing of cargo operation within a short period.

"The success of the BIACC requires teamwork and mutual understanding from various sectors that includes the government and the airport community including Civil Aviation, Royal Customs and Excise Department, airlines and freight forwarders", he said.

He also explained that the BIACC

would act as a catalyst to increase the development in shifting and distributing services and cargo services.

"With more open market in cargo services, it will give the opportunity for meeting one of the objectives of the country, which is to become the hub for distributing and shifting of cargo in the region", the minister explained.

He also hoped that those involved would take the initiative to introduce strategic alliances between the BIACC and air cargo centres in other regions, motivate air cargo carriers to operate in the Sultanate, develop the international airport cargo concept to support the economic development and provide services in distributing and shifting cargo that is competitive, efficient and yet able to compete with other similar centres in this region.

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*\* From page 5  
(children national council)*

spread in the country."

"The formation of the Brunei Darussalam Children National Council is befitting as the body to promote coordination, monitoring and evaluation of events or activities pertaining to the rights of children as well as to monitor measures taken against their violations," says Her Royal Highness, "The council will aim to raise awareness among parents, families and members of the society on the protection of the rights of children in the country as well as to set guidelines for its implementation based on the aspirations and vision of the people and nation."

"With all the attention," Her Royal Highness adds, "the goals of human resource development and capacity building for the country can be easily achieved."

In its recent initiatives which further display its commitment to protect the best interest of the child, the Brunei government enforced the Children Order 2000 on 1 September 2000. The law works to fight against irresponsible people who are found to ill-treat children, be it their own or others, through imposition of heavy penalties.

Among the highlights of the launch were dancing, singing and short drama performances from schoolchildren. There was also an exhibition which aims to highlight the various efforts of government and non-government agencies towards the welfare of the children in the country. The exhibition counters displayed issues concerning education, health, food and special needs for the children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations as well as the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights – civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

Its key principle is that every one of us are born with human rights. It does not discriminate based on race, religion, culture and status. All the rights spelt out in the convention are indivisible and interrelated with a focus on the child as a whole. This means, decisions with regard to any one right must be made in the light of all the other rights in the convention.

The convention defines a child as all human beings under the age of 18,

unless the relevant national laws recognize an earlier age of majority. It also spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere have: the right to survival, to develop to the fullest, to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation, and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life.

## **Adoption of the Convention**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was unanimously adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20 November 1989 and became legally binding on States Parties in September 1990. In 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna set the end of 1995 as a target for the universal ratification of the instrument. 185 States ratified. To date, the convention is the most universally accepted human rights instrument in history. Except for two countries, 191 countries have ratified the instrument. They are the United States, which has signaled its intention to ratify the instrument and Somalia, which is presently without a recognized government.





*His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah speaks to one of the Brunei students studying in Cardiff, shortly before attending a luncheon hosted in his honour at the Celtic Suite, UWIC.*

*\* From Centrepage  
( Crown Prince visits UK )*

The Welsh National Assembly was established in 1998 with, amongst other things, responsibility for local government.

His Royal Highness ended the four-day visit at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff – UWIC. Currently some 70 students from Brunei Darussalam are studying in Cardiff, 37 of them at the UWIC, some of whom the Crown Prince had the opportunity to meet.

His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah has made several visits overseas since his proclamation as Crown Prince in August 1998, including to Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia.

The Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam will always give due attention toward the development of the private sector, especially the small and medium enterprises.

“In 1999 the government had given the green light for the setting up a loan facility scheme for small and medium enterprises so as to facilitate the growth and expansion of this sector. This scheme was duly set up by the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources in cooperation with the Brunei Development Bank, now known as the Islamic Development Bank of Brunei,” said the Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Setia Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman at the launching ceremony of the working capital credit fund. The function took place at the International Convention Centre, Berakas, on 17 January.

The objective of this scheme is to provide financial assistance to small and medium enterprises and to encourage more bumiputeras to start up busi-

nesses, and to develop further their existing businesses by participating in joint-venture projects locally and regionally”, he further explained.

He also said that this scheme extensively covers the main sectors of primary resources, namely agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing industry and tourism.

The scheme was only for Malay entrepreneurs and for joint venture companies where the Malays owned not less than 30 per cent equities in the business.

This scheme had such special features as a low interest rate, flexible period for repayment and a government surety for loan value not covered by the applicant’s deposit, he added.

So far 15 loans worth around B\$5 million have been approved by the Islamic Development Bank, the minister added.

He said that the latest scheme, called the working capital credit fund though similar in nature with the ear-

lier one, is actually significantly different in some ways.

Firstly, eight commercial banks are participating in implementing the scheme and share the risk with the government in a ratio of 75 per cent government and 25 per cent banks. The government and banks share equally the lending rate of four per cent charged on the amount of loans approved, explained the minister.

Secondly, 60 per cent of the total amount of credit facility to be made available is allocated to bona-fide bumiputera-owned companies while the rest of the 40 per cent will be opened up to joint venture companies between bumiputeras or permanent residents and foreign investors.

This scheme will be opened to all sectors of business in the country, especially for projects under the Economic Recovery Plan such as low-cost housing projects, small-scale tourism infrastructure, information technology, hospitality and tourism.

The value of this scheme is initially set at B\$30 million, and would be increased to as much as B\$50 million, if required.

Another special element is the competitive nature of the scheme. Banks participating in the scheme would be carrying out campaigns to promote this scheme and to attract borrowers to their banks, he added.

## ***Further boost to business***

### ***Congratulatory Message***

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has sent a congratulatory message to Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on her appointment as the President of the Republic of the Philippines.

In the message on 22 January, His Majesty wished Her Excellency much success and look forward to working closely to continue enhancing the excellent relations enjoyed by the two countries, both bilaterally and as partners in ASEAN.



# Intending pilgrims in audience

*His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah receiving male haj pilgrims at Istana Nurul Iman prior to the latter's departure to the holy city of Mecca.*



**H**is Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam granted an audience to the country's intending pilgrims who will be performing the haj in Mecca this year. The ceremony took place at Istana Nurul Iman on 23 January.

Along with His Majesty to receive the 'junjung ziarah' from the male pil-

grims was His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah.

In another part of Istana Nurul Iman the same day, Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam received female pilgrims.

The pilgrims will be in the holy land for 27 days, until 11 March. Pil-

grims in the Darussalam Holdings package will leave for Saudi Arabia in four flights on 14 – 17 February, while those in the private package will leave the country beginning 5 February.

More than 1,500 Muslims have registered with the Department of Haj Management of the Ministry of Religious Affairs to perform the haj – Islam's fifth pillar, this year.

## What's happening NEXT month in Brunei Darussalam?

**22-25 February**  
*Sail Brunei International Regatta at Jerudong Marina*  
*Challenge the rough and unpredictable sea of Brunei*

**23 February**  
*Brunei Darussalam National Day*

Witness the colourful parades and performances, beautiful arches and illuminated decorations.

Visit [www.visitbrunei.com](http://www.visitbrunei.com) or email [bruneitourism@brunet.bn](mailto:bruneitourism@brunet.bn) for more details.



*Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajjah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam granted an audience to female haj pilgrims before the pilgrims left for the holy land.*

## 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](http://www.brunei.gov.bn)  
**December Rainfall:** 273.6 mm

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