

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM newsletter

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15 JULY 2003

Royal 57th birthday anniversary speech

HM: NEW SOCIO-ECONOMIC MEASURES SUSTAIN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah said that the strength of the economy plays an important part for the success of the development process.

The sovereign's speech on July 15 during his 57th birthday anniversary outlined several measures that gives priority to Brunei's socio- economic well being.

His Majesty said that the government's function as provider of the foundations of prosperity should be matched by citizens' proactive effort in realising their economic potentials.

His Majesty touched on programmes organised by the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, the government's commitment to help local entrepreneurs through funding, and the state of Brunei's hydrocarbon industry.

Brunei's development is underpinned by its human resources capacity. Investment in training and education is the hallmark of Brunei's effort in achieving its e-government and k-economy ambitions.

"A dynamic national education system that offers high calibre knowledge and skills serves as a tool to overcome today's challenges," said His Majesty.

The Department of Economic Planning and Development is also monitoring Brunei's human resources capacity. It did a study on development and human resource management needs.

"The study is scheduled for completion in September where the result will be used to help the government determine its short- and long-term development and manpower management needs," said His Majesty.

His Majesty also touched on the mid-term review on the 8th National Development Plan (NDP), scheduled for publication in August. The review evaluates the success rate in overcoming the implementation problems between January 2001 and June 2003.

It also proposes changes in policy and strategic planning to enable Brunei to streamline its development needs. According to His Majesty, the proposal will take into account of internal and external factors affecting Brunei.

The sovereign also spoke about health, the public service and application for citizenship procedures.

For the latter, it means that illiterate people aged 50 and above who are applying for Bruneian citizenship are allowed to do the oral version of the Malay language test.

According to His Majesty, this does not contradict with the existing regulation that requires all applicants to be fluent in Malay. But it does provide a fairer opportunity for applicants whose educational background hinders them from completing the written tests.



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah addresses the nation-state on his 57th birthday at the Balai Singgahsana (throne chamber) Indera Buana of Istana Nurul Iman.

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER

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YOUR TURN

The next issue of the Brunei Darussalam newsletter will appear on 31 July 2003. If there are events relating to our country you would like featured in this newsletter please call us on Tel: 02-2383400/ext.BDN Division or better still, send us a report with a picture, if possible. All editorial rights reserved.

PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND...









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

- His Excellency Anatology Zlenko, the Foreign Minister of Ukraine on July 10.
- 2 His Excellency Hara Satoshi, the outgoing Japanese ambassador on July 10.
- His Excellency Tran Tien Vinh, the outgoing Viet Nam ambassador on July 10.
- His Excellency Renaud Muselier, French Minister of State for Foreign Affairs on July 14.

NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWS

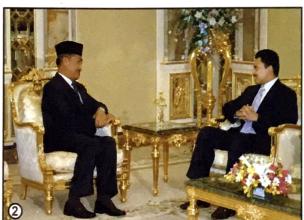




Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha granted separate audiences for:

- 1 Madam Michiko Hara, wife of His Excellency Hara Satoshi, the outgoing ambassador of Japan on July 7.
- 2 Madam Pham Thi Phoung, wife of the outgoing ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on July 7.







His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah received audiences from:

- His Excellency Hara Satoshi, the outgoing ambassador of Japan on July 10.
- His Excellency Tan Sri Mohd Jamil Johari, the newly accredited Malaysian high commissioner on July 10.
- 3 His Excellency Daniel Woker, the non-resident ambassador of Switzerland on July 14.

ALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang DI-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Majesty The Raja Isteri welcome His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong, the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore and wife, Madam Ho Ching at the Istana Nurul Iman.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah and Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha on July 2 received in audience His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong, the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore and wife, Madam Ho Ching at the Istana Nurul Iman.

After the audience, His Majesty held a one-to-one meeting with His Excellency.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs also received in audience His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong at the Balai Penghadapan of Bukit Kayangan where discussion touched on bilateral and regional matters.



His Majesty at a dinner banquet with Right Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah held a one-to-one meeting with the Right Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi, Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia on July 7 at the Istana Nurul Iman.

Prior to the meeting, His Majesty and Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha granted an audience to the Right Honourable and wife, Datin Seri Endon.



Her Majesty The Raja Isteri receives Datin Seri Endon, the wife of the Right Honourable Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister at the Istana Nurul Iman.

Royal 57th birthday anniversary speech

HM: GOVERNMENT PROVIDES BENCHMARK FOR LOCAL PRODUCTS

According to His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, today's challenges crop up in the form of globalisation, regional and international trade, and the opening of the domestic market.

Local entrepreneurs that fulfil the international standard and quality requirements are likely to succeed in the deregulated export market.

The government focuses its attention on local products that meet the stipulated criteria, he says.

The Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, for example, had implemented the standard and quality management practice programme for Bruneian entrepreneurs.

As a preliminary step towards achieving accreditation for the quality of local products, this programme enables local entrepreneurs to obtain internationally recognised quality accreditation certificates.

The ministry also did a feasibility study on the possibility of establishing a National Standard and Accreditation Institute.

The Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Standard and Industrial Research Institution of Malaysia Berhad (SIRIM) on January 19, 2002.

The MoU's remit, confined to food product and services, equips Bruneian small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs) with technical standard in line with the quality and standard criteria required by the global trade system.



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah at the Asia Inc Forum held in the International Conventional Centre, Berakas.

-2nd forum on Brunei economy

FM: BRUNEI ADAPTS TO INVESTORS' NEEDS

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Foreign Minister said that Brunei now receives a number of proposals and statements of interest: there were none last year.

His remark on July 1 at the Asia Inc Forum called *Economic Opportunities for Brunei Darussalam* indicates an expansion of Brunei's investment horizon, a contrast to his previous announcement (see separate story).

Last year, he outlined the government's broad economic strategies that had been designed to restore business confidence. Today the Foreign Minister says the government had taken action on several matters pertaining to investors' needs that had been raised by relevant institutions responsible for the economy.

Such institutions include the Department of Economic Planning and Development and the Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB).

Laws relevant to potential investors had been introduced, some amended. These cover land acquisition, taxation, the process of law that touches on investors' interest, and the legal status of the BEDB as an autonomous body that enables it to sue and be sued.

"We have to be competitive at the highest level," he said. For Brunei, it is not a question of 'what' it could offer, but 'how' it offers investors.

Nine major projects worth over US\$5 billion are currently pledged by relevant parties: heavy and light industry; manufacturing; technology; electronics; transport and communications; hospitality, leisure and tourism; and social welfare.

Brunei also identifies areas that it hopes to secure a special niche in regional and international markets. However, the Foreign Minister says that the process of foreign direct investment is long and complex. Every year is a crucial one from now on because Brunei is now moving out of the evaluation stage.

"We will be doing everything we can to turn proposals into contractual reality," he said.



His Majesty The Sultan and Her Majesty The Raja Isteri at the Balai Singgahsana (throne chamber) Indera



His Majesty awards a recipient with a state decoration.

Awards

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam institutionalises the issuing of state decorations. Orders and medals are given to recipients, local and foreign, in conjunction with the sovereign's birthday anniversary – usually in separate days.

Twenty-two recipients received theirs on July 15 at the Balai Singgahsana (throne chamber) Indera Buana of the Istana Nurul Iman.



Royal entourage at the state banquet held in Istana Nurul Iman.

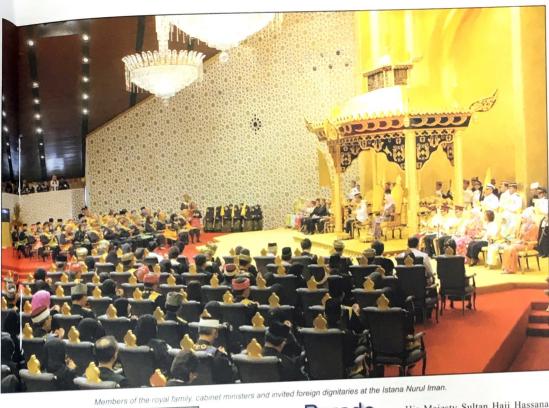


State Banquet

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah and Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha on July 15 attended a state banquet at the Istana Nurul Iman. The ceremony was in conjunction with the sovereign's 57th birthday anniversary.

Prior to the banquet, His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Majesty The Raja Isteri granted an audience to the invited foreign dignitaries.

His Majesty receives greetings from invited foreign dignitaries.





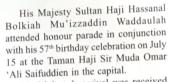
His Majesty inspects the guard of honour at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Salifuddien in Bandar Seri Begawan.

Parade



Enthusiastic students wait eagerly for its darked.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei as the contingents marched passed the Darussalam at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Royal dais. Saifuddien



His Majesty's arrival was received with the military guard of honour and a 21-gun salute.

The sovereign inspected the guard of honour and the contingents comprising uniformed personnel of state organisa-Enthusiastic students wait eagerly for the arrival of tions. His Majesty also took the salute



Twenty one gun salute to mark His Majesty 57th birthday.

Royal 57th birthday anniversary speech

HM: GOVERNMENT OFFERS MORE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

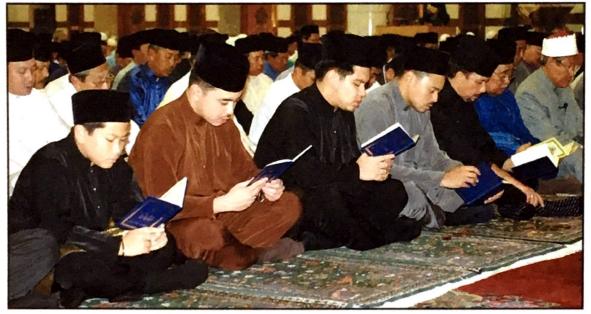
According to His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the government gives priority to the needs of small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

"The government plans to extend two more loan schemes to the existing two local banks and other local financial institutions," he said.

This offers extra choices for small and medium entrepreneurs, and encourages banks to compete in providing attractive loan schemes.

Brunei had introduced three types of financial packages since 2000. The government issued a B\$200 million funding for the development of SMEs in February 19, 2000. It then introduced the working capital credit fund in January 17, 2001. The micro credit finance scheme was introduced in May 28 the same year.

Thanksgiving prayer for His Majesty 57th birthday



His Majesty and royal entourage at Jame'Asr Hassanil Bolkiah for thanksgiving prayer.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam joined scores of Muslims for the thanksgiving prayer in conjunction with his 57th birthday anniversary at the Jame' 'Asr Hassanil Bolkiah mosque on July 14.

After the thanksgiving prayer, His Majesty and entourage received 'junjung ziarah' (revered greetings) from the congregation.

2nd forum on Brunei economy

FIRST GATHERING THE BASIS OF TODAY'S UPDATE

His Royal Highness the Foreign Minister's keynote address during the first economic forum on April 17, 2002 highlighted Brunei's economic strategies in the bid to restore business confidence.

- The function of the Department of Economic Planning and Development as the government's adviser on Brunei's infrastructure needs
- The Economic Development Board's remit on foreign direct investment
- The government action to shore up the economy through implicit reference to the B\$1 billion funding
- Brunei's willingness to 'listen, receive advice and work closely with the business community at home and abroad'
- Brunei's determination 'to work along modern lines'
- The importance of establishing an environment that fosters a thriving business sector 'at all levels
 with facilities that enable all businesses to prosper whatever their size and scope'
- The importance of 'getting it right' by not resorting to short term measures
 His Royal Highness urged all interested parties to remain patient as Brunei's economic recovery
 would take time and 'a great deal of trust.' Time, he said, 'is so precious in business, trust is so
 delicate in investment, and patience is at a premium for governments'.

Royal 57th birthday anniversary speech

HM: BRUNEI'S HYDROCARBON INDUSTRY PROMISING

His Majesty said that in terms of national revenue, the production and prices of oil and gas are stable; last year's production for both sectors achieved record highest.

Oil and gas sectors are expected to always have the ability to contribute to the national economy and the development of the non-oil and gas industries, he says.

The construction of a sixth liquefaction train to increase plant capacity, costing US\$1 billion, is being planned against the backdrop of potential gas demand in the Asia Pacific market.

According to His Majesty, the government continues to explore for oil and gas in areas where Brunei Darussalam holds absolute ownership.

Brunei had opened its territorial waters and land areas for oil exploration, covering 10,000 km" and 2,500 km" respectively, in January 29, 2001.

Consultant: Brunei a viable sports host

Sport Resource Consultant Group(SRC) executive chairman, Chris Akers stated that with the right marketing strategy and planning, Brunei could have hosted host more sporting events.

Brunei could attract more tourists, increase corporate sponsorship, and provide exposure to international television by hosting world-class sports events.

Mr Akers disclosed Brunei's sports hosting potential to His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah, who is the president of the Brunei Darussalam National Olympic Council (BDNOC) on July 1.



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah at the briefing session conducted by Sport Resource Group.

Deputy Minister: Brunei to introduce another travel document

Dato Haji Adanan bin Pehin Dato Haji Mohd. Yusof, the acting Deputy Minister of Home Affairs said that Brunei will soon introduce the APEC business card.

Dato Haji Adanan disclosed Brunei's latest travel document on July 1 during the Sapphire Jubilee anniversary of the Department of Immigration and National Registration.

The acting Deputy Minister said that Brunei expects its law enforcement officers to remain committed in upholding the rules and regulations. He said officers should continuously enhance their professional skill, especially in ICT so they could function as 'contributor' to the well-being of the organisation, not 'passenger'.

Minister: Brunei-French relations promising



A symbol of common understanding between the government of Brunei Darussalam and France.

Pehin Dato Haji Zakaria welcomes the participation of more French companies in Brunei's diversification process, and cites French corporate excellence in Brunei's telecommunications and hydrocarbon sectors.

The Minister of Communications disclosed the previous business venture between Brunei's DST Communications and Alcatel of France on July 13 during the Bastille Day celebration. He said that the IT-driven venture will enhance Brunei's cellular telephone service to world class standard.

The Brunei-French defence cooperation indicates progress; the two states signed a Memorandum of Understanding in defence matters in 1999

In his reply speech, the French ambassador, His Excellency Thierry Borja de Motoza said that there are a number of Brunei students who are currently learning French language. Besides Total Fina Elf, 40 other French companies are operating in Brunei in areas such as banking, cosmetics, foodstuff, industrial equipment, insurance, and shipping.

Ambassador Motoza said that both states will continue to cooperate in the use of science and technology for sustainable development such as forest conservation.

UBD prepares students for ICT career

More students reading IT degree courses in the University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD) are now able to attend industrial training at the DST Group.

UBD's vice chancellor, Dr Haji Ismail bin Haji Duraman disclosed the remit of the UBD Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the DST Group on July 10.

Dr Haji Ismail said that DST Group now offers work placement for ten UBD students per year.

DST Group's managing director, Pengiran Haji Mohd Zain bin Pengiran Damit said the MoU also included his company's agreement to sponsor those planning to do post-graduate studies. Opened for two applicants, DST Group's scholarship is available for UBD teaching staff or students.

Royal 57th birthday anniversary speech

HM: PUBLIC SERVICE GEARS UP FOR CUSTOMER DEMANDS

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said that the government remains committed to enhancing the public service to levels that meet customer demands.

The recently introduced alignment programme, requiring each ministry and department to prepare organisational strategic plans, enables all state institutions to function in tandem with the national vision.

His Majesty urged all government agencies to give serious attention to this programme. He also expected all government agencies to implement and meet the targets of their clients' charter (locally known as *Tekad Pemedulian Orang Ramai*-TPOR).

"The public service will soon introduce the auditing of TPOR's implementation," he said.

The main purpose is to ensure effectiveness of TPOR's implementation in ministries and departments, and monitor their commitment to this programme.

The Management Services Department, an agency tasked to run this programme, helps each ministry and department to identify or overcome weaknesses.

Efforts to streamline the government's administrative machinery never cease so as to maintain citizens' well being and quality of life", he said.

Royal 57th birthday anniversary address

HM: GOVERNMENT ENHANCES HEALTH SERVICE

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam acknowledged that the disease Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) causes anxiety and challenges.

Firm and comprehensive measures in the form of self-styled preventative control and surveillance, and joint efforts with regional health authorities and the World Health Organisation had been taken to combat this problem.

The government gives priority to health matters, he said. Brunei's concept is based on prevention is better than cure.

"This means that health authorities identify the causes of infection, rather than wait for the disease to strike and then treat it," he said.

For instance, when smoking was identified as a health hazard, the government had taken logical steps that included voicing of opinions at international fora and conferences.

The government had signed a joint venture agreement between the Jerudong Park Medical Centre and an international medical group to establish a cardiac centre in Brunei, he says.

This agreement enables cardiac patients to get treatment in Brunei at all levels of care including angioplasty treatment and 'open heart' surgery, previously available only overseas.

Such effort benefits patients and reduces the financial burden of their families. The cardiac centre is expected to gain reputation that could attract patients from overseas and contribute to Brunei's economy, said His Majesty.

2nd forum on Brunei economy

FM: BRUNEI EMBRACES GLOBALISATION

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah said that, given the country's pragmatic acceptance of globalisation, Brunei's worldview makes no distinction regarding the attributes of modernity.

"We in Brunei no longer divide it into sectors. For us, there is no western or eastern world. No northern or southern one. There is only the modern world in its global totality," said the Foreign Minister.

Aspects of globalisation touch the material well-being of each Bruneian, from education to entertainment and from cars to consumer durables.

The past 12 months had been illuminating for Brunei; globalisation entails keeping 'ahead of the times' if the country plans to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). It teaches Brunei to sustain material development and provide resources to fulfil its capacity building ambitions.

According to His Royal Highness, Brunei gives serious attention to recommendations from international consultants on how to make the country more competitive in securing FDI. "We are in competition with the whole world," he says.

In addition to preparing an 'investment map', keeping ahead of the times requires Brunei to commit its people to practise professionalism, keep abreast with the latest knowledge and skills, and flexibility. It requires Brunei to identify investors' current and future requirements to make investments stay. And it fosters a habit of relying on 'accurate information and adapting quickly to changes'.

Reliance on accurate information is a two-way process. For its part, Brunei had been publishing its up-to-date economic indicators quarterly in the *Brunei Economic Bulletin* since January 2002, which are distributed to the APEC member economies, ASEAN member states, and the IMF. "It takes us an important step forward in terms of the transparency and accountability all investors demand," said His Royal Highness.

Brunei's successful membership in the international area is dependent on its citizens' commitment to strive for the best. The Foreign Minster's conclusion reflects Brunei's stand: "We do not seek any form of isolation or insulation from modern historical forces. In fact, we enjoy them. We want to share their benefits and play our part in shaping their future."

Congratulatory messages

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah received congratulatory messages from the heads of state and other foreign dignitaries in conjunction with His Majesty 57th birthday anniversary on July 15. The messages are from Their Majesties Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin ibni Almarhum Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalullail, Yang Di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia; King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia; King Abdullah II ibni Al-Hussien

of Jordan; Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; King Juan Carlos I of Spain;

and Emperor Akihito of Japan.

Also sending their congratulatory messages were Their Excellencies President Megawati Soekarnoputri of Indonesia; President S.R. Nathan of Singapore; President Khamtay Sihandone of the Lao People's Democratic Republic; President Tran Duc Luong of Socialist Republic of Vietnam; President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of Philippines; Senior General Than Shwe, Council for Peace and Development of the Union of Myanmar; President Pervez Musharraf of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; President Dr. Tajudin Ahmed of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam of India; President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine; President John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana; the Right Honourable Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr.Mahathir bin Mohamed of Malaysia. Their Excellencies Prime Minister Goh Chock Tong of Singapore; Prime Minister Boun Nhang Vorachith of the Lao People's Democratic Republic; Prime Minister Phan Van Khai of Socialist Republic of Vietnam; Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada.

Snippets.....

CEO: Brunei conducive for FDI

John Perry, chief executive officer of the Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB) said that a 'clear, credible strategy for diversification' fosters interest among international investors on Brunei's business potentials.

The BEDB signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the British-based ACI Corporation Limited (ACI) on July 10. The MoU enables the two parties to evaluate the project viability, and establish ground rules that govern their proposed business relationships as a preliminary step prior to a final decision.

ACI proposed to commit a US\$1.82 billion investment, spanning five years, which promises 1,220 job opportunities for Bruneians. And BEDB proposed to become a shareholder in a company to be known as ACI Elastomers Brunei Sendirian Berhad.

ACI is in the business of producing rubber powders from used rubber materials using eco-friendly technology. The rubber powders are used in the production of plastic parts found in motor vehicles.

CEO: Brunei targets four areas for diversification

John Perry, BEDB's chief executive officer said that Brunei focuses on four industry clusters in a bid to fulfil its economic diversification ambitions.

Mr Perry disclosed the research findings by the Monitor Group regarding Brunei's comparative advantage in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) on July 11. The findings identify four areas that promise FDI potential: business services; financial services; hospitality and tourism; and transportation and logistics.

The findings' conclusion takes into account of Brunei's stable political environment, standardised bilingual (Malay and English) education system, ample hydrocarbon reserves, and financial resources.

Brunei In Brief

Official name: Negara Brunei Darussalam

Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan

Land size: 5765 sq. km

Geographical Position: North-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia

Population: 340,800 (2002 estimate) **National Carrier:** Royal Brunei Airlines Official Language: Malay Official Religion: Islam

Official Website: www.brunei.gov.bn

PUBLIC WARNING. The trafficking of controlled drugs carries the death penalty in Brunei Darussalam.

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