



بروني دارالسلام

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

newsletter

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HM: Quran builds civilisation



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam awards the winner of the Quran Reading Contest

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah urged Muslims to reflect and find out where they stand today: either in support of civilisation or *jahiliyya* (ignorance that prevailed in the pre-Islamic era).

As a guide, the Quran makes distinction between civilisation and *jahiliyya*. "Attributes of civilisation are expressed as good deeds, whereas ones concerning *jahiliyya* are called sinful acts," said His Majesty.

To live in civilisation is to abide by the Quranic teachings, he said. This entails practising healthy citizenship whereby everyone upholds attributes of virtue such as obeying ordinary law.

All of the Quranic teachings uphold virtue – the building blocks of civilisations. "Whatever that contradicts its teachings falls into *jahiliyya*, the antithesis of civilisation," he said on August 5 at the closing ceremony of the National Quran Reading Contest.

As Allah's gift to humankind, the Quran, which is preserved by Allah, is forever immutable to any challenges or predicaments that afflict the world. His Majesty therefore urged citizens to seek benefits from it and obey its teachings.

According to His Majesty the persistent confusion of asserting civilisation as *jahiliyya*, and *jahiliyya* as civilisation fosters a decadent society.

"We cannot afford to compromise with law breakers because condoning them is tantamount to become one of them," he said.

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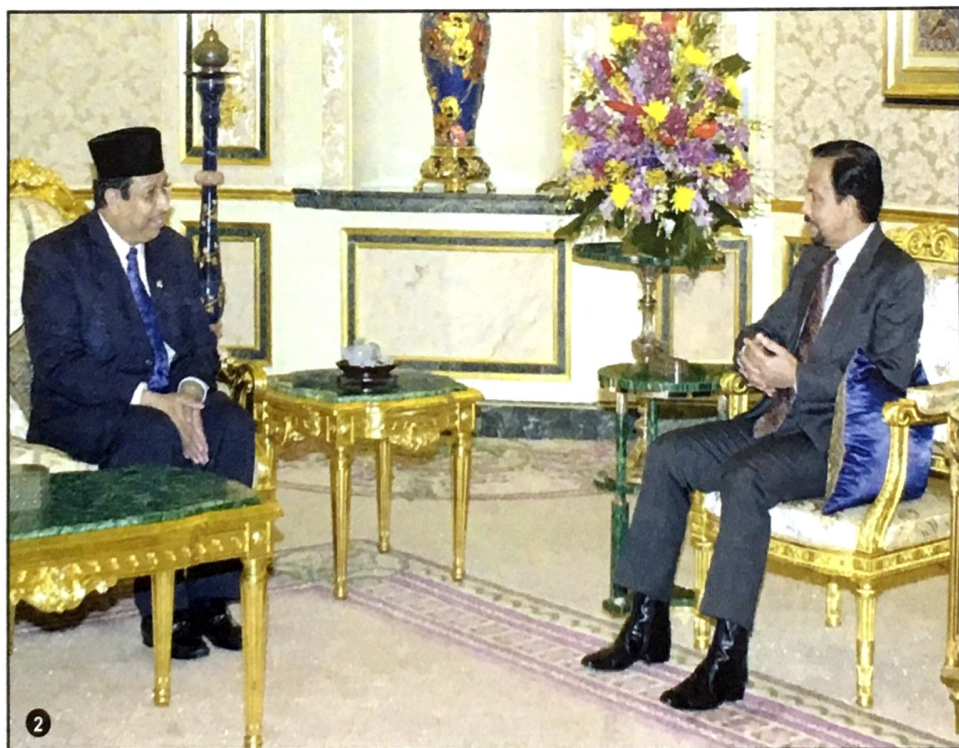
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YOUR TURN

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

**PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND
PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND
PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND...**



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

- ①** Mr. Taufik Kiemas, the spouse of Her Excellency President Megawati Soekarnoputri on August 6.
- ②** His Excellency Dr. Haji Said Aqil Hussin, Religious Affairs Minister of Indonesia on August 6.



Members of royal family and guest at the National Quran Reading Contest

Crown Prince: Benevolence fosters harmony

Islam prohibits Muslims from inflicting damages to the world. Instead, the teachings of the Quran and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) assert that Islam obliges Muslims to cultivate benevolence.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah made the remark on August 4 during the opening ceremony of the National Quran Reading Contest.

According to the crown prince, benevolence thrives in a human heart inspired by frequent Quranic reading, a necessity for harmonious living and cooperation on matters of good intention. Benevolence is also needed to fulfil Prophet Muhammad's emphasis on respecting neighbours regardless of race, religion, and where they live.

Mutual respect between neighbours, as stipulated by Islamic teachings, is crucial today to enable everyone reap the benefits of globalisation, he said.

His Royal Highness made an analogy between a human heart and a house. A heart devoid of Quranic inspiration is like a house without occupants. Neglected, decayed and devoured by termites, dilapidation secures its eventual collapse.

"Same with the heart; if forsaken it will meet similar fate because the heart is susceptible to negligence that leads one astray and to self-destruction," he said.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah at the opening ceremony of the National Quran Reading Contest



Arrival of royal entourage at the National Quran Reading Contest

AROUND BRUNEI WITH THE SOVEREIGN

Destination: BRUNEI MUARA AND TUTONG
Date: AUGUST 5.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on August 5 made an unscheduled visit to welfare homes, primary schools and community hall in both the Brunei Muara and Tutong districts.

The sovereign visited welfare homes; Taman Noor Hidayah; Darussakinah Homes 1 and 2; and the centre for children with special needs. These welfare homes are based in Pulaie.

Next in the itinerary was a visit to Mulaut Primary School in Brunei Muara district and Batang Mitus Primary School in Tutong district.

The visit ended at Batang Mitus's community hall.

Destination: KUALA BELAIT
Date: AUGUST 11.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam visited the government administration buildings; commercial complexes; schools and several villages in Belait district on August 11.

Places under scrutiny in the sovereign's itinerary were; Belait's district office and its branch office in Seria; Bumiputera Shopping Complex; Mumong light industrial area; Seria new market; the Bolkiah government barrack; Jalan Pangsa Flat; Chung Ching Middle School; Jabang village; Seria health clinic; and long houses in the Belait hinterland.

Her Majesty at the Cleanliness and Landscape competition

Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha attended the Cleanliness and Landscape competition and a Live Flower Exhibition on August 10 at the International Convention Centre, Berakas.

Both events attempt to foster a caring attitude towards the natural environment among the younger generation.

The ceremony was organised by Brunei Darussalam Women's Institute (WI) and the Department of Environment, Parks and Recreation of the Ministry of Development in conjunction with His Majesty's 57th Birthday.



Her Majesty at the Live Flower Exhibition held at the International Convention Centre



Her Majesty presents a trophy to one of the winners of the Cleanliness and Landscape competition

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Zariah attended a dinner hosted by the Singapore High Commission on August 9. It was to mark the national day of the Republic of Singapore.

His Royal Highness said that the government of Brunei Darussalam is inspired by methods used by the Singapore government in combating the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) crisis.

Efforts in combating SARS deserved praises as they showed that Singapore is a responsible nation-state with dedicated citizens and medical professionals.

In his reply speech, His Excellency Hirubalan VP, the Singaporean High Commissioner said that Brunei and Singapore share vast areas of bilateral cooperation. Among the areas that witnesses success is through the economy as trade between both countries last year had reached B\$1.19 billion. This is an increase of 12.7 per cent from previous year.

Brunei-Singapore fosters stronger bilateral cooperation



Brunei Darussalam and Singapore share strong bilateral cooperation

The right qualification for the right job

Dato Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Mohiddin, the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs urged students to take courses that are relevant to the current job market in Brunei.

Today's job market, he said on August 7, is different from one that existed 20 years ago. Competition, global economic uncertainty, and the prevalent use of information-communication technology now shape human resource requirements.

Careful planning, keeping abreast with the latest industry recruitment trend, and selecting courses that lead to qualifications that meet such trend might minimise instances of mismatch between job opportunities and employee availability.

Labour Department's Apprenticeship Training Scheme registered 379 degree and diploma holders as of July 31. "Such amount could fulfil the requirements of local firms but the job opportunities on offer were rendered ineffective caused by problems of incompatibility between job and qualification," said Dato Haji Abdul Rahman during the Career Day organised by the Brunei Shell Petroleum Group of Companies.

The Apprenticeship Training Scheme, introduced on March 14, 2001, assigns unemployed graduates and diploma holders at private organisations for three to six months. The state pays monthly allowance of B\$700 for graduates and B\$500 for diploma holders. Private organisations recruit those who show satisfactory work performance at the end of the three- or six-month spell.

Islamic banking useful to all customers

Brunei's Islamic financial institutions' low insurance costs attract both Muslim and non-Muslim customers.

Dato Haji Yakub, the Deputy Finance Minister made the remark at the Islamic Banking Conference at the Empire Hotel & Country Club on August 15.

The annual financial report has shown that the three Islamic banks in Brunei in 1995 had earned from B\$828 million to B\$4.8 billion in 2002 which is an increase of 48 per cent.

Islamic banking offers various financial services that comply with the *sharia* (Islamic law).

'Malam Serumpun'

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah and Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha attended 'Malam Serumpun' (four in one festival) on August 9 which was held in conjunction with His Majesty's 57th birthday celebration.

His Majesty and entourage were greeted by the Chairman of National Committee for His Majesty's 57th birthday, Dato Haji Adanan bin Pehin Dato Haji Mohd. Yusof, the Deputy Home Affairs Minister.

Among the itineraries for 'Malam Serumpun' were Borneo tug-of-war competition; fireworks display; cultural performances and floats procession.



His Majesty The Sultan and Her Majesty The Raja Isteri at the 'Malam Serumpun' held at the Taman Haji Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin



Colourful festivity marks His Majesty's 57th birthday



His Majesty and Her Majesty at a dinner hosted by the Royal Brunei Police Forces



Cake cutting ceremony as the highlight of the evening



Dato Haji Abdul Rahman, the Commissioner of Police presents a 'pesambah' (token of appreciation) to His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam

Police Force celebrates His Majesty's 57th birthday

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzadin Waddaulah and Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha attended a dinner hosted by the Royal Brunei Police Force in conjunction with His Majesty's 57th birthday. The ceremony took place on August 2 at the Assarraa Hall.

The arrival of His Majesty was greeted by Dato Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Johan, the Commissioner of Police and other senior officers of Royal Brunei Police Force.



Dato Haji Hazair, permanent secretary at the Prime Minister's Office and his Thai counterpart, His Excellency Police Major Yongyuth Sarasombath, at the Second Joint Technical Meeting on the Cooperation in Information and Broadcasting.

2nd Brunei-Thailand Joint Technical Committee Meeting

Permanent secretary: Public Broadcasting and Information still relevant

The role of public broadcasting and information today has not changed much from its original purpose in providing information, education and entertainment to society.

To stay relevant, however, public broadcasting service and information have a pressing need to modernise by adapting to new technology, and compete with commercial broadcasters for audience attention.

Dato Haji Hazair bin Haji Abdullah, permanent secretary at the Prime Minister's Office made the remark on August 9 during the Second Brunei-Thailand Joint Technical Committee Meeting (2nd JTCM).

"In fact with globalisation, this

role becomes even more important as there is now a more urgent need for governments and broadcasters to ensure that the national political/social interests, and cultural heritage are not forgotten or get pushed to the side by globalised broadcasting from other cultures," he said.

Promoting awareness of cultural diversity fosters appreciation and understanding among peoples of different races. It also lessens the tendency for cultural dominance of a single source.

The 2nd JTCM showcases the Brunei-Thai relations through the sharing of experience and technical expertise in areas of broadcasting and information (see box). It strengthens the link between public

media institutions of the two states through regular cooperation in the joint production of television and radio shows, the exchanges of news, publications and visits among media personnel.

It also fosters friendship and understanding because the projects' output, channelled through television, radio and press, help the peoples of Brunei and Thailand to learn about each other's culture, history, and achievements.

Joint technical committee meetings were one of the requirements of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Fields of Broadcasting and Information signed on August 16, 2001 between the governments of Brunei and Thailand.

Congratulatory messages

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah issued congratulatory messages to:

- His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Driss Jeltou in conjunction with the sovereign's coronation anniversary on July 30.
- His Excellency President Sellapan Rama Nathan of the Republic of Singapore and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Goh Chok Tong in conjunction with the republic's national day on August 9.
- His Excellency President Roh Moo Hyun of the Republic of Korea in conjunction with the republic's liberation day on August 15.



Delegates from ASEAN members at the Asean Social Security Association meeting

ASSA: promote social security

Brunei Darussalam hosted the 12th Asean Social Security Association (ASSA) meeting from August 6 to 7.

Eight ASEAN members, namely Brunei Darussalam; Indonesia; Laos; Malaysia; the Philippines; Singapore; Thailand and Viet Nam attended the meeting. Australia was at the meeting as an observer. Besides enhancing understanding and cooperation among the ASEAN member states, the meeting provided a platform to promote the development of social securities in the ASEAN region.

ASSA was formed in 1995; and Brunei's Employee Trust Fund joined as the seventh member in November 10, 2001.

Brunei-Thailand 2nd Joint Technical Committee Meeting **BRUNEI EXPANDS REMIT OF COOPERATION**

The 2nd JTCM promised several tangibles, covering areas of broadcasting and information.

For broadcasting, the stipulated provision covered the following:

- A joint television production on a musical variety show scheduled for live telecast in 2004
- Increase another two productions for the next cycle of the Brunei-Thai twin radio programmes
- Implement the training cooperation as planned in the Brunei-Thai Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in August 16, 2001
- Cooperation in sports coverage, especially for the upcoming South East Asian (SEA) Games in Viet Nam

For information, the two states agreed to the following stipulation:

- The exchange of publications
- The exchange of news, both hardcopy and Internet versions
- The exchange visits among information officers and photographers

The hallmark of the Brunei-Thai cooperation surfaced on August 8 when Brunei hosted the first joint radio production of the traditional music performance, *Alai Krathong*.

Pehin Dato Haji Md Zain bin Haji Serudin, the Minister of Religious Affairs urged all employees of Darussalam Holdings Sendirian Berhad (DHSB) to uphold service excellence in the management of haj pilgrims in Saudi Arabia.

Service excellence, he said on August 9 during DHSB's tenth anniversary celebration, should not be confined to ensuring quality and systematically driven work process. It also includes close cooperation with the Pilgrimage Affairs Department of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Brunei's Consulate General based in Jeddah.

The Religious Affairs Minister commended DHSB's role as facilitator for Brunei pilgrims in Saudi Arabia since its establishment on July 8, 1993. DHSB manages several properties in Saudi Arabia since 1995 for the benefit of Brunei citizens and lets such facilities to haj and umrah (lesser pilgrimage) tour operators.

DHSB runs on commercial logic that complies with Islamic law, he said, and therefore it should not be regarded as a charity organisation.

DHSB introduced several additional features during its tenth anniversary celebration. These include the setting up of a website, a travel agent unit, a new corporate logo, and the launching of a book published by the Islamic Propagation Centre of the Religious Affairs Ministry.

Minister: Haj pilgrims' well-being a priority



Pehin Haji Mohd Zain, the Minister of Religious Affairs at the Darussalam Holdings Sendirian Berhad's tenth anniversary celebration

Brunei houses internationally recognised IT accreditation agent



Haji Mohd Mahathir, the president of Brunei Darussalam Computer Association and Cliff Lineker the business development manager of International Computer Driving Licence™ Asia Pacific at the accreditation ceremony for PKBD as one of ICDL's agency

The Brunei Darussalam Computer Association (PKBD) accredits test centres based in Brunei, Kalimantan, Sabah and Sarawak that offer information-communication technology (ICT) training courses designed by the International Computer Driving Licence™ Asia Pacific (ICDL).

PKBD's deputy president, Hajah Hairati binti Dato Haji Muhammad said on August 2 that ICDL is an internationally recognised ICT qualification that enables people to prove their ability in computer skills.

The ICDL course teaches participants about the practical use of computers for work and general purposes. The course is arranged into seven modules covering basic concepts of information technology; using the computer and managing files; word processing; spreadsheets; database; presentation; and information and communication.

Established in 1985 as a non-governmental organisation, the PKBD fosters the development and growth of ICT knowledge among the general population of Brunei.

Permanent secretary: Government consolidates health care

The National Health Care Plan 2000-2010 is Brunei's response to a growing population, estimated at 436,000 by 2011. As a ten-year strategy, the plan takes into account of factors such as changes in demography and population age structure, costs, lifestyle related diseases, and a host of issues.

Dato Haji Zainal bin Haji Momin, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Health made the remark on August 12 during the ministry's fourth convention of the supervisory working group (known locally as the *Kumpulan Kerja Cemerlang – KKC*).

Basically designed to sustain quality healthcare for the years to come, the National Health Care Plan is driven by five goals:

1. To promote primary health care
2. To focus on the management of priority-chronic diseases
3. To pursue high quality in health care
4. To achieve a more flexible allocation of fund for diverse health services and to venture into alternative sources of health care financing
5. To promote selected areas of excellence in health services



Dato Haji Zainal, permanent secretary of the Ministry of Health at the fourth convention of the supervisory working group

The health ministry had identified 12 major issues relevant to its ten-year strategy:

1. Improving the service quality of health care
2. Need to establish policy and planning guidelines
3. Higher priority to be given for primary health care
4. Improving efficiency in support services' delivery
5. Effective management of chronic and degenerative non-communicable diseases associated with lifestyles and environmental conditions
6. Enhancing cost-effectiveness in health care services
7. Improve management and leadership skills among senior officers
8. Need for changes in work culture throughout the Ministry
9. Adopting practical and innovative ways for health care financing and funding
10. Raising professional competencies and ethical standards
11. Allocation of available resources to different services in a more optimal manner
12. Improving the level of information and related technology management throughout the ministry

Snippets...

RBA appoints sales representatives in the Republic of Korea

Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) has appointed Pacific Air Agency and Dongbo Air Services as its sales representatives in the Republic of Korea. It is effective on August 1 and September 1 respectively. The signing of agreement was held on August 7 at RBA Plaza in the Brunei capital, Bandar Seri Begawan.

Pacific Air Agency will handle the passenger sales while Dongbo Air Services will handle the cargo sales.

Pacific Air Agency can be contacted at 12th Floor, Dong Hwa Building, 58-7, Seosomun-Dong, Choong-Ku, Seoul, Republic of Korea (telephone: (82) 27538271 & fax: (82) 27559758. or email to the managing director and chief executive director, Mr. Jong Pil John at: jpil-park@unitel.co.kr).

Brunei media personnel join the 1st ASEAN Journalists' Visit Programme

ASEAN media professionals learnt first hand regarding Singapore's advancement in socio-economic development that now ranks among the best in the world.

Apart from a series of multifaceted planning that had been implemented since independence, Singapore owes its success to its most precious asset: human resources.

Singapore is a constructive member of the international community of nation-states. Since the 1960s, Singapore offers two types of technical assistance under its state-to-state cooperation programme: the bilateral training programme, and the joint training programme.

Its cooperation programme with developing states is based on the notion, "Give man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he will eat for the rest of his life".

Singapore sponsored training courses in areas such as: communications and transport; economic development and trade promotion; English language; the environment; healthcare; information technology; library management; management and productivity; public administration and law; public utilities; and tourism and urban development.

Singapore government officials made the disclosure during the ASEAN Journalists' Visit Programme, the first of its kind, which ran from August 6-10.

Each member state assigned two media professionals: Brunei Darussalam sent two personnel from the Department of Information. The five-day itinerary comprising dialogue sessions with Minister of State for Health and Transport; Minister of State for National Development cum the Minister of State for Trade and Industry; the Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Foreign Affairs; and officials from various state agencies such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Economic Development Board; and one non-governmental body, the Singapore International Foundation.

ASEAN media professionals also discussed matters of mutual interest with their Singapore counterparts from the MediaCorp Group, the former state broadcaster; and the Singapore Press Holdings, publisher of the *Straits Times*.

The highlight of the visit was an interview session with the Singapore Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong.

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*

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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