



بروني دارالسلام BRUNEI DARUSSALAM newsletter

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Change negative perception and generate prosperity

Brunei Darussalam has proven that it has the capability to produce professionals and champions in various fields. The capability should be maintained if we want a glorious future.

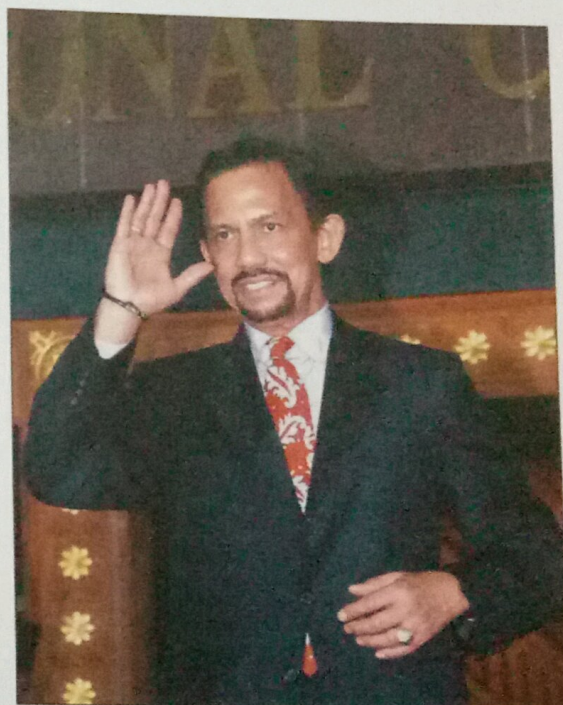
His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said on December 4 at the Hari Raya Aidil Fitri celebration hosted by Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation. The celebration took place at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

The sovereign said there is no limited time for progress. It is always open and ready to be passed. It is we who decide to seize the opportunity.

Succeeding generation, said His Majesty, should be more diligent and strive harder as the current era is more challenging than before. Controversial view of the world on Brunei is now leaning towards the truth. However, duty of Bruneians would not be completed until it has achieved the maximum of its objective.

The objective, according to His Majesty is to change completely the negative perception and views of others towards Brunei and produce prosperity and peace that Allah blesses.

This year's Hari Raya Aidil Fitri celebration by the Sultan Haji Hasanah Bolkiah Foundation was attended by achievers who championed in their respective fields.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam says Brunei has proven its capability to produce professionals

Trafficking and Smuggling of Persons Order, 2004

'Trafficking and Smuggling of Persons Order, 2004' had been introduced in Brunei Darussalam.

The Order which took effect on December 20 is 'An Order to criminalise people trafficking and people smuggling and for purpose connected herewith'.

Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Rahman stated that, the

government would not be hesitant to take action and give stern punishment to the law offender under the regulation.

Among the objectives of the regulation are; to make trafficking and smuggling of persons as one particular crime in Brunei laws and to complete the current order related trafficking and smuggling of persons.

It is also as a preparation for the

possibility of Brunei to become a member of United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and its related protocols.

Brunei is one of ASEAN member countries beside Philippines which had introduced the regulation to overcome trafficking and smuggling of persons.

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PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND...



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on December 11 received audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

- ① His Excellency Ajai Choudhry, the outgoing High Commissioner of India to Brunei.
- ② His Excellency Abolfazi Mohammad Alikhani, the outgoing Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Brunei.
- ③ His Excellency Dr. Guido Scalici, the outgoing Ambassador of Italy to Brunei.



Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha on December 7 granted audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman for:

- ① Madam Kalpana Choudhry, the spouse of outgoing High Commissioner of India to Brunei.
- ② The members of Brunei Girl Guide Association; Datin Hajah Zaharah Haji Idris, President 1; Datin Paduka Hajah Jusnani Haji Lawie, Vice President 11; and members of World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scout (WAGGGS) for Asia Pacific region; Madam Christina Lim Yuson, the Chairwoman and Madam Mei Lee, Training and Development Executive.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah received audience at the Istana Nurul Iman from His Excellency Abolfazi Mohammad Alikhani, the outgoing ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Brunei on December 7.

BND1.6 million to boost tourism industry in 2005

Brunei continues its efforts in attracting tourists into the country as a destination that is comfortable, safe and enjoyable.

Thus, as a means to facilitate the promotion of tourism in the country, approval was received for a sum of BND1.6 million for media advertising in 2005.

New strategies and tourism promotion activities are set to boost the tourism industry in the country next year, and hope to put Brunei on the top-end of the global market. This was revealed by the Director of the Tourism Development Division, Sheikh Jamaluddin during a press conference held on December 9.

Tourism promotion activities focus on global media blitz, followed by a series of international sporting

events and a unique motor rally. During the rally, over one hundred Rolls Royce and Bentley luxury limos from around the world will participate.

A tug-of-war competition at the ASEAN level held in conjunction with His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's birthday celebrations next year is also expected to bring in more tourists into the country.

Another exciting event planned for 2005 include the Asian PGA Golf Tournament scheduled in June that Brunei Darussalam will be hosting for the very first time.

Brunei Darussalam's Tourism Development Division, under the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources has seen an exciting year for the tourism industry. The Brunei



Sheikh Jamaluddin outlines new strategies and promotions for Brunei's tourism industry

Tourism is confident to have achieved a target of 7 per cent annual growth, which is above the estimated 100,000 foreign visitor arrivals in 2003.

His Majesty lauds values uphold by Scouts movements

Values uphold by the scouts are significant as it promotes regional peace, stability and security.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said on December 6 at the official opening ceremony of the 21st Asia-Pacific Regional Scouts Conference at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

It is inspiring to see many young people that accepted the scouts' honoured call to always be prepared. This young people, according to His

Majesty, will play an important role in the future.

The sovereign also said that he values the caring, responsible, generous, teamwork and the self-discipline attitude nurtured by the scouts worldwide. These characteristics are important for any societies that believe in upholding the values of cooperation in the bid for development in peace.

Persatuan Pengakap Negara Brunei Darussalam (PPNBD) or the Brunei Brunei Darussalam Scouts Association

started in 1933 with 12 members. In 1939, the movement was registered as an affiliated member of the World Scout Movement in London. His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam is the patron of PPNBD. This was in conjunction with the movement gaining entry as a member of the World Scout Association of Asia Pacific Region in the World Movement (WOSM/WSB) in 1981. His Majesty is also one of the World Scouts Patron.

His Majesty meets delegates of the 21th Asia-Pacific Regional Scouts Conference



Member delegates in a group photo with His Majesty

His Majesty receives greetings from member delegates



His Majesty tours exhibition showcased at the International Conventional Centre

Condolence Messages

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on December 27 sent condolence messages to His Excellency Dr. Haji Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of the Republic of Indonesia; His Excellency Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Republic of Maldives; Her Excellency Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, President of the Republic of Sri Lanka, The Right Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia; His Excellency Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand and His Excellency Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Republic of India; following the earthquake and tidal waves 'Tsunami' which hit their countries on December 26.

In memory of the recent disaster, His Majesty on December 30 issued a declaration; that all New Year 2005 festivities in Brunei are to be called off.

Festivities were cancelled as the country mourned and shared its sadness over the loss of lives and those effected by the earthquake and tidal waves 'Tsunami'.

Sunat Hajat and *Ghaib* prayers were held at all mosque and *surau* in the country on December 31.

His Royal Highness receives greetings from member delegates



Efforts to promote peace valued

Involvements of youths around the globe to promote and strengthen the peace and harmony are a sole heritage which can be contributed by the scouts associations to its community around the world.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah said at the closing ceremony for the 21st Scouts Convention for the

Asia Pacific Region at the International Convention Center in Berakas on December 11.

His Royal Highness also reflected on the royal address by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam when he consented to officiate the conference recently.

His Majesty observed that the

efforts of scouts and their members have been precious in promoting the love for peaceful co-existence through cross-cultural understanding and above all tolerance amongst the youths, he said.

At least 25 countries participated in the convention which lasted for six consecutive days. Its objectives were to strengthen the cooperation among the countries and promote peace.

Employment Agencies Order, 2004 to protect workers

A regulation to protect workers namely 'Employment Agencies Order, 2004' had been introduced in the nation-state, effective December 20.

The regulation is enforced to look after the activities of employment agencies relating to employment in the private sector. The Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Home Affairs, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Rahman made this announcement during a press conference on December 23.

Activities of employment agents

and agencies had become unscrupulous due to the absence of such regulations or law.

Such laws are enforced not only in Brunei Darussalam but has long since existed in neighbouring countries such as Singapore and Malaysia, said Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Rahman.

Before the enforcement of this order, employers who had licenses to bring in foreign labour normally used the services of agents to carry out the necessary procedures to bring in

foreign workers. This is based on the licenses approved by the Commissioner of Labour.

Among others, with the enforcement of the new regulation, entry of foreign workers will be supervised and the welfare of the foreign workers will be protected from irresponsible employers.

Employment agencies will operate according to regulations established under the new regulation. The Department will take legal actions on those who violate it.

Around Brunei with the sovereign

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam made unscheduled visits to three government agencies under Ministry of Home Affairs; Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB) area; and shopping complex in Gadong.

His first visit was to the Labour Department and Immigration and National Registration Department on December 20. The sovereign toured various divisions of both departments; and also received briefing on the role and development of the agencies.

Both departments have an important role in providing various services to members of public including foreigners working, carrying out business activities and visiting the country.

Labour Department has nine divisions. Among their responsibilities are to administrate and enforce the Labour Act; and to issue license and work passes

support for hiring foreigners.

While among the responsibilities of Immigration and National Registration Department are; to issue high quality identity card to the people and residents of Brunei including permanent and temporary residents; and to ensure births, deaths and adopted children are registered according to rules and regulations.

Later on December 27, His Majesty toured around the city centre. Among the places visited were Kianggeh Market (*Tamu Kianggeh*), fish market, police control post booth and the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation Complex.

Bandar Seri Begawan was formerly known as Bandar Brunei. The capital had been recognised as one of the best city in Asia, where she was placed on number seven with Kuala Lumpur (according to survey made by Asiaweek in year 2000).

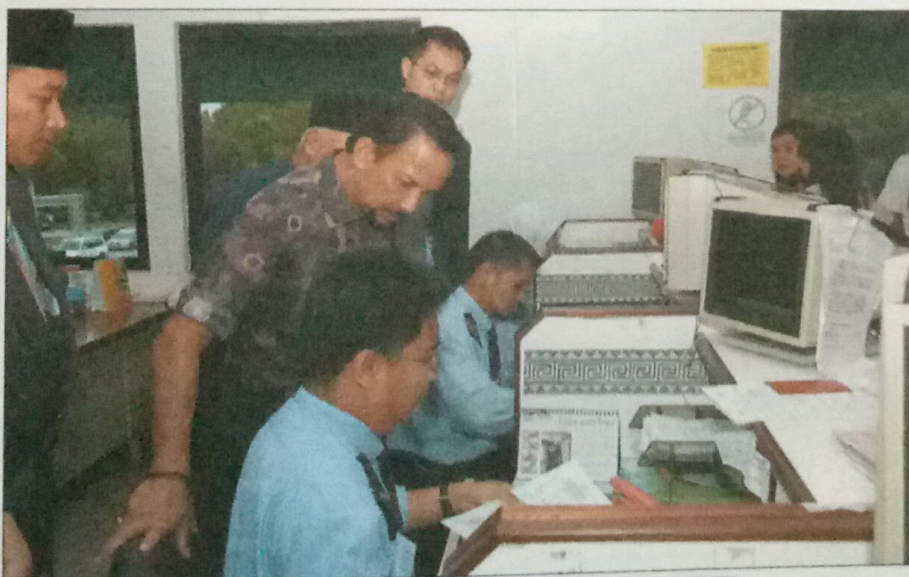
The sovereign then proceed to Gadong, one of the thriving

commercial area in Brunei Muara District and visited one of the shopping complex, The Mall. The Mall is an eight-storey complex with 160 shop spaces including food court and cineplex. It was opened early this year and owned by a local entrepreneur.

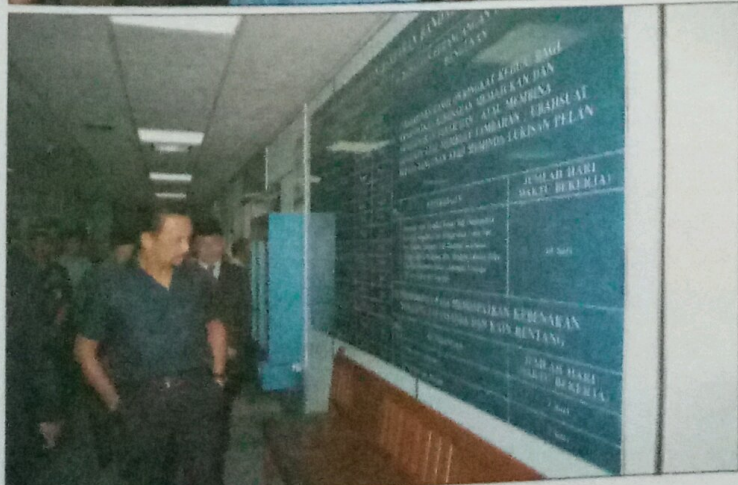
Two days later, on December 29, His Majesty once again went to the capital to visit the Municipal Department. The sovereign toured various divisions of the department.

The establishment of the Municipal Department and Board started in 1921 with the setting up of Bandar Brunei Cleanliness Board. In 1952, the Board was upgraded to Bandar Brunei Municipal Board.

The Board changed its name to Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB) Municipal Board in 1970 when the name of Brunei Town (Bandar Brunei) was changed to Bandar Seri Begawan.



His Majesty tours various sections of the departments under the Ministry of Home Affairs





Their Majesties and members of the royal family receive audiences from intending haj pilgrims

Audience for intending haj pilgrims

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, Her Majesty The Raja Isteri and other members of royal family on December 13 granted audiences to intending haj pilgrims.

The audiences took place at the Istana Nurul Iman.



CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

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

- His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahayyan, President of the United Arab Emirates and the Ruler of Abu Dhabi and His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of United Arab Emirates and the Ruler of Dubai in conjunction with the country's National Day on December 2.
- His Excellency President Khamtay Siphandone of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Bounnhang Voraachith in conjunction with the republic's national day December 2.
- His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Thaksin Shinawatra in conjunction with His Majesty's Birthday on December 5.
- His Majesty Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of Bahrain and his Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa in conjunction with Bahrain's National Day on December 16.
- His Majesty Emperor Akihito of Japan and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Junichiro Koizumi in conjunction with Emperor Akihito's birthday anniversary on December 23.



Her Royal Highness and royal entourage upon arrival at the charity concert

Royalty to charity concert

Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah on December 4 attended 'Music of the Heart' charity concert at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

Also present were Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Majeedah Nurul Bolqiah and Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Hafizah Sururul Bolqiah.

The concert was organised by BASMIDA (national anti-drugs association) and La Strad Musique Company. The objective was to raise BASMIDA's fund and to finance La Strad Musique students who wish to further their studies in music.



Students of La Strad Musique display fine musical recital

Member of the royal family passed away

Brunei mourned over the loss of one of the nobilities; Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Maharaja Lela Pengiran Anak Haji Mohd. Yusof ibni Al-Marhum Pengiran Pemancha Pengiran Anak Haji Mohamed Alam.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Majesty The Raja Isteri on December 14 attended the funeral ceremony of the late Yang Amat Mulia.

Yang Amat Mulia began his service as Deputy Controller of Immigration who was also National Registration Commissioner on April 1, 1970 until August 31, 1971. Later, Yang Amat Mulia was elected as Deputy Head of Adat Istiadat Negara (Royal Customs and Etiquette) and promoted as Head of Adat Istiadat Negara (Royal Customs and Etiquette) on December 1, 1981. He retired from the post on March 30, 2000.

Yang Amat Mulia also had been elected as the member of Privy Council (*Majlis Mesyuarat Diraja*), Council of Succession (*Majlis Mengangkat Raja*), Council of the Adat Istiadat (*Majlis Mesyuarat Adat Istiadat*), Syaria Council (*Majlis Mesyuarat Syariah*).

Yang Amat Mulia was conferred with the title 'Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Maharaja Lela Sahibul Kahar' on July 26, 1968. He also received awards from His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, Egypt and Malaysia.

New Civil Works Department logo to revolutionise department's aspiration

We need to be more dedicated to our job responsibilities and develop our skills in order to provide excellent services to the community.

Services delivered should always be done professionally based accordingly to the current technical facts and should never be based on personal interests only.

Pehin Dato Dr Haji Awang Ahmad, Minister of Development stated this during the launch of the new Civil Works Department logo on December 2 at the Civil Work Department head office.

To commemorate the launching of the logo, a magazine publication entitled 'JKR Construction Professionals' was officially publicised. This magazine is to share experiences of the professional workers who are directly involved in the construction industry in the country.

The release of the magazine he said is also in line with the aspiration



Minister of Development officially launch the new logo

of the department to develop itself as a learning organisation being the oldest technical department with years of experience in launching several construction projects in the country's development plans.

The Civil Works Department will also be developing its current work force through a more systematic plan via the Labour Force Department in order to be a more sable organisation in the future, he added.

Brunei-Thailand stronger bilateral ties



Cake-cutting ceremony as highlight of the evening

Diplomatic relations between Brunei Darussalam and Thailand have progressed rapidly through commercials and investments, services, education, defense as well as agriculture.

Brunei Darussalam's bilateral ties between Thailand have further benefited both countries to promote the peace and stability in the ASEAN region and Asia Pacific.

Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdul Rahman, Minister of Industry and Primary Resources stated this in conjunction with the 77th royal birthday celebration of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej at the International Convention Center in Berakas on December 5.

According to the Minister, the formation of commission of both countries in 1999 has illustrated the significance in development progress to further develop the existing cooperation between both countries.

Increase in multilateral commerce between the two nation-states and tourism will further strengthen diplomatic relations between the government and the community said His Excellency Mom Luang Suparat Devakul, Ambassador of Thailand to Brunei.

Safety of airports to be evaluated

Efficiency is not the only criteria in any International airport, however other features such as the safety of our flight passengers are equally important.

To comply with the international safety standards, the construction, renovation as well as training programs for private securities and x-ray procedures are just some of the important angles which need to be emphasised to ensure the safety operation of the airport.

Pehin Dato Haji Zakaria, Minister of Communications stated this during the official opening of the 23rd annual meeting for the ASEAN Airport Association (AAA) on December 6 at the Centerpoint Hotel in Gadong.

Airports need to be efficient and facilities need to be evaluated to its optimum stage, he added.

Asia Pacific flights are expected to increase to 6.8 per cent this year



Minister of Communications officially opens the 23th annual meeting for the ASEAN Airport Association

and 6.4 per cent by next year adding to almost 26.6 per cent for regional shares.

ASEAN Airports association was formed in 1982 as a platform for airport

senior officers to share their views on subjects relating to airport operations in order to maximize the efficiency and safety of International airports.

World Diabetic Day's Walkathon

In conjunction with World Diabetic Day 2004, the Ministry of Health had organised a walkathon on December 5.

The walkathon was launched by Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar, Minister of Health. About 200 people participated in the activities which started and finished at Jerudong Park Amphitheatre area.

BSM moves to new location

Brunei Shell Marketing (BSM) Company had moved to new location. BSM office is now situated at the Brunei's Malay Teachers Federation Building in the capital.

Launching the new office was Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Rahman, Deputy Minister of Finance as the BSM Board of Director's Chairman on December 9.

BSM was established in 1984 after its first existence in 1977 as a share between His Majesty The Sultan and yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Brunei Shell Petroleum Company. Currently, BSM has 60 staff; and owns 37 petrol stations located onshore and offshore which lease out to local companies.

Le Tour De Brunei 2005

A regional cycling event, namely 'Le Tour De Brunei (LTDB) 2005' would be held from March 2 to 6, 2005 in Brunei.

Director of Youth and Sports, Awang Japar bin Bangkol stated the matters at the LTDB 2005 Press Conference and launching of Brunei Darussalam Cycling Federation (BDCF) website on December 5 at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

BDCF was formed in 1993 and

formerly known as Brunei Cycling Association. The federation is also affiliated with Union Cyclist International (UCI) and ASEAN Cycling Confederation (ACC). BDCF can now be access at www.brunecycling.org.

LTDB 2005 would be organised by BDCF in cooperation with Department of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and supported by Tourism Development

Division, Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources.

The event is hoped to develop and raise the status of racing (cycling) in Brunei. The event also aimed to make the nation as the region sport tourism destination.

The five-day tour route would include each district in the country except Temburong.

A sum of \$40,000 has been allocated for the event prizes.

Brunei-Singapore signs MOU in medical field



Brunei-Singapore signs MOU for the Postgraduate Medical Training Research

It is important to further develop the education for students in medical and research of Brunei Darussalam.

Brunei Darussalam and Singapore strongly share the views on the effort to develop an opportunity for better education for medical students.

Strong bilateral relationships

between both countries over the years have been further strengthened through such efforts said Dr Moses Lee, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Health in the Republic of Singapore during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Postgraduate Medical

Training and Research.

Dato Paduka Awang Haji Zainal, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health in Brunei Darussalam signed the agreement which took place on December 6 at the Ministry of Health building.

Cooperative relations between Brunei Darussalam and Japan for over 20 years through commercial networking as well as diplomatic relations have been encouraging.

Both countries have shown this through several exchange programmes in areas of education, culture as well as human resource developments.

Japan has been involved in the economic development and has been one of the major investors for several years.

Brunei and Japan have shared views and partnerships in several regional and International organisations including the United Nations, APEC, ASEM and ASEAN.

Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar stated this during the reception to mark the 71st royal birthday of His Majesty Emperor Akihito at the Centerpoint Hotel.

Present at the event was the Ambassador of Japan to Brunei, His Excellency Yoshinobu Nisaka along with other international delegates.

Brunei-Japan ties enhanced further



Brunei-Japan ties share several exchange programmes in various areas such as education, culture and human resource development

Bluesky offers attractive fares

Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) is offering several new promotions for its Bluesky Business class fares effective December 11.

New promotional rates include the fares from Bandar Seri Begawan to six destinations

which are eligible for RoyalsKies point collectors according to Deputy Manager of E-Commerce for RBA, Dayang Hajah Sukinah Haji Ghani.

Fares starting as low as B\$623 are offered for destinations to Denpasar, Surabaya and Jakarta and B\$665 for

Bangkok.

Meanwhile, destinations to Hong Kong starts at B\$889 and B\$1,106 to Shanghai.

She also added that Bluesky rates has received encouraging response from the public since it was launched early January.

Private agencies have shown their willingness to invest in the agricultural industry.

Such projects can increase the floriculture of the country that is valued at B\$5 million which has the potential to be further developed to produce high quality horticulture products to meet the demands of International markets.

This was stated by the Director of Agriculture, Dr Hj Mohammad Yussof during the signing ceremony for the new project on December 15 at the Garden Centre in Jalan Tungku.

K.N Nursery that will be developing the project involves a total cost up to B\$3.3 million. The company would take a year to prepare the infrastructure works.

Investment in the project will not only market high quality agriculture produced but also promote the eco-tourism of the country, said Pengiran Yura Perkasa from K.N Nursery (B) Sdn Bhd.

Investment opportunities for private agencies in Agrobusiness



Personel from Department of Agriculture and K.N Nursery sign MOU to develop a Hi-Tech Nursery

Household Expenditure Survey 2005 begins January 1

By January 1 until December 31 next year, the second phase of the government Household Expenditure Survey 2005 will begin.

Deputy Director General of Economic Planning and Development, Dyg Hajah Rosni made the announcement during a press conference held on Thursday 23.

About 6,000 households throughout the four districts have been selected to participate in the survey.

Obtaining comprehensive

and latest information regarding expenditure and income of households in the country is among the main aims of the survey. The survey also aims to analyse expenditure pattern and income level of the population in Brunei Darussalam.

Additionally, the outcome of the survey seeks to revise the weighting pattern of goods and services of the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

According to the Department of Economic Planning and Development,

the statistics from the survey will provide an important source of information for national socio-economic planning.

The main statistics to be obtained involves the average monthly expenditure per household in the country according to expenditure category such as food, clothing, accommodation, transport, education, medical and other expenditures that include overseas expenditure and loan repayments.

Ministry of Health is entirely committed to the existence of Academic Medicine at the Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha (RIPAS) Hospital.

This was said by the Minister of Health, Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar, during the launching ceremony of the book 'Archives of Maxillofacial and Facial Plastic Surgery'.

The launching took place at RIPAS Hospital on December 20 in conjunction with the 20th Anniversary of the hospital.

Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar said that in 1999, the Ministry of Health had started an International Medicine Journal with its early editions containing 584 pages.

During the ceremony, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar expressed his happiness on the continuous efforts by the departments under the Ministry of Health to introduce post-graduate training and learning at RIPAS Hospital for local doctors and visiting medicine students from Brisbane University.

Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar said that the Ministry has entered an interesting phase of integrating service oriented supervision at the hospital with academic medicine.

A RIPAS Hospital offshore workshop in Singapore on Maxillofacial and Facial Plastic Surgery took place for the first time ever on November 28, added Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar.

Ministry of Health committed to existence of Academic Medicine



A health officer briefs on maxillofacial and facial plastic surgery

Thus he urged all specialists and clinical members to utilize the clinical equipments of RIPAS Hospital and report on the experiences they acquired.

Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar also officially launched 'Archives of Maxillofacial and Facial Plastic Surgery'.

The book contains a collection of articles written on various surgeries carried out at the Department of Maxillofacial and Facial Plastic Surgery since its establishment by Dr Ravindranathan in March of 1993.

ASEAN Fencing Championship

Brunei Darussalam Fencing Federation (BDFF) in cooperation with the Department of Youth and Sports will host 7th ASEAN Fencing Championship from January 23 – 28, 2005.

More than 100 people from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and host country, Brunei will participate in the competition.

BDFF hopes that the championship will expose fencing sport to the local community. BDFF also hopes that local fencer will gain experience by competing against experienced foreign fencers.

Further update on Red Tide...

Fishes are safe to consume but the internal organ are advised to be removed, said fisheries official during the briefing for *Mukims*, villages and longhouses headmen and fishmongers in Belait District on December 28.

According to Fisheries Department, from analysis made through water and fishes taken from all fish markets, it has shown no red tide poison present in the fish's womb. While no red tide was

detected in Sabah and Sarawak waters.

The level of red tide in Belait waters has also decreased by December 23. Nevertheless, public were still advised not to consume shellfish, as the poisonous organism could remain in the shellfish for six months.

Fisheries Department detected red tide in Brunei water on December 14; and had taken appropriate steps according to National Red Tide

Action Plan and continuously monitoring the situation.

The department advised public particularly anglers, not to catch small fishes and shellfish and also dead fishes found; and to remove the internal organs of fish prior to cooking; and not to consume fish and shellfish of unspecified origin.

Brunei water had been affected by red tide twice this year, the first was in February.

Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia are making continuous effort to enhance both countries bilateral cooperation in various fields including civil service and human resource.

In regard to this, a delegation of Malaysian Senior Civil Service Officers had held an exchange programme to Brunei from December 20-24.

The delegation, led by Yang Berbahagia Datuk Haji Abdullah bin Haji Yatim, Deputy Secretary General Malaysia's Prime Minister's Office made a courtesy call to Yang Berhormat Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Hazair, the Permanent Secretary at Prime Minister's Office

Courtesy call to Permanent Secretary of PMO



Exchange visit enhances bilateral relations between Brunei and Malaysia

on December 22 at Secretariat Building in the capital.

The delegation itinerary included visits to government agencies and University of Brunei Darussalam. Among

the agencies visited was Department of Management Services of Prime Minister's Office in Berakas.

A bilateral meeting was held between the

Malaysian and Brunei officials. The Malaysian officials also received a briefing by the Prime Minister's Office.

Brunei signs Multilateral Agreement on Passenger Air Services

Brunei Darussalam, Singapore and Thailand signed a multilateral agreement on the liberalisation of passenger air services and the protocol on the liberalisation of passenger air services, to the existing agreements on air services. The signing ceremony took place in Bangkok, Thailand on December 27.

Signing on behalf of the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was Pehin Dato Awang Haji Zakaria, Minister of Communications.

The Multilateral Agreement on Passenger Air Services provides the flexibility of allowing designated airlines of the participating countries to provide passenger air services in both directions. Meaning, unlimited third and fourth freedom traffic rights

on an open route schedule.

Where as the Protocol on the Liberalisation of Passenger Air Services to the Existing Agreement(s) on Air Services signed between the 3 countries serves as an enabling mechanism to this multilateral agreement.

With the signing of the Multilateral Agreement on Passenger Air Services, the three countries have the framework for Asean passenger and all-cargo air services liberalisation using the "2+x" approach. This was envisaged by the leaders at the Asean Summit held in Bali in October 2003.

It is hoped the Agreement would promote and encourage all airlines to operate in this country. It is also hoped to enable the national carrier to develop and expand air services in the Asean region.

RBAF Commander receives award

Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF), Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yusof was conferred with the award 'Grand Meritorious Military Order - First Class' (*Bintang Yudha Dharma Utama*) from Indonesia.

The award was presented by His Excellency Juwono Sudarsono, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Indonesia on behalf of the republic's ruler on December 21 in Jakarta.

The award was given in recognition of the significant role the RBAF Commander has played in enhancing and strengthening excellent cooperation between both countries leaders; and also RBAF and Indonesia National Military.

BEDB: Search for potential investme at partners underway



Chairperson of BEDB outlines latest development on the Pulau Muara Besar Port project

Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB) is currently on the go to search for prospective partners to invest in the Pulau Muara Besar Port project.

The project is expected to be a world-class container transshipment hub port as stated in a press release on December 15.

BEDB and the Halcrow Consultants from London would jointly market the project which aims to find prospective partners to fund, design, develop and operate the proposed port.

Chairperson of BEDB, Pehin Dato Major General (R) Haji Awang Mohammad stated that, at least US\$ 1.5 billion have been allocated for the investment which will be developed in several phases of the project.

The first phase of the Pulau Muara Besar Port project will involve the construction of the pier as wide as 1,300 meters which is valued at US\$400 million while the second stage will involve the construction of a 3,700 meter pier to accommodate additional containers in a 10 year period.

The Pulau Muara Besar Port project will be able to occupy big container shipments placing it amongst the 50 large cargo ports worldwide.

Richard Clarke, Halcrow's Director for ports and dockyards mentioned that the project would be a significant investment opportunity.

He also added that he is positive that the board will be able to look for prospective partners for the project due to the strategic geographical location of the Pulau Muara Besar Port project.

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: 349,600 (2003 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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