



بروني دارالسلام

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

newsletter

Published by the Department of Information
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

MARCH/APRIL 2004

HM officiates 39th SEAMEO Council Conference



His Majesty The Sultan Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the 39th SEAMEO Council Conference

Security is a concern for Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO).

This was highlighted by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the opening of the 39th SEAMEO Council Conference on March 1 at the Empire Hotel and Country Club in Jerudong.

According to His Majesty, security does not only pertain to violent acts but also security of employment, good health, decent family and community life.

"The security of being able to plan one's future in peace, stability and confidence, in keeping with one's own beliefs, values and principles,"

said His Majesty.

His Majesty said that the world, in many ways, has changed for the better. However, as has been noted in every ASEAN Leader's meeting, the world is also profoundly insecure. This is the concern for those who are working in the education system. Therefore, we should work closely to address the concern.

The sovereign also said that with the new globalised world community a culture based on understanding, inclusiveness and tolerance should be acquired. It must involve a deep appreciation of all other cultures, backgrounds and societies of which it is composed. His Majesty added that for a long-term security, the 21st century must discover such culture.

His Majesty said that voyaging in the global community is a new experience.

"We are all migrants. But, just like anyone moving to a new land, we have to learn its language. We have to acquire the skills it demands. We must adapt to its principles. And, at the same time, we must find a lasting place for our own spiritual values and heritage," said the sovereign.

This is where learning process is at its utmost importance. Once completed, it must enable us to leave in peace and understanding with ourselves and with our new neighbours. This process, according to the sovereign, is the very core of education.

** Continued on page 3*

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER

is published fortnightly by the Department of Information. It reports on government, social and business events in the country. All money values are expressed in Brunei dollars \$, unless otherwise stated. Any information in this newsletter may be reproduced; a clipping of the publication would be appreciated. For free subscription (excluding postage) write to the Distribution Division, The Department of Information, Old Airport, Berakas BB 3510, Brunei Darussalam.

Editorial Staff

Editor

Sastra Sarini Haji Julaini

Reporter

Hajah Noorhijrah Haji Idris

Layout Designer

Hajah Zaianit Haji Noorkhan

Photographs

**Photography Division of
Department of Information**

YOUR TURN

The next issue of the Brunei Darussalam newsletter will appear on May/June 2004. If there are events relating to our country you would like featured in this newsletter please call us on Tel: 238 3400/ext.BDN Division or better still, send us a report with a picture, if possible. All editorial rights reserved.

PALACE NEWSROUND... PALACE NEWSROUND...

Brunei-Singapore on a high note

Brunei Darussalam and the Republic of Singapore share similar interest in ensuring regional peace and security.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said at the royal banquet hosted for the President of Republic of Singapore, His Excellency S. R Nathan and Mrs S. R Nathan on March 16 at the Istana Nurul Iman.

The interest towards regional peace and security, according to the sovereign, requires us to direct our efforts towards two objectives; to ensure the future for our own individual citizens.

However, it requires more than just merely accepting changes passively. With physical size as a limitation for both nations, our people should do more than just cope with modern changes.

The sovereign disclosed that citizens should master and benefit from these changes. His Majesty added that he believes it is "...the only path that leads to stability and the personal security it can offer our people in the deepest sense of the word.

"The rest of the world will not help

us to develop unless we offer it a reason to be involved with us and to invest in our future. That is the challenge we face economically and technologically," said His Majesty.

With these challenges, this is the reason Brunei appreciates the opportunities provided by Singapore. Through the relation, Brunei has gained knowledge, increase expertise and share experiences in many walks of life today.

The second objective His Majesty mentioned goes beyond the two nations. "We have developed great respect for each other and we hold regular consultations at all levels of public and private life," said His Majesty.

These form part of a network of similar relations Brunei has with her partners in ASEAN. Cooperation is the heart of ASEAN and vital arteries for relations between members.

"They contain the association's life blood. Its programmes, its projects and its ultimate objectives flow through them. So, ultimately, they ensure that ASEAN's heart is strong. I therefore judge the relations between Brunei Darussalam and Singapore in that light," said His Majesty.



His Excellency S.R.Nathan on a state visit to Brunei



His Excellency Leonid Kuchma and First Lady Lyudmyla Kuchma at a dinner banquet hosted by Their Majesties

HM: Enhance ties for economic prospects

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam called for enhanced cooperation between Brunei and Ukraine, especially in the economic field.

His Majesty delivered the address at the dinner banquet hosted for the three-day state visit of His Excellency Leonid Kuchma, Ukraine President and First Lady Lyudmyla Kuchma at the Istana Nurul Iman to

Brunei on March 7.

"I would also like to encourage our officials and our business communities to take every opportunity to make our relations not only friendly and cooperative but, wherever possible, substantial," said His Majesty.

The sovereign said that Brunei and Ukraine, in its bid for economic development and

diversification, share a similar national plan. With similarities on hand, the monarch said it would be of "...great interest to us to share thoughts and exchange views on the progress of these vital national endeavours."

Diplomatic relations between Brunei and Ukraine was established on October 7, 1997.

** From page one
(SEAMEO Council Conference)*

His Majesty said education starts from the day a person enters the education system. What happened between the moment the person enters kindergarten and the great ceremonies of handing out degrees, diplomas and awards lies largely on the hands of the Ministers.

"How then, can education play its vital role in ensuring that our future societies are ones that will flourish in the present century?

"That I see as your most important work today. Our children receive an ever-increasing amount of technological, scientific and electronic information. But will your decisions also help them acquire tolerance and respect for others?

"History has taught the dangers of leaving this duty entirely to accident or to those who may have a very different agenda than your own," said His Majesty.

His Majesty said that accepting it

as one of education's main responsibilities is the region's greatest educational challenge.

SEAMEO Council Conference is a regional conference where perspectives of education are shared and discussed. More than 120 participants including education ministers and officials from ten SEAMEO countries and representatives from SEAMEO Associate attended the four-day conference.



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

- ❶ His Excellency General Muhammad Yusaf Khan, NI (M), Vice Chief of Army Staff of Islamic Republic of Pakistan on March 15.
- ❷ His Excellency Habibul Islam Bhuiyan, the outgoing High Commissioner of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on March 27.
- ❸ Air Marshal B.R. Ferguson, New Zealand Chief of Defence on March 29.
- ❹ General Pham Van Tra, Vietnam Minister of Defence and entourage on March 31.
- ❺ Dato' Seri Mohd. Bakri bin Haji Omar, the Malaysian State Police's Head on April 8.

HM presents credentials & receive audiences

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam presented diplomatic credentials and received audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

- ❶ His Excellency Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Yusof bin Pengiran Kula, newly accredited Brunei High Commissioner to Singapore on April 3.
- ❷ His Excellency Dato Paduka Haji Yusof bin Haji Abdul Hamid, the newly accredited Ambassador of Brunei to Belgium on April 3.
- ❸ His Excellency Haji Adanan bin Haji Zainal, the newly accredited Ambassador of Brunei to the United Arab Emirates on April 12.
- ❹ His Excellency Dr. Haji Emran bin Bahar, the newly accredited Ambassador of Brunei to Cambodia on April 12.



HM receives credentials & audiences

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

- ❶ His Excellency Lucas Pande Tavaya, the newly accredited non-resident Ambassador of Zimbabwe to Brunei on April 3.
- ❷ His Excellency Pedro Monzon Barata, the newly accredited non-resident Ambassador of Cuba to Brunei on April 3.
- ❸ His Excellency Zelkjo Cimbur, the newly accredited non-resident Ambassador of Croatia to Brunei on April 12.
- ❹ His Excellency Godfrey S. Simasiku, the newly accredited non-resident High Commissioner of Zambia to Brunei on April 12.



Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha received audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

- ❶ Madam Begum Samina Muhammad Yusaf Khan, the wife of Vice Chief of Army Staff of Islamic Republic of Pakistan on March 15.
- ❷ Madam Saha Habib, the wife of the outgoing High Commissioner of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on March 15.
- ❸ Datin Seri Zaleha binti Mohamed, the wife of Malaysian State Police's Head on April 8.
- ❹ Datin Sri Wahyungningsih bin Raden Wignyohartono, the wife of Ambassador of Brunei to Singapore on April 8.
- ❺ Datin Mahani binti Dato Haji Abu Zar, the wife of Ambassador of Brunei to Belgium on April 8.
- ❻ Hajah Mariam binti Haji Md Salleh, wife of the newly accredited Ambassador of Brunei to the United Arab Emirates on April 19.
- ❼ Emaleen Abdul Rahman Teo, wife of the newly accredited Ambassador of Brunei to Cambodia on April 19.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah received audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

- ❶ His Excellency Habibul Islam Bhuiyan, the outgoing High Commissioner of the People's Republic of Bangladesh on March 3.
- ❷ His Excellency Adalbert Ritmueller, the outgoing Ambassador of German to Brunei on April 8.
- ❸ His Excellency Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Yusof bin Pengiran Kula, newly accredited Brunei High Commissioner to Singapore on April 8.
- ❹ His Excellency Dato Paduka Haji Yusof bin Haji Abdul Hamid, the newly accredited Ambassador of Brunei to Belgium on April 8.
- ❺ His Excellency Haji Adanan bin Haji Zainal, newly accredited Ambassador of Brunei to the United Arab Emirates on April 19.
- ❻ His Excellency Dr. Haji Emran bin Bahar, the newly accredited Ambassador of Brunei to Cambodia on April 19.



Crown Prince conferred as General

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam conferred His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah with the rank General of Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) on March 25.

The ceremony took place during His Majesty's visit to Ministry of Defence and RBAF at Berakas Garrison.

AROUND BRUNEI WITH THE SOVEREIGN

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam made unscheduled visits to government agencies, villages and schools of the Temburong and Brunei-Muara district on March 2 and 11 respectively.

At Temburong district, the sovereign visited government-building complex, various villages namely Kampung Biang Baru; Kampung Sibut; Kampung Temada; Amo 'B' and Amo 'C' longhouses. The sovereign also visited Amo

primary school and police control post.

His Majesty also observed the area of Pendaruan River, a border between Temburong and Limbang, Malaysia. The visit ended at Puni Immigration Control Post.

In Brunei-Muara district, His Majesty visited Kampung Setia 'A' and 'B' and Kampung Pudak. The sovereign stopped over at few houses and visited schools situated at respective areas.



Health walkathon witness thousands throng the streets of Bandar Seri Begawan

Health walkathon

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam with more than 10 thousand people participated the health walkathon which started and ended at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar Ali Saifuddien in Bandar Seri Begawan on April 11.

Male participants were required to walk for four kilometres and three kilometres for female participants.

Objective of the walkathon was to promote health and fitness among government public servants and the community in general. It was also to create awareness on the importance of daily exercise.

The host of this annual event is rotated between ministries. This year's hosting ministry is the Ministry of Defence.



Their Majesties in Kelantan in conjunction with the silver jubilee of the ascension to the throne of Duli Yang Maha Mulia Sultan Ismail Petra, Al-Sultan of Kelantan

HM and Her Majesty to Kelantan

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Majesty The Raja Isteri, on April 25, attended the royal banquet held in conjunction with the silver jubilee of the ascension to the throne of Duli Yang Maha Mulia Sultan Ismail Petra, Al-Sultan of Kelantan.

The ceremony was held at Royal Silver Jubilee Hall of Istana Negeri in Kota Bahru, Kelantan.

Citizens receive keys & land lots

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam issued land grants and keys to new homes to 224 recipients on April 7. The ceremony was held at Pengiran Pekerma Setia Diraja Sahibul Bandar Primary School in Kampong Mata-Mata.

From the total recipients, 12 received land grants based at the Kampong Rimba; 14 received house keys under the Kampong Rimba National Housing;

12 received house keys under the Kampong Rimba's Indigenous Landless Scheme; 85 received house keys under the Kampong Mata-Mata (Katok B) Indigenous Landless Scheme; 15 received house keys under the Indigenous Landless Scheme based at Kampong Tungku, Rimba and Lambak Kanan; and 17 received grants for house site for Temporary

Occupation of Land Grant Scheme (TOL) based at Brunei-Muara district.

His Majesty also toured the school; and visited Kampong Mata-Mata Health Clinic and shops; several homes of the recipients including the home of village head of Kampong Rimba National Housing Scheme (area 2); and several business premises located at Beribi Industrial Estate.

Financial Year's Budget

A budget of more than \$4.9 billion has been approved by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam for the financial year of April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2005.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to increase by three to four per cent.

CROWN PRINCE WORKING VISITS

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah continued his work visits to various agencies. Places visited were:

- Islamic Bank of Brunei (IBB) on March 4
- Mukim Labi in Belait on March 6
- Temburong District Office and Mukim Batu Apoi on March 13
- Bandar Seri Begawan Municipal Department on March 15
- Tutong District Office on March 17
- Brunei-Muara District Office on March 18
- Prison Department on March 20
- Fire Services Department on March 22
- Labour Department on March 24
- Immigration and National Registration Department on March 30



CROWN PRINCE TO GOLF CHARITY

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah attended the prize presentation ceremony for the Golf Charity Tournament on March 27.

His Royal Highness also presented the prizes to the winners.



HRH at the Golf Charity Tournament prize presentation ceremony

Professionalism a vital characteristic



HRH at the passing-out parade for the newly recruits

Professionalism is a value that should be the objective of every army personnel. When professionalism is achieved, it would empower the status of Royal Brunei Armed Forces as the defense fortress which is comparable with armed forces of this region.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince General Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah remarked at the passing-out parade for the newly recruits on April 2.

His Royal Highness added that knowledge and skill should be based on honourable quality, sincerity, sacrifice and honesty. It is based on these characteristics so duty and responsibility implemented would lead to a result of high quality, as expected by any nation.

Come forward and volunteer

Individuals and agencies are urged to come forward and offer their services voluntarily for the welfare of the community.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah made the call during the launching ceremony of the one-day seminar on voluntarism on April 3 at the International Convention Centre.

According to His Royal Highness, Bruneians are known for their caring attitude. Although there are changes following the changes in situation and condition, there are still caring people and those who still practise the culture of working together for a common purpose. These include government agencies, non-governmental associations and individuals.

The one-day seminar was a joint event between Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation and MENDAKI Foundation of Singapore.



HRH with a personnel from MENDAKI Foundation of Singapore



HRH launches 'Kamus Bahasa Melayu Nusantara'

Malay Language Dictionary launched

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah has launched the 'Kamus Bahasa Melayu Nusantara (KBMN)' (Dictionary of the Malay Archipelago Language) on March 27.

Brunei initiated the publication where it is an integration of Malay words used by the three Malay-speaking nations: Brunei, Malaysia and Indonesia.

HRH to ASEM-FFM6

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the Sixth Asia-Europe Meeting for Foreign Ministers (ASEM) on April 17 in Dublin, Republic of Ireland.

The meeting was officiated by His Excellency Brian Cowen T.D, Republic of Ireland's Foreign Minister.

A wide range of issues were discussed. Issues touched on recent political development in both regions as well as discussing on the peace process in the Middle East; situation in Iraq; and issues on European Union.



HRH receives audience

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah received in audience, His Excellency Li Zhaoxing, People's Republic of China's Foreign Minister on April 17.

Both ministers discussed bilateral issues between Brunei and China and ways to strengthen the relation.

His Royal Highness and His Excellency were in the Republic of Ireland for the Sixth Asia-Europe Meeting for Foreign Ministers.



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah and His Excellency Tran Duc Luong, President of Republic Socialist Viet Nam

HRH at ASEAN Foreign Minister's Retreat

ASEAN foreign ministers exchanged views on regional concerns and assessed developments achieved in ASEAN's development programs at the recent ASEAN Foreign Minister's Retreat in Hanoi on March 4.

Issues related to the Bali Concord II declaration were also discussed. It is a vital foundation in achieving ASEAN Community by 2020.

Amendment on Immigration Act

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam had consented for a law amendment known as Immigration Order Act (Amendment, No.2), 2004 effective as on April 20, 2004.

The amendment was a follow up to the Immigration Order Act (Amendment) 2004 which took effect on February 12, 2004. The amended act touches on penalty of not less than three strokes of cane under certain chapters.

Discipline for excellent health care



HRH awards the diploma to one of the graduates

Discipline is essential in delivering proper health care. Furthermore, a satisfying health care is from three aspects: high level of care, dedication and commitment.

Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Puteri Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah said at the 10th convocation ceremony of Pengiran Anak Puteri Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah's College of Nursing on March 30.

Her Royal Highness said that with graduates being offered a work place at private institutions, it has proved that nursing as a career is employable and marketable. This is a positive trend for less dependency on the government sector.

The 10th convocation saw 136 students received their Nursing Diploma while 45 received their Advance Nursing Diploma.

APPOINTMENT OF BEDB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB) on March 1 has announced that Pehin Dato Haji Awang Mohammad bin Haji Daud has been appointed as the Chairman of BEDB.

The board also announced the re-election of the members as below:

Mr. Timothy Ong as BEDB's Deputy Director; Mr. John Perry, Dato Paduka Haji Idris bin Haji Belaman and Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Rahman bin Ibrahim as Ex-Officio members; and Haji Khamis bin Haji Tamin, Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Shariffuddin bin Pengiran Metali and Mr. Tan Kok Voon as members of BEDB's board of directors.

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

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

- The Right Honourable Datuk Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi, the Prime Minister of Malaysia for the victory of Barisan Nasional at the 11th Malaysia's General Election on March 22.
- His Excellency President General Pervez Musharraf of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Mir Zafarullah Khan in conjunction with Pakistan Day on March 23.
- His Excellency President Iajuddin Ahmed of Bangladesh and his Prime Minister, Her Excellency Begum Khaleda Zia in conjunction with the republic's independence day on March 26.
- Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark and her Prime Minister, His Excellency Anders Fogh Rasmussen in conjunction with Her Majesty's Queen birthday on April 16.
- Her Majesty Queen Koningin Beatrix Wilhelmina Armgrad of Netherlands and her Prime Minister, His Excellency Jan Peter Balkenende in conjunction with Queen's Day on April 30.
- His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Goran Persson in conjunction with the King of Sweden's birthday on April 30.

Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA), on March 5, has revealed its new business class's flatbed Sky Dreamer seats and personal inflight entertainment system, Sky Show.

Sky Dreamer offers the business class seats with comfort, privacy and personal TV.

Sky Show provides the latest Thales i-4000 series personal inflight entertainment system where video on-demand selections; five broadcast video channels; 10 games; 12 CD albums on-demand; and 15 channels of continuous audio entertainment in various languages are offered.

Currently, Sky Dreamer and Sky Show are available on one of the airline's retrofitted Boeing 767.

On hand to witness the new products were the chairman of RBA, Dato Paduka Haji Hazair bin Haji Abdullah who is also the Permanent Secretary at Prime Minister's Office and Peter Foster, RBA's Chief Executive Officer.

RBA introduces Sky Dreamer and Sky Show



Dato Paduka Haji Hazair, the chairman of RBA witnesses the new product



'Blink Zone', a wireless internet connection introduced by Telecom Department

Blink Zone unveiled

A service known as 'Blink Zone' which accommodates wireless internet access is officially feasible as on March 13.

Blink Zone is similar to 'Wi-Fi Hotspot', a wireless internet service usually available at airport, café, restaurants, hotels, shopping malls, schools and universities.

The new service introduced by Telecom Department is available at Brunei International Airport's departure hall and various business joints.

13th ASEAN Social Security Association Meeting

A group of officers from Brunei's Employee Trust Fund attended the 13th ASEAN Social Security Association (ASSA) Meeting and ASSA Secretariat Meeting in Thailand from March 12 to 13.

The delegation was led by the Acting Managing Director of Brunei's Employee Trust Fund, Hajah Noriah binti Haji Mohammad Abas; who is also the Chairman of ASSA's Board for year 2003 to 2004.

ASSA was formed to enhance the development of social security through exchange of ideas and experience among member states.

Reduction of pesticide residues through IPM

Department of Agriculture has signed a memorandum of understanding for a consultancy project with ASEANET in collaboration with the International Commonwealth Agriculture Bureau (CAB) of Malaysian.

Signatories of the MOU on March 16 were Dr. Haji Mohd Yussof bin Haji Mohiddin, the Director of Agriculture while his counterpart Dr. Lum Keng Yeang represented ASEANET.

The consultancy project is on 'Reduction of Pesticide Residues on Economic Crops through Integrated Pest Management (IPM) methods'. Through the project, information and



Signing of MOU between the Director of Agriculture (right) and representative from ASEANET (left)

explanation would be gathered on usage of pesticides, related issues and solutions for sustainable and eco-rational pest and disease management in crops.

This project would be carried out for a period of 20 weeks in three phases.

Brunei – Australia: MOU on air services

Royal Brunei Airlines could now expand its destinations to Sydney and Melbourne, Australia. More baggage load would also be feasible for destinations to Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth over a period of time.

Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Air Services between Brunei and Australia on March 24 at Canberra, Australia has made these possible.

Dato Paduka Haji Abdullah bin Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Haji Bakar,

Permanent Secretary at Ministry of Communications represented Brunei while his counterpart was Mr. Ken Matthews, secretary at Regional Services and Transportation.

The memorandum offers opportunities for its tourism industry and commerce between both nations.

Before the MOU, an agreement on air services between Brunei and Australia was sealed on April 30, 1992 in Canberra.

Bilateral relations strengthened



Relations between Brunei and Bangladesh continuously enhanced

Brunei's diplomatic relation with Bangladesh is continuously enhanced since achieving independence in 1984.

This was disclosed by Pehin Dato Dr. Haji Awang Hussain bin Pehin Dato Haji Awang Mohd Yusof, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports on March 26 at the reception for The People's Republic of Bangladesh's 33rd Independence and National Day.

He said that the ties is enhanced through exchange of visits and the establishments of missions in both nation-states. It is also done through continuous contribution from Bangladesh's nationals in assisting Brunei's national development.

In his reply speech, His Excellency Habibul Islam Bhuiyan, Bangladesh's High Commissioner to Brunei, expressed that Bangladesh is impressed with the development, stability and prosperity Brunei has achieved under the guidance of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

His Excellency expressed Bangladesh's gratitude with Brunei's contribution towards unity and solidarity among the Islam ummah.

Snippets...

Islamic Republic of Iran Earthquake Humanitarian Fund

To ease the burden of earthquake victims in Iran, a National Committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran Earthquake Humanitarian Fund has been set up.

Public are welcome to give financial donation to the fund commencing March 3 until the next six months by contacting the committee's secretariat at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Brunei waters free from red tide

Brunei has been declared free from red tide.

The announcement was issued on March 25 by the Director of Fisheries, Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Sharifuddin bin Pengiran Haji Yusof.

With the statement, all bans and restrictions imposed has been lifted. However, as precautionary measures, ban on eating shellfish is still enforced until further notice.

Brunei has been facing red tide since February 15 which caused bans and restrictions on fishing at effected areas and importations of small fishes such as sardines, mackerel, anchovies and molluscan shellfish.

Brunei RICS established

Brunei has become a member of Royal Institute Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The Brunei RICS Centre had its first annual general meeting where Awang Haji Zulkipli bin Haji Abdul Hamid was appointed as the chairman.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors is a respected organisation for professionals involved in land, valuation, real estate, construction and environmental issues. Currently, it has 110,000 members across 120 countries worldwide with 134 years representing property professionalism.

A dinner was held on April 10 in conjunction with the establishment of the organisation. Present at the dinner was Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Ahmad bin Haji Jumat, the Minister of Development and Mr. Nicholas Brooke, the President of the Royal Institute Chartered Surveyors.

Internet access for rural areas

Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam with its vision to achieve an e-Society, through Telecom Department, is currently promoting its 'E-Speed 2' product to rural areas.

Under Mukim.Net project, fast internet access with attractive packages is now accessible for residents of Kampung Lumut.

'E-Speed' is an internet service provider using a variation of the ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) technology.

The 'E-Speed 2' promotion runs from February 15 – April 30.

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.

Printed by BORNEO PRINTERS & TRADING SDN.BHD. Simpang 636, No.5,6,7, Block B, Ong Keh Beng Building, Jalan Tutong, Bandar Seri Begawan BF 1320, Negara Brunei Darussalam.