



Royal 62nd birthday anniversary speech:

Importance of national agricultural policy underscored

ISTANA NURUL IMAN, July 15 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam underscored the importance of having a strategic plan and a national agricultural policy that can underpin the national food security as one of its main strategic purposes.

"Speaking of efforts to enhancing the economy, we need to harness our resources and increase efforts to fulfil our needs.

"For this purpose, we need to update all of our planning and human resources implementation and all relevant policies.

"As an example, my government has allocated \$28 million from the Human Resource Fund for the Special programme for Job-seeking Graduates and School-leavers Scheme," said His Majesty. The scheme should relieve the private sector's dependence on foreign labour and at the same time reduces local unemployment.

His Majesty delivered the *titah* during the Audience and Special Investiture Ceremony from the Balai Singgahsana (throne chamber) Indera Buana of the Istana Nurul Iman in conjunction with his 62nd birthday celebrations on July 15.

Earlier, the sovereign said that his government has identified rice as a basic necessity, which is given subsidy. As with fuel, subsidy for rice has risen. But for the wellbeing of citizens and population, the price of rice remains as it is.

"But it does not mean that we are free from concern for food supply. Especially given the fact several producing countries have stopped exporting cereals to other countries," said His Majesty.

Brunei Darussalam, he said, should no longer become dependent on the mercy of vagaries of nature in other countries in order to acquire rice even though we have the means to pay for it.

"The relentless dependence on money to fulfil our food needs is no longer relevant against the backdrop of a food crisis.

"If a certain rice producing country has met 70 per cent of its domestic needs is still designing policy to achieve 100 per cent self-sufficiency, why shouldn't we - who could produce only 3.12 per cent to date - strive to increase our industrial output for rice?," asked His Majesty.

The sovereign also stated that there have been discussions on social security especially on life after retirement in the public sector, the private sector and self-employment.

"For this purpose my government is currently studying mechanisms that could provide better security during old age for citizens and population; and spearheading the implementation; and improving policy and retirement system in this country," said His Majesty.

His Majesty also spoke on the Tobacco Order 2005 which he hoped that the diseases caused by tobacco consumption would become reduced. When this happens, the quality of health and living in this country becomes improved and enhanced.

"In our country, curbing the habit of smoking is not a

*** continue on page 5**



PHOTO: AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGGAH

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam delivers a *titah* at the Balai Singgahsana (throne chamber) Indera Buana.



PHOTO: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN

One of the float processions during the 'Malam Serumpun'. Malam Serumpun is a three-in-one event held annually in conjunction with His Majesty's birthday.

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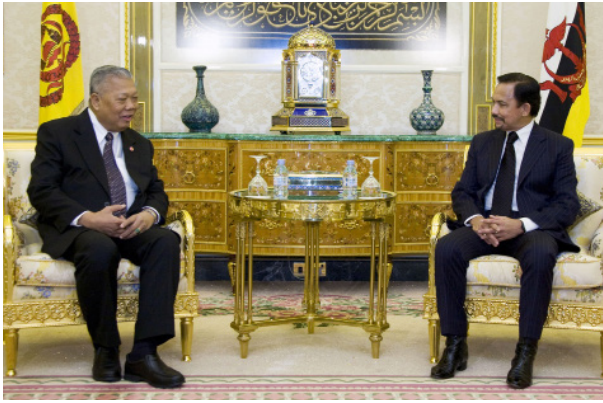
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PHOTO: AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGAH



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah Ibn Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Thailand's Prime Minister His Excellency Samak Sundaravej held a bilateral discussion at Istana Nurul Iman in Bandar Seri Begawan on July 3, 2008. His Excellency The Prime Minister of Thailand was in the country for a two-day official visit.

Brunei-Thailand bilateral relations strengthen

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 5 – Brunei Darussalam is committed in enhancing the bilateral relations and strengthening cooperation with the Kingdom of Thailand.

This was stated by His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at a dinner reception held in honour of His Excellency Samak Sundaravej, the Prime Minister of Thailand's two-day official visit to Brunei Darussalam.

"Your visit gives us a brief, but very welcome opportunity to review this commitment and to consider the best and most practical ways in which it can translated into real benefits for our people," said His Majesty.

The 25-year diplomatic relations shared between the two countries portrays a strong relation in the field of trade, education, air transportation, labour, defence and broadcasting.

In his reply speech, His Excellency stated that 2008 marks the 25th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between the two countries, a relation that is harmonious, cordial, strong and mature. His Excellency also said that the relation was further strengthened through exchange visits on all levels, especially through His Majesty's visit to Thailand to attend the 60th anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol's ascension to the throne in 2006.

During his two-day visit to Brunei Darussalam, His Excellency officially launched the Thai Fair held at the official residence of Thailand's Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam at Bunut.

His Excellency left Brunei Darussalam on July 5.

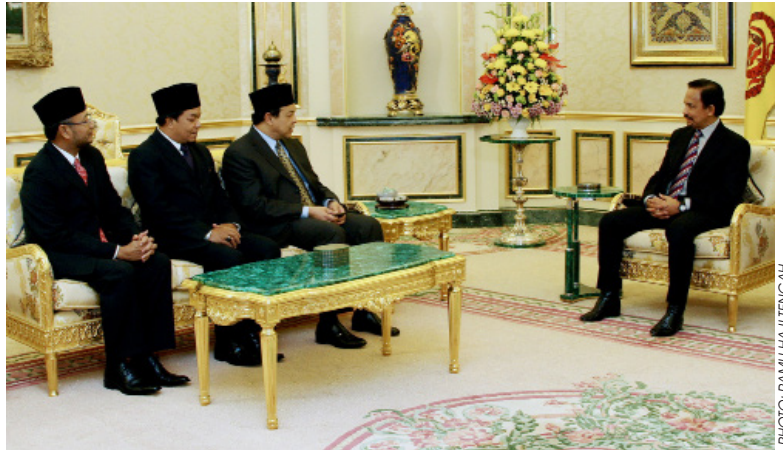


PHOTO: RAMLI HAJI TENGAH

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to receive in audience at the Istana Nurul Iman from the minister at the Malaysian Prime Minister Office's Office, the Honourable Dato' Ahmad Zahid bin Hamidi on July 2.

His Majesty receives special envoy from kedah

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 10 - His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received in audience a special envoy from Kedah Darul Aman led by Yang Teramat Mulia Dato Seri Tunku Annuar Alhaj ibni Almarhum Badlishah Tunku Bendahara Kedah at the Istana Nurul Iman.

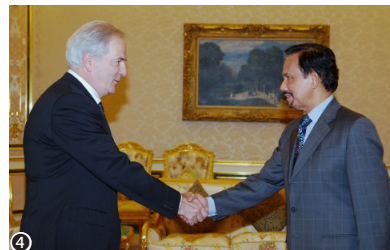
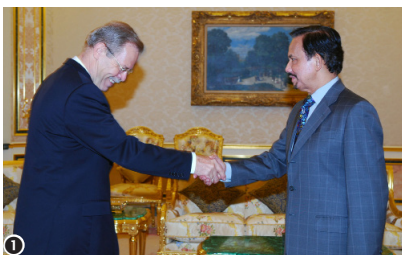


PHOTO: PG HAJI BAHAR PG HAJI OMAR

HM sends congratulatory messages

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam sent congratulatory messages to His Excellency Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic of France, and His Excellency Francois Fillon, Prime Minister of the Republic of France, on the occasion of the Bastille Day of the Republic of France on July 14.

PHOTOS: HALIM HAJI SULAIMAN & HERNIE SULIANA HAJI OTHMAN



His Majesty receives outgoing envoys

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 8 – His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received in audience four outgoing envoys at the Istana Nurul Iman.

- ① His Excellency Conrad Karl Cappell, the outgoing Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Brunei Darussalam;
- ② His Excellency Patrick Bonneville, the outgoing Ambassador of the Republic of France to Brunei Darussalam.
- ③ His Excellency Ahmad bin Mohammad bin Zaher Al-Hinal, the outgoing Ambassador for the Sultanate of Oman to Brunei Darussalam
- ④ His Excellency Leopold Battel, the outgoing High Commissioner of Canada to Brunei Darussalam.

Prime Minister of Kuwait on official visit to Brunei

PHOTO: HAJI MASMALEH HAJI MOHD. ALI



His Majesty and His Royal Highness Prime Minister of Kuwait during the audience at the Istana Nurul Iman.

ISTANA NURUL IMAN, July 25 – His Royal Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of Kuwait was on a three-day official visit to Brunei.

His Royal Highness was granted an audience by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the Cheradi Laila Kenchana, Istana Nurul Iman. Both leaders also held bilateral meetings; which later was followed by one-to-one discussion.

Prior to that, His Majesty and His Royal Highness witnessed the signing of Brunei-Kuwait cooperation agreement on economy, trade and technical field. The signing took place at the Cabinet Room of the palace.

Later, His Majesty and His Royal Highness attended the banquet hosted in conjunction with the Prime Minister of Kuwait's visit to the country.

Also present were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at Prime Minister's Office, His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah, His Royal Highness Prince Haji 'Abdul Malik and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen.



PHOTOS: HAJI SAHRIN HAJI ASMAT

Her Majesty received in audience

ISTANA NURUL IMAN, July 8 - Her Majesty The Raja Isteri received in audience from the wives of the outgoing envoys to Brunei Darussalam at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

- ① Madam Lieselore Cappell, the wife of the outgoing Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Brunei Darussalam.
- ② Madam Christane Bonneille, the wife of the outgoing Ambassador for the Republic of France to Brunei Darussalam.
- ③ Madam Amima binti Mohamed Said Al-Riyami, the wife of the outgoing Ambassador for the Sultanate of Oman to Brunei Darussalam.



PHOTOS: MASRI OSMAN

Crown Prince receives outgoing foreign envoys

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 3 – His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at Prime Minister's Office on July 3 received in audience:

- ① His Excellency Conrad Cappell, the outgoing Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Brunei Darussalam.
- ② His Excellency Ahmed Mohamed Zahir Al-Hinai, the outgoing Ambassador for the Sultanate of Oman to Brunei.

Crown Prince receives audience

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 9 - His Royal Highness Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office received in audience His Excellency Makoto Misono, the President of the National Institute of Technology and Evaluation (NITE), Japan.

His Excellency was in the country to attend the signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding between Brunei Darussalam's Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources and NITE of Japan.

The audience took place at the Istana Nurul Iman on July 9.

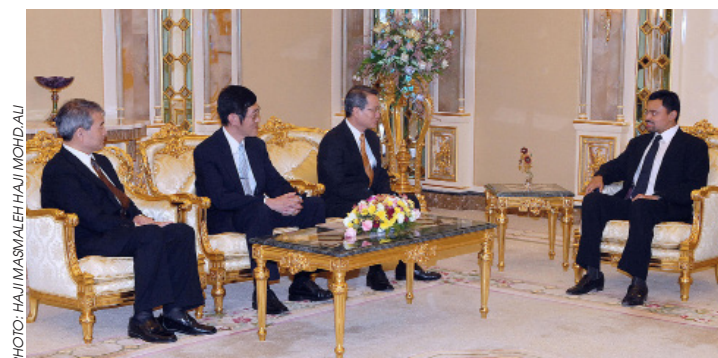


PHOTO: HAJI MASMALEH HAJI MOHD. ALI



Inspecting the Guard-of-Honour at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddien at the capital.

* From frontpage (Royal 62nd birthday anniversary speech)

difficult issue, unlike in other countries. This is because we do not have an interest with cigarettes. We could set our habits and resolve at will any time. I think we are capable of becoming a leading country in curbing smoking. We should also not forget the rules regarding smoking in our country, which is *haram*," said His Majesty.

In the field of education, the sovereign said that the national education system known as the 21st Century Education System (SPN 21) is currently updated. Its implementation is set for early next year.

Brunei Darussalam celebrates the 62nd birthday anniversary of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah (centre), His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah (right) and His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah after the grand assembly at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddien.

30 receive state decorations

ISTANA NURUL IMAN, July 15 – Thirty people received state decorations issued by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the Balai Singgasana (throne chamber) Indera Buana at the Istana Nurul Iman.

The ceremony was held soon after His Majesty delivered his royal speech (titah) during the Audience and Special Investiture ceremony at the Istana Nurul Iman.

Among the decorations issued were The Most Gallant Order of Pahlawan Negara Brunei (1st Class), P.S.P.N.B, bestowed to Tan Sri Dato'

Sri Musa Dato' Haji Hassan; The Most Eminent Order of Islam Brunei (2nd Class), D.S.S.U.B to two recipients which carries the title Dato Seri Pahlawan; The Most Distinguished Order of Paduka Seri Laila Jasa (2nd Class) D.S.L.J to one recipient which carries the title Dato Seri Setia; The Most Honourable Order of Seri Paduka Mahkota Brunei (2nd Class) D.P.M.B to nine recipients; Dato Seri Laila Jasa; The Most Blessed Order of Setia Negara Brunei (3rd Class) S.N.B. to 14 recipients and The Most Eminent Order of Islam Brunei (3rd Class) S.S.U.B to three recipients which carries the title Dato Paduka.

Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on July 15. The celebrations began with a thanksgiving prayer on July 14 throughout the nation-state and an inspection of guard-of-honour at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddien in the capital on July 15.



One of the recipients receives a state decoration from His Majesty.



View of Balai Singgasana (throne chamber) Indera Buana, Istana Nurul Iman during the Audience and Special Investiture ceremony.

PHOTOS: ABDULLAH HAJI AWANG DAMIT & RAMLI HAJI TENGAH



Their Majesties and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri received audiences from invited guests

ISTANA NURUL IMAN, July 15 – Their Majesties and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri received in audience from invited foreign dignitaries in conjunction with His Majesty's 62nd birthday anniversary at the Istana Nurul Iman on July 15. The invited foreign dignitaries were:

- 1 Her Royal Highness Princess Basma binti Talal and His Excellency Dato Seri Setia Al-Syed Walid Ismail Al-Kurdi of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan;
- 2 The Finance Minister of the Republic of Singapore, His Excellency Tharman Shanmugaratnam.
- 3 The Malaysia's Minister of Energy, Water and Communication, Yang Berbahagia Dato' Shaziman bin Abu Mansor.
- 4 The Chief Minister of Sabah, Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Seri Panglima Musa bin Haji Aman.
- 5 The Malaysian Inspector General of Police; Yang Berbahagia Tan Sri Dato Seri Pahlawan Musa bin Dato' Haji Hassan.
- 6 The Chief Minister of Sarawak, Yang Amat Berhormat Pehin Sri Dr. Haji Abdul Taib bin Mahmud.
- 7 The Philippines' Secretary of National Defence, His Excellency Tuan Yang Terutama Gilberto C. Teodoro, Jr.
- 8 Puan Jane Yumiko Ittogi Shanmugaratnam, the spouse of the Finance Minister of the Republic of Singapore.
- 9 Yang Berbahagia Datin Rozana binti Mohamed Khalid, the spouse of the Malaysia's Minister of Energy, Water and Communication,
- 10 Yang Amat Berbahagia Datin Seri Panglima Hajah Faridah binti Haji Tusin, the spouse of the Chief Minister of Sabah.
- 11 Puan Sri Datin Sri Juriah binti Dato' Ahmad, the spouse of the the Malaysian Inspector General of Police.
- 12 Yang Amat Berbahagia Dato Amar Puan Sri Dr. Hajah Laila Taib, the wife of the Chief Minister of Sarawak.





PHOTO: HASTHAL HAZMI ABD. HAMID

Their Majesties and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri at the State Banquet.

Banquets and dinner receptions to celebrate His Majesty's 62nd birthday anniversary

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 30 – His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, Her Majesty The Raja Isteri and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri attended banquets and dinner receptions held in conjunction with His Majesty's 62nd birthday anniversary.

On July 15, Their Majesties and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri attended the Royal Birthday State Banquet. The state banquet was also attended by His Majesty's invited foreign dignitaries. While on July 17, Their Majesties and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri attended the banquet for uniformed personnel government departments and civilian organisations. Both banquets took place at the Istana Nurul Iman.

The Brunei-based diplomatic missions also hosted a reception in honour of His Majesty's 62nd birthday anniversary held at Royal Berkshire of Jerudong Polo Club on July 23.

Another banquet was held on July 28 at Royal Berkshire Hall, Jerudong Polo Club hosted by the Royal Brunei Armed Forces. Later on July 30, the Royal Brunei Police Force hosted a banquet in honour of His Majesty's 62nd birthday anniversary at the Assarraa Hall.



PHOTO: MASRI OSMAN

The people and resident of Brunei gathered to meet and greet His Majesty and a members of the royal family.

His Majesty's 62nd Birthday: Meet-the-people session

Meet-the-people session is the most awaited itinerary at every His Majesty's birthday celebration. These sessions give the public an opportunity to personally greet His Majesty and the members of royal family. The sessions were held at Tutong District on July 17, Belait District on July 19, Brunei - Muara District on July 20, and Temburong District on July 24.



PHOTO: MASRI OSMAN

Champion of the Borneo tug-and-war competition receives the winning trophy from His Majesty

Malam Serumpun, a spectacular showcase

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 26 – A magnificent showcase 'Malam Serumpun', a three-in-one event was held in conjunction with His Majesty's 62nd birthday anniversary. The event was held at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddin in the capital.

Present to witness the colourful event were His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, Her Majesty the Raja Isteri, and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri.

Also in attendance were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen and other members of the royal family.

This year's event saw 20 participations for the float procession competition, Borneo tug-of-war competition and colourful fireworks display. This year's float procession was won by a combined entry from the Brunei Shell Petroleum (BSP), Brunei Shell Tankers (BST) and Brunei Shell Marketing (BSM); while Brunei Darussalam's team emerged as the champion for the Borneo tug-of-war after defeating Sarawak.

His Majesty attends regimental dinner

BERAKAS, July 12 - His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, who is the Minister of Defence and Supreme Commander of Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) attended a Regimental Dinner at the Bolkiah Garrison Officers' Mess to mark the RBAF 47th anniversary celebration.

His Majesty was accompanied by His Royal Highness General Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and General of the RBAF.

At the event, His Majesty and His Royal Highness also meet and received greetings from officers of the Ministry of Defence and RBAF.



PHOTO: HAJI MOHD. YUSOF MOHD YASSIN

His Majesty at the Regimental Dinner.

Foreign envoys celebrate His Majesty's 62nd birthday

JERUDONG, July 23 – His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam attended a dinner hosted by Brunei-based heads of diplomatic missions in conjunction with His Majesty's 62nd birthday.

The dinner took place at the Royal Berkshire Hall, Jerudong Polo Club.

Also present at the event were Her Majesty The Raja Isteri and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah and Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna.



PHOTO: HAJI MOHD. YUSOF MOHD. YASSIN

Brunei-based heads of diplomatic missions held dinner to celebrate His Majesty's birthday.

Head of The State of Sarawak visits Brunei

ISTANA NURUL IMAN, July 9 – Their Majesties and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri received audiences from the Head of the State of Sarawak, His Excellency Tun Datuk Patinggi Abang Haji Muhammad Sallahuaddin Abang Barieng and spouse, Yang Amat Berbahagia Toh Puan Datuk Patinggi Hajah Norkiah who were in the country for a three-day visit. The audience was held at Cheradi Lalla Kenchana of Istana Nurul Iman.

The audience was later followed by a banquet held at Baitul Rahman. Also present at the banquet were His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah and other members of the royal family.

During the visit, His Excellency and delegation visited the Royal Regalia building, Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Islamic Exhibition Gallery; and river cruising along the Kampong Ayer (water village).

The delegation also held a



PHOTO: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN

Banquet held at Istana Nurul Iman to celebrate Head of the State of Sarawak visits to Brunei.

briefing on Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy (SCORE) at the Empire Hotel & Country Club in Jerudong presented by Sarawak's State Secretary, Datuk Amar Wilson Baya Dandot. Attending the briefing was the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade II, Pehin Dato Awang Lim Jock Seng.

Brunei Darussalam and Sarawak share a long and close relations. It is further enhanced through various cooperations such as trade where in 2007, total imports from Sarawak to Brunei was estimated at \$56 million while total exports was valued

at \$12 million. This signified an increase in trade as the previous year recorded a total import from Sarawak to Brunei at \$51 million and \$9 million in exports from Brunei to Sarawak. Among the items imported from Sarawak are poultry, fruits, vegetables and timber products.

Brunei Darussalam and Sarawak also officially launched the Frequent Travelers Card (FTC) on September 11, 2007. Meanwhile, Brunei's national carrier, Royal Brunei Airlines on November 1, 2007 extended its flight services to five times a week to Kuching, Sarawak.



PHOTO: RAMLI HAJI TENGAH

KEDAH DARUL AMAN, July 22 – His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, Her Majesty The Raja Isteri and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri attended the Royal Banquet hosted in conjunction with the Golden Jubilee celebration of His Majesty Al-Sultan Almu'tasimu Billahi Muhibbuddin Tuanku Alhaj Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, the Sultan of Kedah Darul Aman's coronation to the throne.

The banquet was held at the Dewan Persantapan Istana Anak Bukit.

Royalty in Kedah for Coronation Golden Jubilee's coronation banquet



Her Majesty The Raja Isteri and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri attended the Royal Banquet to commemorate the King of Kedah's Golden Jubilee coronation celebration.

Sovereign envisions a nation of *Zikir*

BERAKAS, July 26 – His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam is determine for Brunei Darussalam to become a nation of *Zikir*.

This vision was highlighted by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the official opening of the Knowledge Convention 2008 held at the International Convention Centre.

According to the sovereign, this determination is not mere rhetoric but sourced from the deepest confidence that a nation of *Zikir* would be blessed and helped by Allah.

With a concept of *Zikir*, by God's Willing, the nation and the life of the people would be developed in a way that it is good and approved by Allah and also the people. We will work towards excellence with this concept, said His Majesty.

These meant that our children will excel in their studies, so too the technicians, the doctors, entrepreneurs, administrators, policy makers and the people. In short, we will be excellent due to the blessings of *Zikir* and remembering Allah.

Knowledge Convention is an annual event organised as part of the itinerary to celebrate His Majesty's birthday anniversary. This year carries the theme "*Menghayati Negara Zikir*".



His Majesty at one of the exhibition's booth at the Knowledge Convention 2008

PHOTO: HAJI SAHRIN HAJI ASMAT



His Majesty mingling with one of the exhibitors at the Majlis Ilmu exhibition.

PHOTO: ABDULLAH HAJI AWANG DAMIT



Her Majesty The Raja Isteri and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri at the Majlis Ilmu exhibition.

PHOTO: HAJI SAHRIN HAJI ASMAT



His Royal Highness Crown Prince attends talk on 'A Nation of *Zikir*'.

PHOTO: ABDULLAH HAJI AWANG DAMIT

Crown Prince attends talk on 'A Nation of *Zikir*'

BERAKAS, July 28 - His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah attended the presentation of a premier paper entitled "A Nation of *Zikir*" delivered by the State Mufti in conjunction with The Knowledge Convention 2008.

It was held at the International Convention Centre in Berakas to mark the 62nd birthday anniversary of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Also present was His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik.

The State Mufti, Pehin Datu Seri Maharaja Dato Paduka Seri Setia (Dr) Ustaz Hj Awg Abd Aziz said the survival of the nation and its people rely on prayer, *zikir* and good deeds of the people. The nation will be blessed if it is economically, socially and defensively oriented towards *zikir*.

The State Mufti added that *zikir* is a big "*Kalimah*" or declaration that is full of purity and comes from Allah as stated in the *Quran*.

The Knowledge Convention is an annual academic event held as part of the itinerary to celebrate the birthday anniversary of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Special Talk on 'Negara *Zikir*' for women

BERAKAS, July 27 - Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Azrinaz Mazhar attended the Ceramah Khas Negara *Zikir* (Special Talk on Negara *Zikir*) for women in conjunction with the Knowledge Convention 2008 (*Majlis Ilmu* 2008) at the International Convention Centre.

Also present were Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah and other female members of the royal family.

The special talk on '*Ke Arah Merealisasikan Keluarga Zikir*' was delivered by Prof. Madya Dr. Sharifah Syed Ismail, Deputy Director (Foundation Degree), Academy of Islamic Studies, University Malaya, Malaysia. About 3,500 women from public and private sectors, students and also youth associations attended the talk.

Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri also visited the exhibitions held in conjunction with the Knowledge Convention 2008. Knowledge Convention is part of His Majesty's birthday anniversary's itinerary.

Kampong Senukoh – mesmerizing traditional life style

In Brunei brings you to another place of interest to visit in Temburong District; that is Kampong Senukoh located in Mukim Labu. The villagers are comprised of mainly Malay Kedayan, Malay Murut and also Chinese and other races.

This village offers a concept of a *Kampung* (village) stay where visitors can choose between a day trip or overnight programme (two-day one night stay). The programmes are organised by the *Majlis Perundingan* (Consultative Council) Kampong Senukoh Labu Temburong.

The daily trip will usually start as early as 8.15 am, once the visitors arrived at the Bangar Town from the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan. Meanwhile for an overnight programme, visitors will arrive at Temburong in the afternoon.

The journey from the capital to the district will take about 45 minutes by boat. Even though Temburong District can be reached by road (through Limbang, Sarawak of Malaysia) but visitors prefer boat rides as less time is consumed. Visitors can also enjoy the beautiful scenery of green forest and river along the journey.

Upon arrival at Kampong Senukoh, visitors will be greeted by the friendly Senukoh residents and entertained with traditional dances. Itinerary begins with a short briefing on the history and development of the village.

After the briefing, visitors are invited to join and experience traditional activities. Among the activities are *menumbuk padi* and *mengamping* (pounding of padi); preparing local delicacies; making local handicrafts; playing traditional games and river cruising.

Local villagers, usually the elderly, will demonstrate the steps of preparing local delicacies. The process will include *mendadih* (cooking), *membungkus* (wrapping the cooked delicacies into a leaves such as *Nyirik* leaves for *kelupis*), and *menjalin* (tying the delicacies together).

The specialities of Senukoh's villagers are making *wajid*, *lapat* and *kelupis*. Among these three delicacies, *wajid* is the most famous. *Wajid Temburong* is a known brand in the country for its delicious taste.

The daily trip will end with lunch. Visitors will enjoy various local dishes during lunch. Among the food served will be local rice, varieties of vegetables like *umbut*, *pakis* and *rebung* (bamboo shoot), *ikan liking*, *udang galah* (fresh water prawn) and local delicacies. The uniqueness of the lunch is it will be served on a hut which will be floating on the river.

The overnight itinerary is almost similar except visitors will be presented with a cultural show like traditional dances during dinner, joining fishing activity and sightseeing at the village.

The visit programme to Kampong Senukoh offers another option for tourist attraction in the district not only for foreign tourist but also for locals to experience the uniqueness about Brunei.



PHOTOS:
HAJAH NOORHIJRAH HAJI IDRIS
& PG. IKRAM BIN PG. HAJI AHMAD





NTING



Did you know that...

The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports was established on January 1, 1984 on the resumption of full independence and sovereignty of Brunei Darussalam.

During the early years of establishment, there were six departments under the Ministry.

Now there are five departments under the ministry; Department of Youth and Sports, Language and Literature Bureau, Museums Department, Department of History Centre and Department of Community Development.

The departments are led by a director except for History Centre which is led by a Principal.

More information on the ministry is available at www.kkbs.gov.bn.

>> BRUNEI IN BRIEF

- Official name is Negara Brunei Darussalam.
 - Capital is Bandar Seri Begawan.
 - It is located on the north-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia.
 - Land size is 5765 sq. km
 - Population is estimated at 398,000 people (2008)
 - It is divided into four districts – Brunei Muara, Tutong, Kuala Belait and Temburong.
 - Malay is the official language but English is widely spoken.
 - Islam is the official religion and it allows other religions to be practiced.
 - National carrier is Royal Brunei Airlines.
 - It has an equatorial climate, a uniform temperature, high humidity and heavy rainfall.
- Public Warning:** The trafficking of controlled drugs carries the death penalty in Brunei Darussalam

>> HOW TO GET TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM?

There are a number of ways to reach Brunei.

- By air - Brunei's national carrier, Royal Brunei Airlines travels to more than 20 destinations around the world. The airline also has worldwide office for you to book a return flight to Brunei (to know the nearest RBA's office at your place, please log to: www.brunelair.com)

International airlines such as Singapore Airlines, Malaysia Airlines and Thai Airways also fly frequently to Brunei. Beginning July 2006, Air Asia, the Malaysia's lowest airfare carrier also has direct flight from Kuala Lumpur to Brunei.

Arrival by plane would land you to Brunei International Airport (BWN), the sole airport in the nation.

- For those who enjoy journey by sea, you can reach Brunei by boat or ferry. The main ferry terminal in Brunei is the Serasa Ferry Terminal at Muara. You can catch a ferry from Labuan, Sabah or Lawas and Sundar, both in Sarawak, a state of the neighbouring country, Malaysia. Another option is via a boat from Limbang, Sarawak which will arrive at the jetty around Jalan Residency area in the Capital.
- You would have two options of entry point to Brunei by land transport. You can enter through the Sungai Tujoh Immigration Control Post in Belait District or the Kuala Lurah Immigration Control Post in Brunei Muara District. The Sungai Tujoh Immigration Control Post in Belait is the entry point for those from Miri, Sarawak. While the Kuala Lurah Immigration Control Post is the entrance for those coming from Limbang, Sarawak; Kota Kinabalu; and Kalimantan.

PHOTO: AMPUAN HAJI MAHMUD AMPUAN HAJI TENGAH



His Majesty present an award to one of the winners of Ta'mir Masjid Award.

Call to increase agricultural products

BERAKAS, July 30 – Brunei Darussalam must take stern actions in the bid to increase agricultural products particularly rice. We must ensure that we succeed in being self-sufficient using our own products.

These were emphasised by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at a ceremony to mark the Israk Mikraj held at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

According to His Majesty, the enhancement is a must, at least to reduce our dependency on large import. We must be quick to overcome the slow growth.

At the ceremony, His Majesty also presented prizes to the winners of Ta'mir Masjid Award which was divided into five categories.

Brunei International Airport receives royal visit

PHOTO: HAJI MOHD. YUSOF MOHD. YASSIN



His Majesty at one of the business premises at the departure hall of Brunei International Airport

BERAKAS, July 9 – His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam made an unscheduled visit to the Brunei International Airport (BIA), Brunei International Air Cargo Centre (BIACC), Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) and Royal Brunei Airlines' hangar.

During the visit, His Majesty took a closer look at the daily operations and various services and facilities available.

A loving and caring monarch, His Majesty also mingled around with members of the public who were present at the airport where the public took the opportunity to personally greet His Majesty.

At BIA, His Majesty also took a closer look at the departure hall and business premises, the 'Royal Sky Lounge' and the Tourists Information Centre. He later proceeded to BIACC, Department of Civil Aviation and later to RBA's hangar based in Kampong Terunjing.

Female royalty at Israk Mikraj celebration

ISTANA NURUL IMAN, July 30 – Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri Azrinaz Mazhar attended the Israk Mikraj celebration at the Istana Nurul Iman.

Also present were Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah, Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah, Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Muta-Wakkilah Hayatul Bolkiah,

Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Majeedah Nuurul Bulqiah, Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Hafizah Sururul Bulqiah and other female members of the royal family.

More than 7,000 women from various sectors and organisations and also public attended the event. A special talk on Israk Mikraj was also delivered by Yang Berhormat Pehin Dato (Dr.) Ustaz Haji Awang Abdul Aziz bin Juned, the State Mufti.



PHOTO: RAMLI HAJI TENGAH

Her Majesty The Raja Isteri, Her Royal Highness Pengiran Isteri and Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri at the Israk Mikraj celebration for women.

His Majesty receives congratulatory greetings

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received congratulatory messages from the heads of states and other foreign dignitaries in conjunction with His Majesty's 62nd birthday anniversary on July 15.

The messages were from:

His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, Emperor Akihito of Japan, Singapore President His Excellency S R Nathan, President of Philippines Datin Laila Utama Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, President of Laos His Excellency Choummaly Sayasone, President of Vietnam His Excellency

Nguyen Minh Triet, President of Pakistan His Excellency General (Rtd) Pervez Musharraf, President of India Her Excellency Pratibha Devisingh Patil, and President of Bangladesh Professor Dr Iajuddin Ahmed.

Congratulatory messages also came from The Right Honorable Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia, His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of Singapore, His Excellency Bouasone Boupavanh, Prime Minister of Laos, His Excellency Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister of Vietnam; The Honorable Gordon Brown, British Prime Minister, His Excellency Syed Yousaf Giza Gillai, Prime Minister of Pakistan and His Excellency Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed, Chief Adviser to the Non-Party Caretaker Government of Bangladesh.

Thanksgiving prayers mark His Majesty's 62nd birthday

KIARONG, July 14 - On the eve of 62nd birthday of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, all mosques, suraus and prayer halls in the country held thanksgiving prayers.

The main focal point was at the Jame 'Asr Hassanil Bolkiah where His Majesty and male members of the royal family joined scores of Muslims for the thanksgiving prayers.

Sayyidina Hasan Secondary school wins PRYNSA awards



PHOTO: HAJI SAHRIN HAJI ASMAT

Her Royal Highness presents PRYNSA Challenge Trophy to the winner of PRYNSA 2008.

GADONG, July 23 – A project entitled 'Plants Defence Mechanism: Are Myrmecophytic Macaranga Always Better Protected To Herbivores Than Other Non-Myrmecophytic Macaranga?' presented by Sayyidina Hasan Secondary School won the 10th Princess Rashidah Young Nature Scientist Awards (PRYNSA).

Present to give away the prize was Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatulk Bolkiah as the Royal Patron of PRYNSA. The event was held at the Rizqun International Hotel.

Also present was Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Majeedah Nuurul Bulqiah.

Second place was won by Seri Mulia Sarjana School with the project entitled "The Comparison Of Coleoptera Diversity and Abundance In Peat-Swamp Forests of Labi, Beliat District" while Pengiran Isteri Hajah Mariam Secondary School came in third place with the project "Comparison Of Leaf Construction Costs Of Native Species In Different Forest Types In Brunei".

PRYNSA's champion received \$3,000.00 with a challenge trophy, second place received \$2,000.00 and third winner received \$1,000.00.

PRYNSA was sponsored by Brunei Shell Sendirian Berhad and Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Cooperation (HSBC) with the collaboration of Forestry Department. PRYNSA was first held in 1997 aimed at nurturing excellence among the young, especially in the field of natural science. PRYNSA is one of the many activities introduced under the National Forest Sustainability Programme.

Her Royal Highness awarded Bachelor Degree

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 18 – Her Royal Highness Princess 'Azemah Ni'matul Bolkiah, the daughter of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was awarded a Bachelor Degree in a convocation at Butterworth Hall Warwick Coventry on July 17.

Her Royal Highness was awarded with a Bachelor of Laws with Honours from Warwick University.

Present at the convocation was Her Royal Highness Princess Fadziilah Lubabul Bulqiah.



Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna attends 15th Ministerial Conference of NAM

TEHRAN, July 30 – Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna, Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, called on member countries of the Non Aligned Movement (NAM) to remain united and strongly committed to the Bandung Principles as they cherished for a world where peace, justice and friendship prevailed.

Her Royal Highness made a call in her statement during the second day of the General Debate of the VX Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Tehran.

Like other members of the Movement, Her Royal Highness stated that Brunei Darussalam is standing firmly by these principles. Her Royal Highness also believed that these principles were reflected in the theme of the Conference, "Solidarity for Peace, Justice & Friendship" and considered that the theme provided members with a focus and a common direction as members exchanged views on issues of interest to the Movement.

Her Royal Highness also expressed that Brunei Darussalam strongly believed in peaceful coexistence between and among states which could only be achieved through mutual understanding, tolerance and friendly relations. Her Royal Highness saw the importance of promoting respect for cultural diversity.

In acknowledging the progress made by the Movement, Her Royal Highness appreciated the work done thus far to strengthen the Movement's mechanism to exchange views and assist each other as demonstrated by adoption of the three-year Plan of Action by the Leaders of the Movement in Havana in 2006.

Her Royal Highness stated that this signaled a more action-oriented Movement and would provide the Movement's Leaders with a systematic way of reviewing its progress when they meet in Egypt next year. Her Royal Highness ended her statement with the assurance of Brunei Darussalam's continued support to the Movement.

Her Royal Highness also attended a luncheon hosted by His Excellency Manouchehr Mottaki, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran. Prior to this, Her Royal Highness met with the Foreign minister of the Republic of Serbia, His Excellency Vuk Jeremic and discussed bilateral as well as regional and international matters.

While on July 29, Her Royal Highness attended the Opening Ceremony of the XV Ministerial Conference of the NAM held at the OIC Conference Hall in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran.

Her Royal Highness also met Madam Tahereh Nazari, wife of the Foreign Minister of Iran in her capacity as Director General of Women's International Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Iran. Both exchanged views on issues related to the advancement of women in both countries.

Later in the evening, Her Royal Highness also attended a dinner hosted by His Excellency President Dr. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the Diplomatic Club in Tehran.

Food and energy security discussed

SINGAPORE, July 21 – ASEAN ministers discussed outstanding ASEAN matters including the implementation of the ASEAN Charter; ASEAN's external relations; and exchanged views on a number of regional and international developments, especially food security, energy security, and the financial global situation at the 41st ASEAN Ministerial meeting (AMM) held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore.

Present on behalf of Brunei Darussalam was His Royal Highness

Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Ministerial Meeting included a Retreat; a Working Lunch; and Meetings with the High Level Panel to establish the ASEAN Human Rights Body, and a Legal Experts Group.

Following the Working Lunch, His Royal Highness, together with other Foreign Ministers of ASEAN, witnessed a ceremony in which the Foreign Minister of Myanmar deposited his country's Instrument of Ratification of

the ASEAN Charter with the Secretary General of ASEAN. His Royal Highness then attended the Meeting of the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free-Zone (SEANWFZ) Commission, at which Ministers reviewed the progress of the SEANWFZ Plan of Action.

The 41st AMM was officially opened by His Excellency Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of Singapore.

The meeting ended with an ASEAN press conference on the Release of the Post Nargis Joint Assessment Report.

PHOTO: HERNIE SULIANA HAJI OTHMAN



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah (left) in group photo with others East Asia Foreign Ministers.

HRH co-chairs ASEAN-China Post Ministerial Conference

SINGAPURA, July 23 – His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade co-chaired the ASEAN-China Post Ministerial Conference with His Excellency Yang Jiechi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore. The Foreign Ministers reviewed the progress of the dialogue relationship, discussed

ways to enhance cooperation, and exchanged views on regional and international matters.

His Royal Highness noted the progress of the dialogue relations, and expressed appreciation to China for the close cooperation between ASEAN and the People's Republic of China. His Royal Highness also wished China every success in hosting the

forthcoming Olympic games.

His Royal Highness and Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Zariah, in the evening, joined other Foreign Ministers of ASEAN, Dialogue Partners, members of the ASEAN Regional Forum, and spouses at a Gala Dinner hosted by His Excellency George Yeo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, at the Istana Banquet Hall in Singapore.

PHOTO: HAJI MASMALEH HAJI MOHD ALI



Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Suyoi delivers his speech.

Issues on domestic violence discussed

BERAKAS, July 5 - A more in-depth and holistic strategic planning is needed by preparing a National Plan of Action in handling issues of domestic violence. The action plan should outline four sectors comprising of prevention, protection, justice and support.

This was stated by the Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Suyoi at a symposium on domestic violence to commemorate ASEAN Women's Day 2008.

The Minister also said that perhaps it is time to introduce an Act in this country where it will protect family members from violence, similar to existing Acts in neighbouring countries.

ASEAN celebrates Women's Day every July 5 where it aims to promote awareness among its community on women's contribution in various fields, particularly on nation-building.

Around 250 people took part in the symposium ranging from government officers, the private sector and non-governmental organisations.

Brunei-Korea: MoU on postal services

JALAN MENTERI BESAR, July 5 - A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enable a closer cooperation between Brunei Darussalam and the Republic of Korea's postal services was signed recently.

Through the MoU, both parties have agreed to cooperate in various fields which among others include; exchange in information on Mail Processing System (MPS); cooperation in Expedite Mail Service (EMS); exchanging information and procedures in parcel service and cash on delivery services.

Present as signatories were the Postmaster General of Brunei Postal Services, Haji Abdul Kadir bin Tengah while his counterpart was the President of Korea Post, Mr. Kyong Won Jung. Present to



Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar (centre) witnessing the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between Brunei Department of Postal Services and Korea Post.

witness the signing ceremony was the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apang.

PHOTO: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN

Call to enhance nation's food security



PHOTO: HAJI MASMALEH HAJI MOHD ALI

Deputy Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, Pengiran Datin Hajah Mariana officially open Wasan Vocational School orientation week.

JALAN WASAN, July 7 - The agricultural and fishery sectors are important in assisting the nation to diversify the economy. The main strategic goal is to enhance the National Food Security through strengthening its capability in producing quality, safe and halal food commodity.

These were highlighted by the Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, Pengiran Hajah Mariana PDNLDR Pengiran Haji Abdul Momin at the official opening of Wasan Vocational School's third intake orientation week.

According to the Deputy Permanent Secretary, food security has become a top agenda in facing today's global food crisis. We have seen how the citizens and residents of a country become aggravated when food becomes limited and price for commodity has increased.

There are several areas that need to be taken into account in strengthening food security which are; ensure local production of commodity is sufficient, and available; ensure reasonable market price so all members of the community are able to afford it; and ensure continuous and accessible food supply.

The nation's food security needs an integrated implementation of all major actions that covers enhancing the capability of local production; efficient management

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Brunei - Japan: MoU for technical cooperation

PHOTO: HAJI SAHRIN HAJI ASMAT



Brunei Darussalam and Japan representatives after the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding for technical cooperation between Brunei Darussalam's Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources and Japan's National Institute of Technology and Evaluation (NITE).

JERUDONG, July 10 – Brunei Darussalam's Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources and Japan's National Institute of Technology and Evaluation (NITE) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the field of technical cooperation.

Through the MoU, it will enable cooperation in the exploration of microbial resources under the Heart of Borneo (HoB) project and initiate joint research and development work on forest micro-organisms including microbial resources in Brunei's rainforests.

Signing on behalf of Brunei Darussalam was the Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hamdillah bin Haji Abdul Wahab who is also the chairman of HoB's National Council. While his counterpart was Dr. Makoto Misono, the President of NITE.

This five-year technical cooperation is aimed at enhancing the national capacity in areas of priority through joint research and development using this country's abundant biological resources.

Both parties will prepare a platform for technical transfer, exchange of information and research for the benefits of both parties which is inline with the national and international legal framework such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and increase the effectiveness of forest micro-organisms and genetic resources conservation strategies in Brunei.

Campaigns to encourage fruit plantation

JALAN MULAUT, July 10 – A five-year strategic planning (2008-2013) by the Department of Agriculture that include programmes to increase the production and quality of local fruits is among the measures taken to ensure an increase in production of local fruits. While through a long-term planning, the country aims to produce 24, 649 metric tonnes of fruits worth \$50 million by 2023.

These were stated by the Acting Director of Agriculture, Dayang Hajah Normah Suriahayati at the opening of the Fruits and Agri-food Fair 2008.

To realise the department's vision, a number of campaigns to encourage fruit plantation such as plantation of around 17,000 seedlings in 2008 that will be distributed to students, farmers and members of the public for them to plant at the compounds of their homes.

The Department of Agriculture has also allocated the types of fruits at

designated zones in accordance with the suitability of the soil and area for convenient production and collection within a period of five to seven years.

The Department is also planning to set up a collection centre for those who wish to sell their productions.

These campaigns will continue for the next five years with a set target to distribute 100,000 seedlings for replanting around individual homes. This will save an area of 500 hectares of replanting with an average 200 trees per hectare.

While campaigns involving schools is a cooperation with the Department of Schools. Several teachers have undergone courses on planting where the knowledge will be disseminated to their students. Sixty eight schools will be involved where 5,000 seedlings will be planted by the students studying sciences, agriculture and general science. The department has also prepared guidebooks on local



PHOTO: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN

Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Pehin Dato Dr. Awang Haji Ahmad views the exhibition.

fruits and cultivation and care for reference.

The Fruit and Agri-Food Fair 2008 was officially opened by the Minister of Development, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Dr. Haji Awang Ahmad bin Haji Jumat.

The fair aims to introduce local fruits especially to the younger generation. It also aims to create awareness on the importance of conservation of local fruits' plants.

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(Call to enhance nation's food security)

on supply of import items; the need to have an international agreement on trade for agricultural and fishery commodity; and management of food reserves for nation's food security.

Speaking on Wasan Vocational School, through various programmes introduced based on agriculture, fishery, forestry and food processing, it can be the source to produce human resources with knowledge and skills in not only fields of primary resources but also in processing.

A number of 60 students have been accepted for the third intake with 20 undertaking the National Diploma in Agriculture Science; 20 in National Trade Certificate 3 (NTC3) Fish Husbandry; and 20 in NTC3 Basic Food Processing.

The National Diploma is a 2 ½ years course while NTC3 is a 1 ½ year course where the final six months will entail the students to undergo industrial attachments at either the government or private sector.

The Wasan Vocational School was established in 2006 where it is hoped that through the programmes offered, it will become the precursor to the development and production of the nation's agriculture, fishery, forestry and food processing sector.

Brunei - Kuwait enhance technical, trade and economic cooperation

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 25 – Cooperation between Brunei Darussalam and Kuwait is further strengthened with the signing of a multilateral agreement. The signing ceremony was held at the Cabinet Room, Istana Nurul Iman.

The signings were witnessed by His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Prime Minister of Kuwait, His Royal Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Also witnessing was His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The Agreement on Technical and Economic Cooperation of both countries were signed by Minister of Finance II, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Abdul Rahman and Kuwait's Trade Minister, His



PHOTO: MOHD. ZUL-IZZI HAJI DURAMAN

The Agreement on Technical and Economic Cooperation of both countries were signed by Minister of Finance II, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Abdul Rahman and Kuwait's Trade Minister, His Excellency Mustafa Jassim AlShamali.

Excellency Mustafa Jassim AlShamali.

Another agreement signed was on trade. Signing on behalf of Brunei was the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade II, Pehin Dato Lim Jock Seng and his counterpart was Kuwait's Trade Minister, His Excellency Mustafa Jassim AlShamali.

Brunei's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade II also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on bilateral consultation between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His counterpart was His Excellency Khalid Sulaiman AlJarallah, the Primary Secretary at Kuwait's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Seven-coloured powdered paste

Brunei Darussalam shares her own unique wedding tradition. Predominantly a Malay society, the Brunei Malay wedding is a full regal affair that shares some similarities with the Malaysian and Singaporean Malay wedding. As an Islamic country, the wedding ceremonies are not only shaped through centuries of old tradition and culture, but religion plays a vital role too. The solemnisation is the only must carry-out ceremony due to the Islamic Law of Marriage.

A week-long of wedding ceremonials, in a number of stages, is a norm in this society where the ceremonies may vary according to the couple's origins. Most of the ceremonials are traditions inherited from the elderly.

One of the ceremonies is the Majlis Malam Berbedak. This is when the *bedak tujuh warna* or seven-coloured powdered paste are used where it will be applied on the palms of the bride and groom.

Bedak tujuh warna are made from rice flour which will later be coloured. The seven colours are normally red, yellow, blue, green, peach, pink and natural colour.

According to traditional beliefs, the bride must undergo this ceremony before the groom. It is believed that a bad omen will be cast upon the couple if the groom is the first to carry out this ceremony.

In the olden days, the 'berbedak' ceremony would entail the bride to be seated on a special mat (usually velvet cloth weave with gold thread). Four yellow candles would be placed on the edge of the square mat. The coloured powdered paste would be kept in seven separate bowls.

The only difference today is that the bride will be seated on a chair based on the bridal's dais.

This ceremony symbolises unity between the bride's and groom's family as it is a norm where besides the bride's family, the groom's family will also apply the coloured powdered paste on the palms of the bride and vice versa.

There is also a special technique in applying these coloured powdered paste as one must use his/her ring finger. Once the colours have been chosen, he/she may apply the paste on the palms of the bride and groom.



PHOTOS: DK NOR ASRINAWATI PG.HJ.KAMARUDDIN

The seven- coloured powdered paste for the Majlis Malam Berbedak.



PHOTOS: DK NOR ASRINAWATI PG.HJ.KAMARUDDIN

A father applying seven-coloured powdered paste on his daughter's palms during the Majlis Malam Berbedak.



PHOTO: SASITRA SARINI HAJI JULAINI

Pandan leaves used as the brush for applying seven-coloured powdered paste but some prefer to use their ring finger.

How to make seven-coloured powdered paste (bedak tujuh warna).

Ingredients:

Rice flour
Rose or Jasmine buds
Colour powder or water colour

Method:

Wash the rice and set aside for 15 minutes to drain. Grind rice into fine sizes. Dry under the sun. Put the powder into a container together with rose or jasmine buds to enhance the aroma. To make the paste, just pour water on the powder.



PHOTO: HAJAH NOORHURAH HAJI IDRIS

The raw seven- coloured powdered paste on sale at the Tamu (market) Kianggeh in the capital.

ACAR REBUNG KARI

(Curry Bamboo Shoot Pickle)

Ingredients:

Rebung (bamboo shoots) - sliced
 Kayu Manis (Cinnamon)
 Cengkih (Clover)
 Buah Pelaga
 Bunga Lawang
 Onions (grind)
 Garlics (grind)
 Gingers (slice)
 Red chilies (slice) or chili powder
 Curry powder
 Vinegar
 Water
 Salt and sugar to taste
 Cooking oil



PHOTO: AK ABU BAKAR PHK

Method:

Heat the pot with cooking oil and later put *Kayu Manis*, *Cengkih*, *Buah Pelaga*, *Bunga Lawang*, onions, garlic and ginger. Then add the slice bamboo shoots into the pot and stirs well. When the bamboo shoots become soft add chilies, curry powder and vinegar and again stirs well. Add little water. Stirs well the mixture under medium heat.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX JULY 2008

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) in July 2008 remained the same level as in the previous month (June) with an index of 105.4.

The cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages in July rose by 0.4 per cent over the previous month due to higher prices of flour, noodles, fresh prawn, milk, cheese, fresh fruits, coffee and tea, cocoa-based beverages, and sauces and soup.

Some food items which recorded notable price increases in July 2008 compared with the previous month were small prawn, large prawn, instant noodles, rice flour, tomatoes and red snapper. Meanwhile some food items that showed notable price decreases were such as rumahan bini, spinach, rumahan laki, kangkong and cauliflower.

Cheaper prices of ready-made clothing, material for male and female, and footwear during the Mid-Year Sales led to a 5.8 per cent decrease in the cost of clothing and footwear.

The cost of housing, water, electricity and maintenance went up by 0.3 per cent as a result of higher prices of maintenance and minor repair, and housing insurance.

The cost of household goods, services and operation went down by 1.0 per cent as a result of lower prices of furniture, floor covering, household furnishings, audio and video equipment, kitchen appliances and utensils, crockery and cutlery and household operation.

The transport cost rose by 0.5 per cent due to higher prices of spare parts and air fares.

Higher prices of proprietary medicines and supplies and therapeutical appliances raised the cost of medical and health by 0.1 per cent.

The cost of recreation and entertainment rose by 1.8 per cent as a result of higher prices of toys and holiday packages.

The cost of miscellaneous goods and services fell by 0.1 per cent was due to lower prices of ladies personal care, ladies personal effects and baby care equipment.

The communication and education costs remained the same.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for July 2008 was 2.8 per cent higher than that of the same month in 2007.

For the first seven months (January to July 2008) of this year, the CPI rose by 2.4 per cent compared to the same period last year.

Inmate Management System Underway

GADONG, July 8 – The Prison Department will soon have an Inmate Management System using the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology. This was made feasible with a contract signing ceremony for an e-government project – 'Inmate Management System' between Prison Department and ALIF Technologies Sdn. Bhd held at the Centrepont Hotel.

Signing on behalf of Prison Department was Dato Paduka Awang Haji Ahmad bin Haji Dullah while his counterpart was Pengiran Haji Mohammad bin Pengiran Haji Kamaluddin, the Chief Executive of ALIF Technologies Sdn Bhd. The signing ceremony was witnessed by the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Home Affairs, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Adnan bin Haji Hanafiah. This \$3,536,180.80 project is expected to be complete in 12 months.

Pelita Brunei now twice a week

BERAKAS, July 9 – The official government newspaper, Pelita Brunei, will be published twice a week starting July 9; while its online news is now available daily from July 7.

The Pelita Brunei will be published every Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Sungai Liang Health Centre now operational

SUNGAI LIANG, July 10 – Residents of Kampong Sungai Liang in the Belait District will no longer need to commute to the Seria Health Centre or the Suri Seri Begawan Hospital for medical check-ups as the Sungai Liang Health Centre is now ready to provide similar health services especially emergency treatments.

Thus, a key handing-over ceremony for the new building was held. Present to hand over the key was Awang Haji Suhaimi bin Haji Gafar, the Acting Deputy Director General of the Public Works Department. On hand to receive the key was the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Health Dato Paduka Awang Haji Serbini bin Haji Ali.

The health centre cost nearly \$4 million to construct on a 0.727 hectare of land. The construction began on December 31, 2005.

It is equipped with a number of services ranging from pharmaceutical, medical store, office, medical record room, maternal health clinic and child, breast feeding room, surveillance room, outpatient, dental, x-ray, lab and 50 parking bay.

Kampong Ayer tourist and cultural centre open next year

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, July 12 – In its effort to further develop the nation's tourism industry, Brunei Darussalam will have a Kampong Ayer Tourist and Cultural Centre by next year.

A *doa selamat* ceremony was held to mark the construction of the centre where it was attended by the Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Pehin Dato Dr. Awang Haji Ahmad bin Haji Jumat.

The centre which costs \$3 million to construct is expected to be complete by end of this year and will be officially open in 2009. Located at Kampong Lorong Sikuna, the construction of the centre is expected to become the landmark of Malay's culture and tradition; and an attraction for ecotourism.

It will exhibit historical and evolutionary collections of water village including the daily activities and handicrafts. An observer tower, a tourist information centre, a souvenir shop and basic amenities will also be available within the vicinity.



PHOTO: HERNIE SULIANA HAJI OTHMAN
The Minister of Industry and Primary Resources (centre) at the construction site.

CIA BND20 and SGD20 polymer notes issued

BERAKAS, July 16 – As a continuation of activities to commemorate 40 years of Brunei-Singapore Currency Interchangeability Agreement, a four-in-one Currency Interchangeability Agreement (CIA) circulations notes and ingot sets have been issued.

Each of the sets issued consists of CIA BND20 and SGD20 polymer notes with parallel serial numbers; and silver ingots replica with designs bearing CIA BND20 and SGD20.

The set is available for sale at BND370.00 each at the Brunei Currency and Monetary Board, Ministry of Finance.

Brunei-Malaysia hold ICT business collaboration

BERAKAS, July 28 – Darussalam and Malaysia continue to strengthen its cooperation in the field of Info-Communication Technology (ICT) and scheduled to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the next few months.

To realise this vision, the Brunei Authority of Info-Communication Technology (AITI) has officially collaborated with Malaysia's Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC), Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC).

AITI's Chief Executive Officer, Pengiran Haji Mohd. Zain in his speech expressed his hope that the business collaboration between Brunei and Malaysia will produce concrete cooperation.

He also called all Brunei and Malaysia ICT authorities and companies to create a consortium that would offer projects not only in Brunei but also for the regional and global market. With the consortium, he hopes it will encourage the progress of Intellectual Property (IP) ownership between two countries, assist in local human resource development, easy knowledge transfer and create reliable products and services.



PHOTO: HAJI SAHRIN HAJI ASWAT
Pengiran Haji Mohd Zain bin Pengiran Haji Abd Razak (left) and his counterpart, Dato' Mohd Badlisham Ghazali (right) exchanged momentos at the official launching of the ICT business collaboration between Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia.

Another landmark in Belait District by 2010

BELAIT, July 19 – Belait District will soon have another landmark by year 2010. The matter was revealed during His Majesty's visit to the Pusat Insani Gallery at Padang Bandaran Kuala Belait. The gallery was opened in conjunction with the His Majesty's meet-the-people session in Belait District where a replica of the Pusat Insani was showcased.

Pusat Insani will be built on a 10,000 square meters site located opposite the Oil & Gas Discovery Centre (OGDC), Seria. Construction of the centre will begin in April next year and it is expected to be complete in 2010.

The centre is jointly built by Brunei Shell Petroleum (BSP) Company Sendirian Berhad with relevant government agencies in Belait District.

Tailored with the 'urban park' theme, the centre will have one main hall which can accommodate 1500 people, VVIP room, prayer hall, learning unit equipped with internet access and aerobic room.

The centre is expected to encourage the development of small and medium entrepreneurship (SME) among local community besides becoming one of Belait District's attractions.



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Various events and activities were organised at all four districts to celebrate the 62nd birthday anniversary of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

