



## Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam leading the 3.7-kilometre Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession which began and ended at Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddien.

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 24** – Muslims in the country celebrate the Maulidur Rasul celebration with the Grand Assembly and Procession.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam joined the procession along with almost 12 thousand Muslim citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam which took place at Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddien in the capital.

Accompanying His Majesty were His Majesty's sons; His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Wakeel and other members of the royal family.

His Majesty's arrival was greeted by Yang Berhormat Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Haji Awang Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka Haji Othman, Minister of Religious Affairs as the Chairman of the Executive Committee of Major Islamic events of 1437 Hijrah as well as other members of the celebration's Executive Committee.

Continue on page 3

## Get-Together Ceremony with Brunei citizens and residents in United Kingdom and Northern Ireland

**LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, December 13** – His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Majesty Duli Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha binti Al-Marhum Pengiran Pemancha Pengiran Anak Haji Mohamed Alam consented to attend the Get-Together Ceremony with citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

The highlight of the ceremony was the conferment of 'The Chancellor's Scholar' of Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) for the 2015/2016 Session.

The ceremony was held at Hilton Hotel on Park Lane, London, United Kingdom.

Continue on page 7



3. Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession



7. 15 BDAC members receive Red Ribbon Award



8. Discussion on regional and global issues in disaster management



9. Brunei-Thailand share same values



10. International Civil Aviation Day 2015



11. Brunei-Philippines sign MoU on cooperation to improve ICT and Multimedia initiatives



12. Lao People's Democratic Republic appreciates friendly relations with Brunei Darussalam



13. Celebrating Rice as a Cultural Heritage



13. 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games Brunei contingents bring home 12 medals



14. UNISSA receives KUISAS delegation



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## His Majesty sends congratulatory messages

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to send congratulatory messages to:

- His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the King of Thailand and to His Excellency General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand as well as to the people of the Kingdom of Thailand on the occasion of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 88<sup>th</sup> birthday on December 5.
- His Majesty Akihito, Emperor of Japan and His Excellency Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan as well as the Government and people of Japan on the occasion of His Majesty Akihito's 82<sup>nd</sup> Birthday Anniversary on December 23.
- His Excellency Choummaly Sayasone, President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and His Excellency Thongsing Thammavong, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Government as well as the people of the Democratic Republic on the occasion of their 40<sup>th</sup> National Day on December 2.

## News

### Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession (continued)

From front page

The event commenced with the reading of Surah Al-Fatihah led by Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Seri Maharaja Dato Paduka Seri Setia (Dr.) Ustaz Haji Awang Abdul Aziz bin Juned, the State Mufti.

The Minister of Religious Affairs in his welcoming remarks stressed that Muslims in the country celebrate this auspicious event filled with religious activities that has proven to be a blessing for the country under the rule of a fair monarch that unites the citizens and government as well as the citizens together whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims.

His Majesty then received a *junjung ziarah* (meet and greet) from heads of teams who participated in the Grand Assembly and Procession in the Brunei-Muara District, where as many as 143 teams participated, comprising government Ministries and Departments, Village Consultative Councils, mosque takmir committee, Higher Educational Institutes, colleges and secondary schools.



His Majesty receiving a *junjung ziarah* (meet and greet) from participants of the Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession.

The event continued with the *Dikir Marhaban* performed by the Ministry of *Doa Selamat* was read by the State Finance's *Dikir* Team followed by a 21-canon fire.

Continue on page 4



The Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddien in the capital.

## Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession (continued)

From page 3

Mufti, followed by a recital of Salawat by Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Imam Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Haji Awang Abdul Hamid bin Bakal.

His Majesty and sons then joined the participants of the Grand Assembly and Procession with the 3.7-kilometre procession around the capital.

This year's celebration carried the theme 'Menghayati Sunnah Rasulullah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam' which means 'Understanding and Practising the Prophet's sunnah or traditions'.



His Majesty in a group photo with some of the participants of the Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession.



Accompanying His Majesty were His Majesty's sons; His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Wakeel.



One of the teams participating in the Maulidur Rasul Grand Assembly and Procession.

## Get-Together Ceremony with Brunei citizens and residents in United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (continued)



Their Majesties and other members of royal family in a group photo with the two recipients of 'The Chancellor's Scholar' from Universiti Brunei Darussalam for the 2015/2016 Session.

From front page

Accompanying Their Majesties were His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Wakeel and Her Royal Highness Princess Ameerah Wardatul Bolkia.

Their Majesties arrival was greeted by His Excellency Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Aminuddin Ihsan bin Pehin Orang Kaya Saiful Mulok Dato Seri Paduka Haji Abidin, High Commissioner

of Brunei Darussalam to United Kingdom and wife, Datin Nurhayana Janis binti Abdullah Lim; as well as Muhammad Ayyub bin Haji Kamaluddin, President of the Brunei Students' Union in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (BSUnion) and Dayangku Nurul Hafizah binti Pengiran Mohd. Noor Sufian, Vice President of BSUnion.

Shortly after arrival at the Grand Ballroom,

the ceremony commenced with the Brunei Darussalam national anthem performed by the Brunei A-Level Society (BruALs) and the Brunei Students' Union of Year One, University of Reading.

This was followed by the recitation of verses of the Al-Quran by Ahmad Firdaus bin Haji Mohammad from the University of Essex, whilst the interpretation of the verses was read by Abdul Hafiizh bin Haji Kassim from the University of Bath.

A *Doa Selamat* was read by Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Seri Maharaja Dato Paduka Seri Setia (Dr.) Ustaz Haji Awang Abdul Aziz bin Juned, the State Mufti.

The President of BSUnion on behalf of the citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam present at the ceremony in his welcoming speech delivered a pledge of unwavering loyalty and allegiance to His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

His Majesty then consented to confer 'The Chancellor's Scholar' of Universiti Brunei Darussalam for the 2015/2016 Session to two recipients; Sarah Hanaa binti Haji Ahmad Ghazali, currently pursuing a First Year Doctorate Degree (Ph.D) in Comparative Literature at the University College London and Muhammad Faiz-Hafiz bin Mohammad Kipli, currently doing his First Year Doctorate Degree (Ph.D) in Biochemistry at the University of Oxford.



His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam during the Get-Together Ceremony with citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

Continue on page 6

## Get-Together Ceremony with Brunei citizens and residents in United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (continued)



Her Majesty Duli Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha during the Get-Together Ceremony with citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

From page 5

At the ceremony, His Majesty consented to deliver a *titah* (royal speech) highlighting that students must really understand the position of the 'value system' and stressed that the students are currently in another country to gain knowledge and not to immerse in another country's culture and way of life. This is the way to safeguard the value system of every student.

Their Majesties then received a *pesambah* (souvenir) presented by the President and Vice President of BSUnion, followed by a poem presentation by Noor Hafizah binti Haji Ajak from Aberystwyth University; Muhammad Firas bin Kalong from Keele University; and Siti Nurul Aqilah binti Haji Zaidin from Cheltenham Ladies' College.

Their Majesties and members of the royal family then proceeded to meet more than 2,000 citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam who are currently in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland comprising students, government officials on duty, those attending courses as well as those on vacation with families.



His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen taking a photo with students studying in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland during the Get-Together Ceremony.

## 15 BDAC members receive Red Ribbon Award

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 1** - The Brunei Darussalam AIDS Council (BDAC) which was established in the year 2000 is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) that aids the community in the country in handling HIV and AIDS related matters.

According to Iswandy bin Ahmad, President of BDAC, since its establishment 15 years ago, BDAC through the hard work and dedication of volunteers have carried out a number of programmes in combating HIV and AIDS.

The matter was stated during an Appreciation Dinner in conjunction with World AIDS Day 2015, held at the Rizqun International Hotel.

The President of BDAC further explained that among the programmes was the HIV Awareness Programme for Peers and Youth – HAPPY, which has educated more than 4,000 youths and has produced youth leaders in the field of HIV and AIDS, cooperation between government agencies and private agencies such as the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports; the Ministry of Education; Standard Chartered Bank; Jerudong Park Medical Centre; Brunei Times; Brunei Press; BISTARI Association; BARA; and others who have given their service.

He also added that BDAC is one of the organisations that is still capable of giving their dedication even when its members are aged 30 and below. They are also able to attract the youths' interest in joining the programmes and the members are among professionals.

Other than that, BDAC is also capable in conducting projects of national interests with agencies, although finance may be



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib, Speaker of the Legislative Council as Advisor to BDAC awarding the Red Ribbon Award to one of the recipients, Haji Ali Yusri bin Abdul Gapor during the Appreciation Dinner in conjunction with World AIDS Day 2015.

a huge challenge. Thus, BDAC is one of the organisations in Brunei Darussalam that is well known and dedicated to the works of HIV and AIDS, especially in the development of the community and youth.

Present as the Guest of Honour at the ceremony was Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib, Speaker of the Legislative Council as Advisor to BDAC.

Also present was Haji Zakaria bin Haji Serudin, Permanent Secretary at the

Ministry of Health.

At the ceremony, the Guest of Honour awarded Red Ribbons to 15 recipients for their contributions in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

13 graduates from Universiti Brunei Darussalam also received certificates for concluding their 'Community Outreach Programme' at BDAC.

The Appreciation Dinner was enlivened with a performance by volunteers from the Health Promotion Centre as well as members of the BDAC.



The Speaker of the Legislative Council as Advisor to BDAC in a group photo with BDAC members at the Appreciation Dinner in conjunction with World AIDS Day 2015.

## Speaker of LegCo receives Members of the Regional Representative Council of Indonesia

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 12** - Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib, Speaker of the Legislative Council (LegCo) received a courtesy call from Members of the Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia at the Dewan Majlis Building.

The 11-member delegation from the Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia was led by Yang Berhormat Drs. Hardi Selamat Hood.

Also present at the courtesy call were Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Orang Kaya Pekerma Jaya Dato Paduka Awang Haji Judin bin Haji Asar, Secretary to the Cabinet Minister's Council and Clerk to the LegCo; and Members of the LegCo, Yang Berhormat Awang Haji Gapor @ Haji Md. Daud bin Karim, Yang Berhormat Awang Haji Jumat bin Akim, Yang Berhormat Awang Haji Mohd Shafiee bin Ahmad and Yang Berhormat Awang Haji Sulaiman bin Haji Ahad.



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Lela Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Dato Setia Haji Mohamed Taib, Speaker of the Legislative Council during the courtesy call from Members of the Regional Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia at the Dewan Majlis Building.

During the courtesy call, Brunei and Indonesia expressed hopes of forging closer bilateral ties.

The working visit was an opportunity for both countries to exchange views and share knowledge on recent

developments.

Accompanying the council members was Her Excellency Nurul Qomar, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Indonesia to Brunei Darussalam.

## Discussion on regional and global issues in disaster management

**PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA, December 16** - Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs led the delegation from Brunei Darussalam at the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management (AMMDM) and the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (COP to AADMER) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Among the issues discussed during the AMMDM and COP to AADMER were regional and global issues in disaster management and humanitarian aid; developments and achievements in the implementation of AADMER; coordination between ministerial-level organisations in ensuring the disaster management response is in line with the One ASEAN, One Response approach.

Present at the meeting were ASEAN Ministers in charge of disaster management including the Secretary-General of ASEAN.

The meeting commenced with the handing over of the chairmanship of the meetings to Cambodia from Brunei.

Earlier, the Minister of Home Affairs explained the developments and achievements in regional disaster management during the period of Brunei Darussalam's chairmanship.

Also in attendance at the meeting as part of the delegation of Brunei Darussalam were Haji Mohd. 'Abdoh bin Dato Seri Setia



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs handing over the chairmanship of the meetings to Cambodia.

Haji Abdul Salam, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA); Colonel (Rtd) Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Rosli bin Pengiran Haji Chuchu, Director of the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) as well as officers from MoHA and NDMC.

## Brunei-Thailand share same values

**JERUDONG, December 5** - His Excellency Chirdchu Raktabutr, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Thailand to Brunei Darussalam stated that the relationship between Brunei and Thailand remains strong and friendly, as both countries share the same values, especially their loyalty to their Monarch.

His Excellency stated the matter at a reception in conjunction with the 88<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand. The reception was held at the di Royal Berkshire Hall, Royal Brunei Polo and Riding Club (RBPRC).

His Excellency added that the governments of both countries have always cooperated closely with each other to foster a good relationship that exists in bilateral relations and network cooperations in the framework of ASEAN.

"The citizens and residents of both countries as well have interacted closely with one another through culture, tourism, and the art of culinary," added His Excellency.

Present on behalf of the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Laila Setia Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Ibrahim, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance and wife, Datin Hajah Sapiyah binti Haji Sabtu.



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Laila Setia Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Ibrahim, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Finance receiving a souvenir from His Excellency Chirdchu Raktabutr, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Thailand to Brunei Darussalam at the reception in conjunction with the 88<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

At the ceremony, the Minister and His Excellency joined the cake cutting ceremony in conjunction with 88<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.



The Minister and wife, joining His Excellency in the cake-cutting ceremony in conjunction with the 88<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand.

## Numerous achievements by 10<sup>th</sup> TMM BIMP-EAGA

**PALAWAN, REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, December 3** - Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications led the delegation of Brunei Darussalam at the 10<sup>th</sup> BIMP-EAGA Transport Ministers Meeting (TMM) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 2015, which took place at Puerto Princesa.

The Minister who is also the outgoing Chair of the TMM since November 2014, in his opening remarks expressed satisfaction with the major achievements made by the Transport Cluster and related working groups through the implementation of various transportation and connectivity projects both bilaterally and in the framework of BIMP-EAGA.

The meeting was then chaired by Her Excellency Ms. Catherine

Jennifer P. Gonzales, Undersecretary for Department of Transport and Communications, Republic of the Philippines as the newly-appointed Chairperson.

The finalisation of the draft protocol to amend the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Expansion of Air Linkages is the significant deliverable of the 10<sup>th</sup> TMM. Under this protocol, the Designated Airlines from BIMP-EAGA among others will be allowed to operate to more points within the sub-region.

Therefore, the Designated Airlines will also be allowed to operate co-terminalisation services to designated points outside BIMP-EAGA.

Continue on page 10

## Numerous achievements by 10<sup>th</sup> TMM BIMP-EAGA (continued)

From page 9

The 10<sup>th</sup> TMM also discussed the establishment of new shipping services and additional roll-on roll-off (RoRo) vessel services plying the route between Muara and Labuan.

Other initiatives that are currently in the pipeline are the completion of the BIMP-EAGA Ports Information Booklet (Phase 1); the finalisation of the MoU on Non-Convention Sized Ship and efforts to finalise the BIMP-EAGA Travel by Bus Information Booklet; the final development of the BIMP-EAGA Drivers Log Book; the creation of a common permit scheme; a third party vehicle insurance coverage for buses and trucks operating under the sub-regional MoUs; and possible implementation of the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) concept.

BIMP-EAGA's post-2016 medium-term strategic cooperation framework (2017-2025) was also discussed. The strategic cooperation aims to advance integration in the sub-region and enhanced by greater selectivity, clarity and focus in the selection of priority initiatives.



Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications (second, right) at the 10<sup>th</sup> BIMP-EAGA Transport Ministers Meeting (TMM) which took place at the Republic of the Philippines.

## International Civil Aviation Day 2015

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 7** - The launching of the Civil Aviation Exhibition, mass *Sunat Hajat* prayer, recitation of *Surah Yaasiin, Tahliil* and *Doa Selamat* in conjunction with the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Aviation Day 2015 was held at the Brunei International Airport, Berakas.

The event was organised by the Department of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Communications.

Present as the Guest of Honour and to launch the exhibition was Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications.

Mohammad Nazri bin Mohammad Yusof, Acting Director of the Department of Civil Aviation in his opening remarks stated that the theme for this year's International Civil Aviation Day is 'Working Together To Ensure No Country Is Left Behind'.

'No Country Left Behind (NCLB)' is an initiative of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in its efforts to assist member countries conduct the Standards And Recommended Practices (SARPs), in ensuring global conduct and harmony which can help countries enjoy socioeconomic benefits from airlines that are safe and trusted.



Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications viewing the exhibition in conjunction with the International Civil Aviation Day 2015.

NCLB is in accordance with the principles that creates and enables the growth through the Air Transport Aspiration 2035, benchmarks, target, objectives and achievements that have been proposed for the 2 per cent increase of contribution from the civil aviation sector to the GDP of the country.

Also present were Haji Azhar bin Haji Ahmad, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications; Heads of

Departments; senior officials and officers of the Ministry of Communications and the departments under it; as well as staff from involved agencies and the Brunei International Airport.

The exhibition held at the arrival hall in conjunction with the International Civil Aviation Day showcases careers on civil aviation, services and facilities of the Brunei International Airport.

## Brunei-Philippines sign MoU on cooperation to improve ICT and Multimedia initiatives

**MANILA, REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, December 4** – Brunei Darussalam has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Republic of the Philippines on the initiatives to improve ICT and Multimedia.

The MoU was signed by Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications on behalf of the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and by His Excellency Mario G. Montejo, Secretary of Science and Technology of the Republic of the Philippines on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Philippines.

The MoU aims to promote cooperation designed to assist ICT and multimedia initiatives and establish the necessary steps to evolve these initiatives.

One of the areas of cooperation between both countries is the BIMP-EAGA Submarine and Terrestrial Cable project. This project aims to facilitate direct interconnections and enable telecommunication services in BIMP-EAGA through satellite, microwave and fibre-optic cables.

This project will allow BIMP-EAGA to expand, connect and diversify its networks with other countries outside the sub-region.



Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communication and His Excellency Mario G. Montejo, Secretary of Science and Technology of the Republic of the Philippines during the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries.

Also present at the signing ceremony were senior officials from the Ministry of Communications of Brunei Darussalam, Embassy of Brunei Darussalam in the Republic of the Philippines, Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines and the Department of Science and Technology of the Republic of the Philippines.

## Public Transport System continues to be improved

**LUMAPAS, December 10** – The Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam through the Ministry of Communications continues its efforts to improve and enhance the public transport system in the country through various approaches.

Among the proposals discussed was the establishment of joint ventures to increase the service of public transportation in the country.

This is because the public transportation system in the country is seen unregulated where there are no specific regulations governing the provision of bus services.

Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications stated the matter in an interview with the media during the launching of two new Low Floor Buses (LFB) at Tasamul Corporation Transport Division in Kampung Lumapas.

The Minister also said that the Government is involved in desire to establish a consortium in the hope that the bus system can be well organised, especially in terms of discipline.

According to the Minister, the public will always hope that the bus service are reliable, always available, on time, comfortable, frequent and most importantly travel to destinations that are strategic such as schools, hospitals, the airport and shopping complexes.

The Minister further added that the role of the future consortium will be discussed first whether it will become either an authority, a sub-contractor or a service provider due to the many levels involved.

Therefore, it has to be ensured that the bus transport regulations are in order, other than looking at it from an economy point of view because the situation is unbalanced where there is profit and loss, hence the matter is still under discussion.



Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications launching the two new Low Floor Buses at the Tasamul Corporation Transport Division in Kampung Lumapas.

The Minister explained that these are based on the research done by the Land Transport Department which looked at the best practices carried out in other countries, where public transportation services are taken over by the government in terms of regulations.

Two 25-seater LFB were launched by the Land Transport Department in collaboration with Tasamul Corporation Transport Division. It is an extension to the public buses that are already available.

After the launching ceremony, the Minister held a discussion with public bus operators in the Brunei-Muara District, which among others touched on the planning and policy proposals of the Ministry of Communications in prioritising and focusing on strategies to improve and enhance the efficiency and reliability of the public transportation system which is affordable for the public.

Continue on page 12

## Qatar celebrates 44<sup>th</sup> National Day

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 10** - Since 1971, every 18<sup>th</sup> of December, the State of Qatar celebrates its National Day.

In conjunction with the upcoming 44<sup>th</sup> National Day of the State of Qatar, the Embassy of the State of Qatar in Brunei Darussalam hosted a Dinner Reception at the Rizqun International Hotel, Gadong.

The dinner was hosted by His Excellency Saleh Mohammed Al-Nesef, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Qatar to Brunei Darussalam.

Present on behalf of the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications and wife, Pengiran Datin Hajah Jamilah binti Pengiran Haji Mohd. Yusof.

The Dinner Reception began with the singing of national anthems of both countries followed by the recitation of verses of the Al-Quran by Haji Mohd. Fahmi bin Haji Metussin.

Diplomatic relations between both countries were established in



His Excellency Saleh Mohammed Al-Nesef, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Qatar to Brunei Darussalam with Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mustappa bin Haji Sirat, Minister of Communications and wife, Pengiran Datin Hajah Jamilah binti Pengiran Haji Mohd. Yusof during the cake-cutting ceremony in conjunction with the 44<sup>th</sup> National Day of the State of Qatar.

2008 and continues to expand through areas such as business, economy, culture, communications, education, health, tourism and sports.

## Lao People's Democratic Republic appreciates friendly relations with Brunei Darussalam



Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports with His Excellency Amphay Kindavong, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Lao People's Democratic Republic during the cake-cutting ceremony in conjunction with the 40<sup>th</sup> National Day of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

**JERUDONG, December 2** - In conjunction with the 40<sup>th</sup> National Day of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Embassy of the Lao People's Democratic Republic in Brunei Darussalam held a reception which took place at the Royal Berkshire Hall, Royal Brunei Polo and Riding Club, Jerudong.

Present as the Guest of Honour and to represent the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei

Darussalam was Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yusof and wife, Datin Hajah Kalshom binti Haji Suhaili.

His Excellency Amphay Kindavong, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Lao People's Democratic Republic at the reception stated that the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Brunei Darussalam

diplomatic relations began in July 1993.

According to His Excellency, in 1997, both countries opened their respective diplomatic missions.

His Excellency added that since then, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has always been attentive to the developments of Brunei Darussalam and after 31 years of independence, Brunei Darussalam has achieved a lot in the socio-economic development of Brunei Darussalam under the leadership of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

His Excellency further said that the Lao People's Democratic Republic is very grateful towards the friendly relations between both countries.

His Excellency and wife together with the Minister and wife were then invited to the cake cutting ceremony in conjunction with the 40<sup>th</sup> National Day of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

## Public Transport System continues to be improved (continued)

From page 11

The discussion also touched on a business model that can balance the situation to produce equitable service with the aim of encouraging investments from private sectors and increasing participation from bus and taxi service providers. The Ministry of Communications also

stressed on the importance of being responsible and cooperation from all parties, especially bus and taxi operators.

Present at the launching were Haji Azhar bin Haji Ahmad, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications; Dr. Haji Supry bin Haji Awang Ladi, Director of

Land Transport as Chairman of the Motor Transport Licensing Authority (MTLA); Directors and Heads of Departments; senior officials from the Ministry of Communications and the departments under it; MTLA Secretary and public operators in the Brunei-Muara District.

## Celebrating Rice as a Cultural Heritage

**JERUDONG, December 1** - The ASEAN Rice Festival with the theme 'Celebrating Rice as a Cultural Heritage' aimed to support and carry out the strategic plan of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community related to the cultural heritage of ASEAN countries.

Brunei Darussalam became host to the two-day festival which began on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, held at the Starlodge Hotel, Jerudong.

The festival was officiated by Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yusof, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports as the Guest of Honour.

Pengiran Dr. Karim bin Pengiran Haji Osman, Director of Museums in his opening remarks explained that the festival is a project under the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information proposed by Brunei Darussalam in 2013.

He also added that rice is not just a mere everyday staple food but has been part of the Southeast Asian culture for a very long time.

In line with the theme, the ASEAN Rice Festival is aimed to support and carry out the strategic plan of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community related to the cultural heritage of ASEAN countries.

In addition, it is also to ensure that ASEAN cultures are shared and learnt so that it does not become extinct.

Also present were Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Maharaja Kerna Dato Paduka Seri Awang Haji Yaakub bin Pehin Orang Kaya Maharaja Diraja



Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yusof, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports officiating the ASEAN Rice Festival.



A cultural dance performance by the Culture and Arts Division at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Dato Paduka Awang Haji Zainal, Member of the Legislative Council; Permanent Secretaries at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports; and Ambassadors of ASEAN member countries to Brunei Darussalam as well as Directors, Deputy Directors, officers and staff from the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.

## 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games Brunei contingents bring home 12 medals

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 10** - The Brunei contingent to the 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games in Singapore brought home three gold, three silver and six bronze medals.

Present at the airport to welcome the contingent back was Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yusof, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

In an interview with Pelita Brunei, the Minister said that the achievements have made the country proud and is hoped will encourage others to step forward to participate and represent the country.

The Minister also expressed his confidence that the contingent will do better in the next Para Games and that the preparations will be done in advanced and in an organised manner than before.



The arrival of the 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games contingent being greeted by Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yusof, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

Continue on page 14

## 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games Brunei contingents bring home 12 medals (continued)

From page 13

The Brunei contingent will need to continue to train systematically with the coaches for the preparation of the 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games that will take place in 2017 in Malaysia.

Also present to welcome the contingent were Dato Paduka Dr. Awang Haji Affendy bin Pehin Orang Kaya Saiful Mulok Dato Seri Paduka Haji Abidin and Datin Paduka Dr. Hajah Norlila binti Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Jalil, Permanent Secretaries at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS); and Haji Noor Jusmin bin Haji Abdul Samad, Deputy Permanent Secretary at MCYS.

Disability is no barrier in achieving excellence, particularly in the field of sports.

This was shared by one of the gold medalists of the 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games in an interview with Pelita Brunei.

Kamarul Ariffin bin Haji Ghaffar, who participated in the ten-pin bowling categories; Double TPB 2 + TPB 2 and Trios TPB1 + TPB2 + TPB2, said that the winnings achieved have become a motivation for him to be successful in the next games.

Touching on his experience in participating in the prestige competition, Kamarul Ariffin said that the experience is



Sahri bin Haji Jumat (left) and Kamarul Ariffin bin Haji Ghaffar (right) with their 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Para Games medals.

very different than before and that there were challenges such as competing with athletes from other countries as well.

He further explained that from the encouragement given by his teammates, he was able to face these challenges.

Meanwhile, Saidin bin Haji Awang Damit who also participated in the same event, expressed happiness after winning the gold medal, despite all the tiredness and exhaustion.

He also expressed his thanks to His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam for allowing and



trusting the athletes to participate in the event.

Sahri bin Haji Jumat who won the country's first gold medal in the F54/55 men's javelin said that the strong competitors were athletes from Indonesia and the Philippines. Touching on preparations, he will continue to train in order to improve his performance.

His advice to other athletes who have not yet been successful is to never give up and to keep on trying in the future because there are still opportunities for success.

## UNISSA receives KUISAS delegation

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 7** - Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA) received a delegation from the Usuluddin, Counselling and Communication Society (UCSS), Sultan Azlan Shah Islamic University College (KUISAS) comprised of 10 undergraduates on the 5<sup>th</sup> of December.

The delegation was led by Mohd. Ikhwan bin Zolkapli, Head of the Department of Usuluddin, KUISAS. Present to welcome the arrival of the delegation was Supri bin Haji Sudin, Dean of Student Affairs of UNISSA as well as Student Affairs officers of UNISSA and members of the Student Representative Council.

The visit is the first ever since the signing of Memorandum of Understanding between UNISSA and KUISAS on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2015.

The visit provided opportunities for the KUISAS undergraduates to take a closer look at the learning atmosphere in UNISSA and to share ideas with UNISSA undergraduates on the learning



Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA) with the delegation from the Usuluddin, Counselling and Communication Society (UCSS), Sultan Azlan Shah Islamic University College (KUISAS).

cultures of their university.

The visit began with welcoming remarks from UNISSA's Dean of Students Affairs followed by a video presentation about UNISSA.

The delegation was also briefed on the Faculty of Usuluddin by Dr. Abdul Muthalif

Afuwardeen, Acting Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Usuluddin in UNISSA.

This was followed by a meeting on academic programmes, extracurricular activities and student unions.

The visit then concluded with a tour of the UNISSA campus.

## Nearly 900 join 'Run4Them' Charity Run

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, December 6** - The 'Run4Them' charity run organised by the Diploma Year Two students of Institute of Brunei Technical Education Sekolah Perdagangan (IBTE SP) was held at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium. The charity run aimed to support the Paraplegic and Physically Disabled Association (PAPDA) by raising funds for the association.

A total of 870 runners including PAPDA members participated in the charity run.

The charity run was divided into three categories; the 5-kilometre, 3-kilometre and 2-kilometre fun run.

The event began with a warming up session participated by Dr. Chin Wei Keh, Director of Technical Education who is also the Chief Executive Officer of IBTE, as the Guest of Honour.

The 5-kilometre run was won by Sefli Ahar with a record of 17 minutes, followed by Gavin Hicks with a record of 17 minutes and 28 seconds, and Md. Syahiruddin bin Pengiran Haji Tengah won third place with a record of 17 minutes and 54 seconds.



Dr. Chin Wei Keh, Director of Technical Education and Chief Executive Officer of IBTE starting off the 'Run4Them' charity run.

Meanwhile, the 3-kilometre run was won by Ali Akbar bin Ali Hisham, who completed the run in 11 minutes and 55 seconds, followed by Md. Mazni bin

Pengiran Saifuddin with a record of 12 minutes and 17 seconds and in third place was Md. Nadzri bin Haji Tarsat with a record of 12 minutes and 31 seconds.



Dr. Chin Wei Keh participating in the warming up session before the 'Run4Them' charity run began.



Dr. Chin Wei Keh awarding a prize to Sefli Ahar, the first place winner for the 5-kilometre run.



Among the participants of the 'Run4Them' charity run.

