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## Foundation Laying Ceremony for Temburong Bridge Project

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 16** - Brunei Darussalam will continue to move towards a steady and competitive economic growth with the construction of a bridge between Brunei-Muara District and Temburong District.

The construction of the Temburong bridge reflects His Majesty's concern for the welfare of the citizens and residents of the country.

This is one of the highlights during the arrival of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddin Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam to the Foundation Laying Ceremony for the Temburong Bridge Project which will be a landmark for the nation and the people in this country.

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

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His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddin Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam officiating the foundation laying ceremony for the Temburong Bridge project. Also present accompanying His Majesty were His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office; His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah; His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik; and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Wakeel.

## Brunei-Laos relations remain firm



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 with His Excellency Amphay Kindavong, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to Brunei Darussalam during the goodwill visit.

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 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 received a goodwill visit from His Excellency Amphay Kindavong, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to Brunei Darussalam.

The goodwill visit took place at the Legislative Council building.

Also present were the Secretary to the Cabinet Ministers' Council and Clerk to the Legislative Council, Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Orang Kaya Pekerma Jaya DatoPaduka Haji Judin bin Haji Asar; Deputy Clerk to the Legislative Council, Dayang Rose Aminah binti Haji Ismail as well as officers from the department.

The visit was aimed at strengthening the friendship and bilateral ties between the two countries.





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## His Majesty receives audiences

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 received in audience at the Istana Nurul Iman:



His Excellency Dato Paduka Haji Serbini bin Haji Ali, newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States of America; and His Excellency Haji Na'im bin Md. Salleh, newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Lao People's Democratic Republic on January 23.



Her Excellency Nagma Mohamed Mallick, newly appointed High Commissioner of the Republic of India to Brunei Darussalam on January 23.

## His Royal Highness the Crown Prince receives audiences

His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah ibni His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Ministers' Office, consented to receive in audience at Qashr Al-Meezaan:

His Excellency Chirdchu Raktabutr, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Thailand to Brunei Darussalam on January 21.







His Excellency Haji Na'aim bin Md. Salleh, newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Lao People's Democratic Republic on January 28.

Her Excellency Nagma Mohamed Mallick, newly appointed High Commissioner of the Republic of India to Brunei Darussalam on January 28.

### 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 has consented to send congratulatory messages to:

- His Excellency U Thein Sein, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar as well as the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on the occasion of the 68th Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on January 4.
- The Honourable Sir General Peter Cosgrove, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia; and The Honourable Malcolm Turnbull, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia on the occasion of Australia Day on January 26.
- His Excellency Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India; and His Excellency Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, on the occasion of the Republic Day of India on January 26.

### His Majesty sends message of condolences

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 has consented to send a message of condolences to:

- His Excellency Dato Laila Utama Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, following the violent attacks and bomb explosions in Jakarta on January 14



His Majesty together with the other members of royal family in a group picture with the National Committee for the Temburong Bridge.

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Chairman of the National Committee for the Temburong Bridge; and Yang Berhormat Dato Paduka Awang Haji Bahrin bin Abdullah, Minister of Development.

The ceremony commenced with the recitation 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.

At the ceremony, His Majesty consented to watch a video presentation on the concept of the Temburong Bridge which showcased the design of the bridge once construction is completed.

His Majesty proceeded to officiate the foundation laying ceremony of the Temburong Bridge, accompanied by the call of the Takbir led by the State Mufti.

His Majesty then signed a commemorative plaque of the Temburong Bridge followed with a *Doa Selamat* read by the State Mufti to bless the ceremony.

His Majesty was also briefed on the progress of the landmark construction project by Eddie bin Dato Paduka Haji Sunny, Permanent Secretary (Technical and Professional) at the Ministry of Development, as the Chairman of Technical Working Committee for the Temburong Bridge.

His Majesty then proceeded to the Exhibition Hall, where scale models were



His Majesty witnessing the scale models and listening to a briefing on the construction of the Temburong Bridge as a whole.

exhibited to showcase the construction of the Temburong Bridge as a whole.

While looking at the exhibition, His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was briefed by Haji Marzuke bin Haji Mohsin, Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Development on the construction of the Temburong Bridge.

His Majesty then viewed the exhibition of the CC2 package (Marine Viaducts), which is a 13.4 kilometres marine viaduct along the Brunei Bay.

The CC3 package (Navigation Bridges),

which is the shipping bridge and the CC4 package (Temburong Viaduct) were also exhibited. The CC3 package involves the construction of two 1.1-kilometre two-way lanes highway bridges; a Single Tower Cable Stay Bridge located at the Brunei Shipping Line and a Twin Tower Cable Stay Bridge located at the Eastern Shipping Line.

The CC4 package involves the construction of two 11.8-kilometre two-way lanes highway bridges including a bridge across Sungai Labu to Jalan Labu Estate, Mukim Labu, Temburong District.

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## Foundation Laying Ceremony for Temburong Bridge Project (continued)

From front page

Upon arrival at project site of the Temburong bridge in Kampung Sungai Besar, Jalan Kota Batu His Majesty was welcomed by 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 as Chairman of the National Committee for the Temburong Bridge; Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Singamanteri Colonel (Rtd) Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Awang Haji Mohammad Yasmin bin Haji Umar, Minister of Energy and Industry at the Prime Minister's Office as Deputy



Continue on page 5 His Majesty signing a commemorative plaque of foundation laying of the Temburong bridge.



## Foundation Laying Ceremony for Temburong Bridge Project (continued)

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During the visit, His Majesty was briefed by Awang Haji Amer Hishamuddin bin Pehin Orang Kaya Amar Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Haji Zakaria, Acting Deputy Director-General of the Public Works Department, Ministry of Development.

Some of the attractions at the exhibition were the two-tower bridge model built using 150,880 lego pieces for the CC3 package (Eastern Channel Bridge) and the Brunei Channel Bridge tower built using 365,000 lego pieces, brought in from the United States.

His Majesty was briefed by Yee Kok On, Director of Department of Roads, Public Works Department while taking a closer look at the lego models.

The magnificent model was built by P-Nut's Merchandise Team headed by Norhafilah binti Amin as well as her colleagues, Siti Nur Fatanah Azrina bin Haji Azahari and Fatin Afiqaa binti Haji Mohammad Ali within two weeks.

While viewing the exhibition, His Majesty also listened to briefings from the managements of the Daelim Industrial Company Limited-Swee Sendirian



His Majesty viewing the full scale model of the Temburong Bridge.

Berhad Joint Venture and the China State Construction Engineering Corporation Limited-Ocean Quarry and Construction Sendirian Berhad Joint Venture.

The Temburong Bridge, which will link Jalan Utama Mentiri in Brunei-Muara District and Jalan Labu

Estate in Temburong District, traversing the Brunei Bay is one of the largest public infrastructure projects ever carried out in the country.

The construction will be carried out in several phases and is expected to be completed in 2019.

## Her Majesty graces Special Assembly for Women

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 16** - Her Majesty Duli Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha binti Al-Marhum Pengiran Pemancha Pengiran Anak Haji Mohamed Alam consented to attend the Special Assembly for Women in conjunction with the Maulidur Rasul celebration for the year 1437 Hijrah.

Upon arrival at the International Convention Centre, Her Majesty was welcomed by Yang Berhormat Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Haji Awang Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka Haji Othman, Minister of Religious Affairs; Yang Mulia Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Mokti bin Haji Mohd. Daud, Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs; Dr. Hajah Masnon binti Haji Ibrahim, Ra'ees of the Religious Teachers University College of Seri Begawan (KUPU SB) in her capacity as the Joint Chairperson as well as members of the organising committee and Council of Women of Brunei Darussalam in conjunction with the Maulidur Rasul celebration for the year 1437 Hijrah.

Also present were Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah binti Pengiran



Her Majesty Duli Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha binti Al-Marhum Pengiran Pemancha Pengiran Anak Haji Mohamed Alam at the Special Assembly for Women in conjunction with the Maulidur Rasul celebration for the year 1437 Hijrah.

Haji Salleh Ab Rahaman, Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Zariah, Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah, Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Majeedah Nuurul Bolkiah and Her

Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna.

The ceremony commenced with a recitation of the Al-Quran read by Dayangku Fauziah Nadhirah binti

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Accompanying Her Majesty were Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah binti Pengiran Haji Salleh Ab Rahaman; Her Royal Highness Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Zariah; Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah; Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Majeedah Nuurul Bolkiah; and Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna.

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Pengiran Haji Jofri, first runner-up of the 2013 Southeast Asia Youth Musabaqah Tilawah Al-Quran while its translation was delivered by Hajah Siti Juriah binti Haji Japar, Assistant Lecturer of KUPU SB.

Dr. Hajah Masnon in her welcoming address among others touched on the theme, 'Menghayati Sunnah Rasulallah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam' (Understanding and practising the Prophet's Sunnah).

"Sunnah is a source of knowledge and reference that derived from Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam whether his words, actions, declarations of his characters and manners," said the Ra'ees.

She further explained that the theme encourages Muslims to study, seek and strive to learn as well as to practise whatever comes from the life of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam.

She added that this is because the arrival of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam is a blessing to the world.

Dr. Hajah Masnon also expressed her gratitude for the consent of Her Majesty to attend to the ceremony.

The highlight of the ceremony was the Special Talk titled 'Menghayati Sunnah Rasulallah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam' (Understanding and practising the



Some of the invited guests present at the ceremony.

Prophet's Sunnah), presented by the Haji Muhammad. Dean of the Faculty of Usuluddin.

The ceremony was also enlivened with a choral performance delivered by students of the Bandar Seri Begawan Arabic Preparatory School, narrating the characteristics of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam, which are *siddiq* (honest), *amanah* (trustworthy), *tabligh* (delivers the prophecy of Allah the Almighty) and *fathanah* (intelligent).

This was followed with a performance of *Dikir Marhaban* by a group of female officers and staff from the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA), Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and members of the Council of Women of Brunei Darussalam (MWNBD).

To bless the ceremony, a *Doa Selamat* was read by Datin Hajah Maznah binti

The Special Assembly for Women in conjunction with the Maulidur Rasul celebration for the year 1437 Hijrah was jointly organised by MoRA and MWNBD in collaboration with MoHA.

This year marks the 22<sup>nd</sup> event since its inception in 1995 where it was organised specifically for women to commemorate the birth of Prophet Muhammad Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam and his role in enhancing women's status, as well as being an example to follow.

Also present at the ceremony were the spouses of Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Pengiran Cheteria, Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers as well as spouse of the Permanent Secretaries and Deputy Permanent Secretaries.



## MoHA to continuously improve public services



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs at the meeting with Members of the Legislative Council held at Ministry of Home Affairs.

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 14** - In safeguarding the welfare and security of the community, in addition to assimilating the value of unity, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) carries various responsibilities and needs to be prepared to ensure excellent service and the increase in security as well as the development of the community's inclusive socioeconomy.

Towards this vision, MoHA will continuously improve the facilitation and procedures of delivering services to the public in order to enhance services so that it is always customer-friendly, relevant to current times to ensure fast and responsive services.

Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs stated the matter in a meeting with Members of the Legislative Council (LegCo), held at MoHA.

The Minister stated that MoHA's efforts include the aligning of the Ministry's strategy so that it is in line with the Brunei Vision 2035; there are six strategic goals which act as a guide, implemented by 11 departments and one centre under MoHA.

The six strategies are enhancing public services; promoting unity and well-being; safeguarding the security of the community; preparation in public and facilities; increasing human resource capacity; and stimulating economic growth.

The Minister added that on an international level, competition between countries is increasing and the competitiveness of a country is measured by its capability to attract investment and business compared to others.

This challenge can be seen clearly with the existence of reports such as the 'Doing Business' Annual Report by the World Bank which makes ratings based on service-related competencies such as licensing, laws and regulations as well as procurement processes.

The Minister explained that in order to create a pro-business

and business-friendly environment in the country, MoHA is continuously working with key government agencies such as the PENGGERAK (Delivery) Unit, Prime Minister's Office; the Ministry of Finance; and the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources (at that time) and has succeeded in updating the procedures of how to start a business from the 1st of January 2015.

The Minister also stated that success in reducing the processing time for a business license application has helped raised the country's reputation in the 'Doing Business 2016' report published by the World Bank. The country's ranking rose from 105<sup>th</sup> in 2015 to 84<sup>th</sup> in 2016.

According to the Starting a Business Indicator, the Ministry as a Champion Group has achieved 74<sup>th</sup> in ranking, from 181<sup>st</sup>, whereas in the ASEAN region, Brunei Darussalam is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> after the Republic of Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand.

"We are hoping that with the improved eco-system, not only will more foreign business be persuaded to invest in the sultanate, but local entrepreneurs will be encouraged to improve their business performance," said the Minister.

In regards to enhancing the economy of the mukims and villages, MoHA is also looking at ways to improve the economy of the mukims and villages through the 'One Village One Product' initiative.

The meeting was attended by 18 LegCo members who discussed and shared on the vision and aspirations in together work on the importance, value and interest of the citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam under the leadership of the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Also present during the meeting were Permanent Secretary, Deputy Permanent Secretary, heads of departments and senior officials from MoHA.

## National Literacy and Numeracy Standards to be introduced



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Suyoi bin Haji Osman, Minister of Education delivering his speech at the 5<sup>th</sup> National Education Forum held at the International Convention Centre.

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 14** - The Ministry of Education (MoE) will be introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy Standards to assist the ministry in identifying and addressing students' level of proficiency as early as Year 1 to provide interventions for students in order to meet the

expectations of each level.

Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Suyoi bin Haji Osman, Minister of Education said that to achieve the goal, it is important for us to start supporting and helping our children as early as possible.

The Minister stated the matter at the 5<sup>th</sup> National Education Forum of the Ministry of Education, which took place at the International Convention Centre.

"This standard will help us to identify students' level of proficiency as early as Year 1, thus enabling us to provide necessary intervention to meet the expectations of each level and enable them to succeed," said the Minister.

The Minister also touched on the strong transition of primary school students to secondary school students.

The Minister called on primary and secondary school leaders for greater engagement in ensuring a complete transition for secondary school students and the effectiveness of strategy implementation.

The Minister also presented on the country's target for the Primary School

Assessment (PSR) 2016. He added that MoE has a revised national target for PSR 2016 set at 79 per cent achievement of Grade 'A' to 'C'.

In addition, the Minister also explained about the initiatives in the Primary Education Initiatives (PEI).

In realising the aim of PEI, MoE needs to continue the 36 initiatives in primary schools from last year and focus on 32 identified 'Red and Yellow flag' schools.

Additionally, the Minister also touched on the country's target for the Brunei-Cambridge General Certificate of Education Level Examination 2017.

MoE invites secondary counterparts to join the Secondary Education Initiatives (SEI).

The Minister further stated that for secondary schools, a national target has been set at 60 per cent achievement of at least five 'O' Level credits by 2017.

"In view of our plateauing achievement in the past five years, the target may seem a huge challenge to some," said the Minister.

The Minister highlighted the importance of the preparation and adoption of correct strategies in realising the goal.

## Compulsory Religious Education Order 2012 must be complied

**SERUSOP, January 7** - The Compulsory Religious Education Order introduced two years ago is not solely for religious study or religious education as a subject, but it is intended to ensure continuity in religious education.

It also means that there is a religious education at a level, where religious schools educate and discipline students in order to produce them as perfect Muslims.

The matter was stated by Yang Berhormat Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Haji Awang Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka Haji Othman, Minister of Religious Affairs in an interview with the media on the sidelines of a visit to the Pengiran Anak Puteri Mutawakillah Hayatul Bolkih Religious School in Kampung Serusop to observe the registration for pre-schoolers in the new religious school term for the year 2016.

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Yang Berhormat Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Haji Awang Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka Haji Othman, Minister of Religious Affairs interacting with the new pre-schoolers of Pengiran Anak Puteri Mutawakillah Hayatul Bolkih Religious School.



## Compulsory Religious Education Order 2012 must be complied (continued)

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In strengthening the religious education system in the country, the Minister explained that the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) has provided specific strategies in providing facilities from year to year, place, preparation of teachers and so on.

The Minister added that what is most important is that no students will be dropped out of religious schools.

The Minister said that Compulsory Religious Education Order ensures that the future generation of Brunei is equipped with basic religious knowledge, at least until Class VI, where it equips them as a Muslim / Muslimah who can perform the *faru ain* (obligatory).

The Minister further said that it is different to when students enter secondary school and study Islamic Religious Knowledge (IRK), where the subject is to complement, refine and reinforce what was already taught in primary school.

Touching on the number of students enrolled in pre-school, the Minister stated that there are 5,258 pre-schoolers registering for religious education in all four districts.

"By looking at the statistics, it shows a good sign. It means that if this goes on, then the next generation of Brunei will be equipped with religious education," said the Minister.

Also present was Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Mokti bin Haji Mohd. Daud,



The Minister of Education interacting with one of the new pre-schoolers' guardian.

Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs.

The Minister's visit was to ensure that the registration process for pre-schoolers of 2016 in religious schools across the country is running smoothly and the admission of the students are in compliance with the requirements of the Compulsory Religious Education (Chapter 215), where no Muslim children in this country will drop out of understanding and knowing the basic knowledge of Islamic education.

Out of 5,258 total enrolments across the country, Brunei-Muara District recorded the highest enrolment with a total of 3,764 new students.

During the visit, the Minister also mingled

with the students and interacted with the parents and guardians of the students who play a vital role in upholding the responsibility and improving the education of Islam.

A total of 92 new pupils were enrolled at the Pengiran Anak Puteri Mutawakillah Hayatul Bolkiah Religious School.

The Compulsory Religious Education Order 2012 which came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2013, states that Muslim parents must ensure that their children are registered as pupils at a religious school, if their child is at the age of compulsory schooling on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2013, and continues to be a pupil for the period of compulsory religious education.

## Republic of Myanmar celebrates 68<sup>th</sup> Independence Day



Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yussof, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports and wife, Datin Hajah Kalshom binti Haji Suhaili with His Excellency Cho Htun Aung, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Brunei Darussalam during the cake-cutting ceremony.

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 7** – The Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in Brunei Darussalam hosted a Reception Ceremony in conjunction with the 68<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, held at the Songket Ballroom of the Rizqun International Hotel, Gadong.

Present as the Guest of Honour was Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yussof, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports and wife, Datin Hajah Kalshom binti Haji Suhaili.

The ceremony began with the national

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anthems of both countries, followed by a welcoming speech by His Excellency Cho Htun Aung, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to Brunei Darussalam.

His Excellency in his speech highlighted that Brunei Darussalam and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar established diplomatic relations on the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 1993, where the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has consistently maintained the good and friendly relationship between the two countries.

His Excellency also expressed gratitude to His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and

His Majesty's Government for the continuous support in the political and economical transformation towards achieving the vision and objective of ASEAN.

His Excellency also touched on the health sector, where a total of 150 comprising medical experts including doctors and nurses from the Republic of the Union of Myanmar have worked and contributed in Brunei Darussalam's health sector.

The highlight of the event was the cake-cutting ceremony in conjunction with the 68<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

## Launching of International Volunteer Day 2016



Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yussof, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports during an interview with the media.

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 10** - Voluntary service has long been embedded in Brunei Darussalam and is often referred to as a measure of community character, concept of cooperation and mutual cooperation in carrying out various community activities that represent the reflection of the spirit.

The government constantly encourages the involvement of members of the community in every community programme in line with the desire to develop the community.

In this regard, the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports (MCYS) through the Department of Youth and Sports held a launching ceremony for the Day of Action (D.O.A) in conjunction with the International Volunteer Day which took place at the Youth Centre in the capital.

Present as the Guest of Honour was Yang Berhormat Pehin Datu Lailaraja Major General (Rtd) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd. Yussof,

Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

The Minister said that D.O.A is one of the pure initiatives undertaken by Department of Youth and Sports.

"It is, in fact, in response to the International Volunteer Day designated by the United Nations (UN) to be celebrated on every 5<sup>th</sup> of December since 1985.

Alhamdulillah, I personally feel overwhelmed, proud and delighted by the response of the various agencies in the country, beyond belief, because it was first held taking into account not only in Brunei Darussalam, but in all four districts simultaneously.

Hence, it is a good impact for the youth who are constantly engaged in volunteering for networking. In addition, they can contact each other and already know who they should contact in order to solve any issues," said the Minister.

The Minister further added that with the networking already created today, other efforts will be easier.

About 1,000 volunteers comprised of youths throughout the district participated in D.O.A activities by bringing together voluntary organisations to volunteer on a large scale.

In this D.O.A, voluntary services provided by volunteers included social services in general such as teaching, delivering food to selected families, donating equipment to mosques, cleaning of mosques, cleaning of beaches, recycling services, home improvement and more.

Among the parties involved were Yayasan Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah, Kampung Rimba Village Consultative Council, Community Welfare Council, Brunei Youth Council, Brunei AIDS Council, Red Crescent Society, KESAN Alumni, Chevening Alumni, Adison Marketing Services, Borneo Guide, Green Brunei, Green Leaders Camp Alumni, Singapore-Brunei Youth Leadership Exchange Programme Alumni (SCOT), Young Entrepreneurs Association Brunei (SUKA) led by the Belait District Office and the Tutong District Office; as well as the Department of Community Development.



The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports viewing the activities conducted by volunteers in conjunction with the International Volunteer Day 2016.



## Radicalisation continues to be worldwide security concern



Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hamdan bin Haji Abu Bakar, Deputy Minister at the Prime Minister's Office in a group photo with Yang Amat Berhormat Dato Laila Utama Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia as well as other ministers at the Opening Ceremony of the International Conference on Deradicalisation and Countering Violent Extremism 2016.

**KUALA LUMPUR, January 26** – Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hamdan bin Haji Abu Bakar, Deputy Minister at the Prime Minister's Office stated that radicalisation continues to be a major concern for security agencies worldwide and will remain as one of the strongest threats faced in the region, especially with the extensive use of the internet as a tool in spreading violent extremism and radical propaganda.

The Deputy Minister also stressed that the Government of Brunei Darussalam will remain vigilant against terrorism or terror-related activities happening in the country, especially in the midst of the Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) phenomenon.

The Deputy Minister stated the matter at the International Conference on Deradicalisation and Countering Violent Extremism 2016 which was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from the 25<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of January.

The Deputy Minister also shared that in order to effectively address radicalisation and violent extremism, Brunei Darussalam must not undermine the fact that neither of these phenomena are exclusive to any one group or religion nor has it always been religiously motivated.

Brunei intelligence and enforcement agencies will continue to learn and adapt best practices from the counterparts through the sharing of knowledge and experience to improve the current strategies, policies and the undergoing rehabilitation programmes run by the government.

The Deputy Minister also said that although the process of deradicalisation and reintegration is a long-term process and evaluating the effectiveness of rehabilitation efforts may be a long and challenging task, Brunei and the rest of the world believe that such efforts are significant in ensuring the long-term safety of the citizens.

On the second day of the conference, the programme was divided into four plenary sessions on topics related to deradicalisation programmes in certain countries and measures taken to prevent and address violence extremism, shared by invited experts.

The conference was launched by Yang Amat Berhormat Dato Laila Utama Dato' Sri Mohd. Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Other countries including ASEAN countries participated in the conference; Australia, People's Republic of China, Japan, France, United States, United Kingdom, Italy, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Joining in the delegation of Brunei Darussalam were senior officials from the Prime Minister's Office and the Internal Security Department.

## Commander of RBAF receives introductory visit



Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Awang Mohd. Tawih bin Abdullah, Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces with Brigadier General Melvyn Ong Su Kiat, Chief of Army of the Singapore Armed Forces.

**BERAKAS, January 13** - Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Awang Mohd. Tawih bin Abdullah, Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF), received an introductory visit from Brigadier General Melvyn Ong Su Kiat, Chief of Army of the Singapore Armed Forces.

Also present during the visit was Brigadier General Pengiran Dato Seri Pahlawan Aminan bin Pengiran Haji Mahmud, Commander of the Royal Brunei Land Force (RBLF).

The introductory visit was a personal introduction to the Commander of RBAF. During the visit, both parties discussed ways to enhance the bilateral defence relationship and professional cooperation between both armed forces, particularly in training and exercises.

## Introductory Visit from Royal Malaysian Navy

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 25** – Admiral Dato' Seri Panglima Ahmad Kamarulzaman bin Haji Ahmad Badaruddin, Chief of Navy of the Royal Malaysian Navy is in the country for a three-day introductory visit from the 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2016.

Admiral Dato' Seri Panglima Ahmad Kamarulzaman bin Haji Ahmad Badaruddin paid a visit to First Admiral (Rtd) Dato Seri Pahlawan Awang Abdul Aziz bin Haji Mohd. Tamit, Deputy Minister of Defence and Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Awang Mohd. Tawih bin Abdullah, Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January.

The Chief of Navy also paid a courtesy call to First Admiral Pengiran Dato Seri Pahlawan Norazmi bin Pengiran Haji Muhammad, Commander of the Royal Brunei Navy (RBN).

Prior to the courtesy call, Admiral Dato' Seri Panglima Ahmad Kamarulzaman was accompanied to inspect the Static Guard of Honour comprised of the members of RBN, led by Lieutenant Pengiran Mohd. Faren bin Pengiran Mohd. Noor.

Admiral Dato' Seri Panglima Ahmad Kamarulzaman then proceeded to the Headquarters of RBN for a briefing on the organisation of RBN followed by a



First Admiral (Rtd) Dato Seri Pahlawan Awang Abdul Aziz bin Haji Mohd. Tamit, Deputy Minister of Defence (right) receiving an introductory visit from Admiral Dato' Seri Panglima Ahmad Kamarulzaman bin Haji Ahmad Badaruddin, Chief of Navy of the Royal Malaysian Navy (left).

discussion session.

The introductory visit is a testimony of the esteemed relationship between Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia.

Through the visit, both sides had the opportunity to discuss on bilateral activities such as the Hornbill Exercise, courses, meetings, seminars, conferences and exchange of visits as

well as exploring ways to further enhance the bilateral relationship between both sides.

Admiral Dato' Seri Panglima Ahmad Kamarulzaman was appointed as the 16<sup>th</sup> Chief of Royal Malaysian Navy on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2015 and was previously appointed as Deputy Chief of Navy for a period of three years.



Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Awang Mohd. Tawih bin Abdullah, Commander of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) (centre) in a group photo with Admiral Dato' Seri Panglima Ahmad Kamarulzaman (third, right) during the introductory visit.



## Understand current geostrategic conditions

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 15** – The participants of the Command and Staff Course (CSC) Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) were urged to challenge the norm for the purpose of obtaining accurate knowledge and information related to their academic development throughout the course.

Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Awang Mohd. Tawih bin Abdullah, Commander of RBAF emphasised the matter during the Opening Ceremony of the 6<sup>th</sup> Command and Staff Course (CSC) 2016 at the Defence Academy RBAF Auditorium, Kampung Tanah Jambu.

The course will teach participants to understand the current geostrategic conditions around the world, specifically with tensions in the Middle East, Persian Gulf, Korean Peninsula and South China Sea.

According to the Commander, terrorism has been around for a long time, but the world today is experiencing re-existence of global attack where increasing threats can create chaos at every level; individual, regional and global.

The Commander added that as the security personnel, they are very concerned with all of these developments and are interested in finding ways to mitigate the effects of these threats.

“The security challenges faced are increasingly complicated, given the

globalisation and rapid development of technologies, which have been fully tested and strengthened in our capabilities.

“The current downturn in the economy and its implications also has the potential to affect the safety of many countries, including our own. We all know that defence is an expensive undertaking but it is not an option and we cannot compromise the security of our country even in the most demanding times.

“We just need to be more prudent with our expense for defence and optimise our resources. Every country should always be prepared and able to counter any form of threat effectively,” said the Commander.

The Commander added that it is important for all participants to be open-minded, to analyse and discuss the situation through a variety of theological and ideological perspectives to come up with good academic and practical arguments in dealing with the transnational threats of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

A total of 27 officers are attending the course including 14 officers from RBAF; an officer from Royal Brunei Police Force and 12 military officers from the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, People’s Republic of China, Republic of India, Republic of Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Sultanate of Oman, Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Singapore, Thailand and the United States of America.



Yang Dimuliakan Pehin Datu Pekerma Jaya Major General Dato Paduka Seri Awang Mohd. Tawih bin Abdullah, Commander of Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) during the Opening Ceremony of the 6<sup>th</sup> Command and Staff Course 2016 at the Defence Academy RBAF Auditorium, Kampung Tanah Jambu.

The 6<sup>th</sup> CSC is a 40-week post graduate level course delivered in partnership with Massey University of New Zealand, responsible for delivering the academic component of the Tri-Service course which is also joint in nature.

The course aims to broaden professional and academic knowledge and to develop command, analytical and communication skills of mid-level officers in order to prepare them for higher command and staff appointments.

Successful students at the course will be awarded the military qualification of ‘passed Staff College’ (Joint) and also the Post Graduate Diploma in International Security with the option of pursuing a Master degree for the most competent students.

## RBAF hosts ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 25** - The ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) Logistics Support Framework Table Top Exercise commenced at the Defence Academy, Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF).

The event was officiated by Brigadier General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Awang Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat, Commander of the Joint Forces of RBAF.

In his welcoming remarks, the Commander of the Joint Forces of RBAF stated that the meeting among others was held to equally make the region become resilient against disasters and respond quickly to address any possible disaster in the future.

The Table Top Exercise was conducted to continue the ADMM Logistics Support Framework, aimed at promoting and achieving effective cooperation among ASEAN defence military establishments in areas of common interests.

Chairing the two-day meeting was Captain Hussein bin Dato Paduka

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Brigadier General (U) Dato Seri Pahlawan Awang Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sahat, Commander of the Joint Forces of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces delivering his speech at the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM) Logistics Support Framework Table Top Exercise.



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Haji Mohamad, Director of Logistics and Haji Adi Ithram bin Dato Paduka Haji Mahmud, Acting Director of Defence Policy.

The participants comprised of logistics experts from ASEAN Member States, as well as representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat and

the ASEAN Coordination Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre).



The Commander of the Joint Forces of RBAF in a group photo with participants of the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM).

## RBN hosts IPC on Maritime Security

**MUARA, January 27** – A two-day Initial Planning Conference (IPC) for the ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting – Plus (ADMM-Plus) Field Training Exercise on Maritime Security (FTX MS) hosted by Royal Brunei Navy (RBN) begins today at the Royal Brunei Armed Forces Defence Academy.

The ADMM-Plus FTX MS which is also called the Exercise Mahi Tangaroa 16, is scheduled to take place on the 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of November 2016 in Auckland, New Zealand.

The exercise will include an International Fleet Review so as to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN).

The IPC was co-chaired by Commander Haji Othman bin Haji Suhaili @ Suhaily, Deputy Commander of RBN and Mr. Mike Thompson, Director Asia Ministry of Defence of New Zealand and was attended by 40 participants representing the ADMM-Plus member countries and the ASEAN Secretariat.

During the conference, participants were briefed on the general overview of the exercise as well as the Sequence of

Events upon the arrival of the ADMM-Plus Naval Assets in Auckland, New Zealand.

The ADMM-Plus also discussed the exercise organisational structure and other exercise logistics and administration matters.

The exercise will incorporate the ADMM-Plus FTX Standard Operating Procedures and the document of Code of Unplanned Encounters at Sea (CUES).

Brunei Darussalam and New Zealand is co-chairing the ADMM-Plus Experts’ Working Group on Maritime Security from 2014 to 2017.

The work plan to orchestrate Exercise Mahi Tangaroa ‘16 was adopted at the 6<sup>th</sup> ADMM-Plus EWG Meeting in Sydney, Australia in October 2013.

The Exercise Mahi Tangaroa 16 is aimed to promote cooperation and interoperability among ADMM-Plus member countries in addressing global common non-traditional security threats.



Commander Haji Othman bin Haji Suhaili @ Suhaily, Deputy Commander of RBN and Mr. Mike Thompson, Director Asia Ministry of Defence New Zealand in a group photo with representatives from ADMM-Plus member countries and the ASEAN Secretariat.



## Brunei wins Thomas Phillips Moot Debate



Members of ALSA Brunei and students from the Faculty of Shariah and Law of Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA) with their trophies from the Thomas Phillips Moot Debate Competition at the Annual Conference 2016 in Malaysia.

**BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, January 30** - Three members of the Asian Law Students Association (ALSA) Brunei and students from the Faculty of Shariah and Law of Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University (UNISSA) won the Thomas Phillips Moot Debate Competition at the Annual Conference 2016 in Malaysia.

The Annual Conference is among the major events of the ALSA International where law students from 15 countries get together to attend the Governing Council Meeting and participate in the moot debate discussions as well as the Model United Nations.

The three debaters sent by ALSA Brunei for this year's competition were Rusyddin bin Bagul, A'bidah binti Mahri, and Hafiz bin Hamzah.

The five out of 15 countries that participated in the competition were ALSA Brunei, ALSA Taiwan, ALSA Thailand, ALSA Malaysia and ALSA Laos.

The issues to be discussed were circulated to all teams a month before the Annual Conference of Malaysia for the participants to prepare for the Bundle of Authorities / Memorials. Matters discussed were related to international criminal law.

In addition, ALSA Brunei also sent five students from the Faculty of Shariah and Law, UNISSA to participate in the Model United Nations. Two out of five participants of Brunei, Abdul Hakim bin Ahmad Zakaria and Nurhani binti Haji Chipli won the Best Position Paper.

Azilla Liyana binti Mohd. Azam Zaki, President of ALSA Brunei expressed gratitude to the team that helped train debaters in the preparation, namely Dr. Altaf Hussein and Hajah Zalwatul Sakinah binti Haji Ibrahim, Vice President of ALSA Brunei, as the former Moot Speaker for the Herbert Smith Freehills Competition Law Moot in Singapore 2014.

The President of ALSA Brunei also thanked UNISSA for the support and sponsorship of ALSA Brunei since 2010.