



# بروني دارالسلام

## BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

newsletter

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## No compromise with antagonists of law and constitution: HM Sultan

Brunei Darussalam ushered the Islamic new year of 1422 Hijrah with His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam issuing a strong warning that activities contradictory to the country's laws and constitution will not be tolerated.

In a hard-hitting titah (royal speech) broadcast to the nation by radio and television on 1<sup>st</sup> Muharam 1422 Hijrah of the Islamic calendar corresponding to 25 March 2001, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam spoke of bold attempt by certain irresponsible elements to ruin the harmony of soci-

ety – that of the Muslim community in particular, despite knowing this was contradictory to the laws and constitution of the country.

"I wish to remind that there will be no compromise or leniency with any element, be it from within, more so from outside the country, who commit activities contradictory to the laws and constitution of the country", His Majesty warned.

His Majesty said that as a sovereign Islamic nation, Brunei Darussalam must constantly be prepared. Accordingly, His Majesty revealed, the government has moved to modify a number of laws to meet the requirements of Is-

lamic teachings. The Islamic Religious Council, with the cooperation of other relevant authorities including the Attorney-General's Chamber, has completed several new laws which are already gazetted.

"It is hoped that enforcements of these laws will enhance the progress of the nation and exalt Islam and will lead to wellbeing and prosperity", His Majesty further said.

His Majesty underscored the importance of unity and spirit of brotherhood as possessed by the people of Ansar and Muhajirin (followers of Prophet Muhammad when the Prophet left

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His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam presents the tokoh bakti Hijrah award (Hijrah meritorious award) to Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Setia Jaya Pengiran Haji Abdul Momin bin Pengiran Haji Osman, one of three recipients of the award for his contribution to the development of Islam in the sultanate.

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### YOUR TURN

The next issue of the Brunei Darussalam newsletter will appear on 15 April 2001. If there are events relating to our country you would like featured in this newsletter please call us on Tel: 02-383400/ext.BDN Division or better still, send us a report with a picture, if possible. All editorial rights reserved.

*\* From page one  
( Hijrah )*

Mecca for Medina). Their unity and brotherhood never shattered or withered away even in the face of tests and tribulations, said His Majesty.

The basis was a single belief in Allah The Almighty who created a glorious bond of kinship amongst the Muslim community, so much so that their strength was incomparable, the ruler pointed.

"This is the kind of unity and brotherhood we desire and the Muslim world is in urgent need of such attributes to enable them repair the damages which have long occurred as a result of their fragmenting and quarrelling amongst themselves", His Majesty lamented.

His Majesty expressed the hope that the forging of unity and brotherhood would be the main agenda of Muslims in the Hijrah new year.

Other agendas can ensue, His Majesty said, but without unity and spirit of brotherhood they will only be in vain.

The ruler went on to say, "As Muslims we must strengthen and uphold our faith because Allah The Almighty will look after those who are steadfast and undivided in their belief of Islam".

But those who abandon Islam will be fragile and unstable, he added.

The ruler said that by having basic education and strong spirit of brotherhood, Muslims will not commit religious subversions, but remain steadfast in

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*Awang Haji Juned bin Penyurat Pali, above, receiving his Hijrah meritorious award from His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam during the Islamic new year of Hijrah celebration held at the Jame' Asr' Hassanail Bolkiaah mosque, above, while below shows the State Mufti, Dato Ustaz Haji Awang Abdul Aziz bin Juned reads the Do'a Selamat..*



\* From page 2  
( Hijrah )

Islam and forever protect it.

The celebration marking the new year Hijrah took place at the Jame' 'Asr Hassanil Bolkiah mosque the next day at Kiulap just outside the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan, and was highlighted with the presentation of awards by the ruler to three people who had contributed much to the development of Islam in the country over the years.



*His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam along with, right to left facing the camera, Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah, Prince 'Abdul Malik and Prince 'Abdul Mateen having an informal conversation with the three recipients of the tokoh Hijrah award.*

## E-government: a priority for ASEAN Civil Service

Acknowledgement on the irreversible phenomena of the digital revolution brought about by information and communication technology (ICT) was underscored by ASEAN member states. A seminar on managing electronic government in ASEAN civil service, in accordance with the remit of the ASEAN Conference on Civil Service Matters (ACCSM) held on March 27 indicated the member states' collective determination. In his welcoming speech, the permanent secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, Dato Paduka Haji Hazair bin Haji Abdullah said that globalisation, e-commerce, knowledge-based economies and other ICT related concepts are increasingly becoming forces of change.

ASEAN leaders, he reasoned, have recognised the importance of ICT and the need to move urgently to get ASEAN region wired up and logged on to a rapid global info-communication system. "The well being of our citizens rests increasingly on our region's ability to harness the information and communication technology in the course of our economic, political and social lives," said Dato Haji Hazair.

Encouraged by potentials spurred by progress in ICT, the permanent secretary urged governments to organise major review of the "ways-of-doing-things" and how the public sector can harness info-communication technologies to reach global markets and deliver

services effectively by engaging in the e-government programme. Anticipating attainable benefits that promise efficiencies, Dato Haji Hazair cited advantages the likes of horizontal integration across agencies; faster distribution of public information; and faster transactions such as renewing a license, completing an application for a permit, paying water and electricity bills.

"The e-government programme is no longer about improving but a bona fide transformation on governance and services. It is intended to bring about a new environment and create a new relationship to establish the best of governance and services that previously were not there," emphasised Dato Haji Hazair.

The incorporation of technological component into service delivery methods will involve upgrading of governance qualities of the civil service that affect people and process, said Dato Haji Hazair.

In response to the *fait accompli* characteristic of the entire business of digital revolution, the permanent secretary cautioned his audience on the grounds of regionalism: "ASEAN must be aware that the sweep of information revolution poses challenges and even threats. We cannot be complacent because there is no turning back."

The permanent secretary said that upgrading and extending government service portal into interactive services and government procurement will im-

prove productivity; transparency and cost efficiency in government services and enhances business opportunity. A paperless operation, Dato Haji Hazair argues, enables government business conducted easily in both domestic and international markets.

Recalling the ASEAN Cooperation in ICT as stipulated by the 1998 Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA) that called for the establishment of the ASEAN Information Infrastructure (AII), Dato Haji Hazair said that its accompanying recommendations resulted in the formation of an e-ASEAN Framework Agreement.

In tandem with Brunei Darussalam's economic diversification attempt that stresses multifaceted approach that include the development of home grown small-and-medium-enterprises (SMEs), Dato Haji Hazair's articulation projected a direct bearing on the country's economic progress: "Business stands to gain the most from dependable and easily accessible government service. By introducing e-procurement for example, government can draw their suppliers on line and consequently stimulate the local electronic commerce environment for the suppliers. This spin off effect will become a powerful incentive or stimulus for SMEs to invest confidently in the new technology."

Also in response to ASEAN's *raison d'être* of solidarity of member states, the permanent secretary re-

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# His Majesty begins series of visits



Above, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam takes a close look at some of the fishing facilities and equipment used by the Kampong Batu Marang residents, many of whom are fishermen by tradition.



His Majesty giving a quick test to a pupil as he went from one classroom to another while on a tour of the Kampong Batu Marang Primary School, left, while above shows the ruler chatting informally with residents who had turned up in large numbers to greet him.



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam made his first visit this year to Kampong Batu Marang in Mukim Mentiri and Mukim Pengkalan Batu.

During his visit, on 24 March, to Kampong Batu Marang, 20 kilometres from the Brunei capital, Bandar Seri Begawan, His Majesty was greeted by the Brunei-Muara District Officer, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Dani and Penghulu (Head) Mukim Mentiri, Pengarah Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Naim. The official welcoming ceremony

for His Majesty was held at Batu Marang Primary School, which the monarch toured later.

The ceremony began with the recitation of the Al-Faathiah and a Do'a Selamat read by the Imam of Batu Marang mosque, Awang Haji Ahmad bin Haji Bini.

The Penghulu Mukim in his remarks said that His Majesty's visit was an evidence of the ruler's sense of caring for his subjects and people. He also spoke on the developments and basic facilities provided for the villagers, which included electricity and water supplies,

roads, telephone lines, primary and secondary schools and a mosque.

Kampong Batu Marang, which is situated at the Brunei Gulf has about 2,000 residents, and is wellknown for its 'belacan' (shrimp paste). Some of its residents work in the government and private sector, while others work on their own.

Mukim Mentiri consists of six villages, namely Batu Marang, Mentiri, Sungai Buloh, Tanah Jambu, Mentiri I and II Housing, with a total population of 9,737 people.

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( Sultan's visit )

His Majesty then visited Kampung Limau Manis in Mukim Pengkalan Batu, where the monarch was greeted on arrival by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Mohiddin and Permanent Secretary of the Education Ministry, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Alihashim.

At the welcoming ceremony at the Penglima Berudin Primary School, the Pengulu Mukim Pengkalan Batu, Pengarah Awang Buntar bin Haji Serudin among others spoke on the development and activities conducted by the mukim.

His Majesty later toured several classrooms of the school. With 15 teaching manpower, the school has to date more than 100 pupils from kindergarten classes to Primary Six.

Mukim Pengkalan Batu consists of eight villages namely Kampung Junjungan, Pengkalan Batu, Limau Manis, Wasan, Bebuloh, Panchor Murai, Masin and Batong.

Kampung Limau Manis alone has an area of 6,062 sq. kilometers and a population of 964 people. Most residents work with the government and private sector, while some have their own businesses.

His Majesty's next stop was the house of the Ketua of Kampung Junjungan, where the ruler consented to listen to a briefing on several problems faced by the residents.

His Majesty later visited Mukim Lumapas and stopped by at the houses of Ketuas of Kampung Lumapas A and B respectively, and toured a sports complex at Sungai Asam.

The visit aimed to look closely on the progress in educational fields and development in those villages, while enabling the ruler to mingle with his citizens and people.



His Majesty signing the visitors' book at the residence of the pengulu (head) of Mukim Pengkalan Batu, Pengarah Haji Buntar, above. Below: Visiting the Sungai Asam sports complex, the ruler looked at the facilities and scanned its grounds.



His Majesty chats with the pengulu of Mukim Pengkalan Batu and those of villagers under the mukim, above. Right: The ruler watches pupils at work during a computer class at the Penglima Barudin Primary School.



## FEALAC to establish working groups to strengthen dialogue and cooperation



Above, The Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, second from left front row, at the final plenary session of the first meeting of FEALAC held in the Chilean capital, Santiago. Ministers and heads of delegation attending the FEALAC Meeting in a group photograph, below.



Below, His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah holding a bilateral meeting with his Chilean counterpart, Her Excellency Soledad Alvear, who was co-chair of the FEALAC Meeting.



Ministers attending the first Ministerial Meeting of the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) had approved the framework document of the forum that establishes the principles, aims, objectives and modalities to guide its future work.

They also decided to establish three working groups, with the aim of strengthening dialogue and cooperation in the wide-ranging political/cultural, economic/social and education/science fields.

The Ministers also welcomed the participation of Costa Rica, Cuba and El-Salvador, new members of the Forum. The acceptance of admission of Costa Rica, Cuba and El-Salvador as new members was announced at the plenary session chaired by the Foreign Minister of Chile, Her Excellency Maria Soledad Alvear. FEALAC, founded by the Republic of Singapore in 1998, now has 29 members.

The communiqué issued on 30 March said the Santiago Meeting marks the beginning of an unprecedented dialogue and cooperation between their regions to meet political, cultural, social, economic and international issues of common concern.

In this connection, they would strengthen the ties between their two dynamic regions that would need to manage the challenges and opportunities in an interdependent and globalised world. The meeting has provided a new opening to develop greater understanding while preserving the respective cultural identity, the communiqué said.

The meeting held for the first time, beginning 29 – 30 March in Santiago, Chile was attended by foreign ministers and heads of delegation from Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, China, Ecuador, El-Salvador, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Myanmar, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Uruguay, Venezuela and Vietnam.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Brunei Darussalam's Minister of Foreign Affairs attended the meeting for Brunei Darussalam. On 29 March, His Royal

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(FEALAC)

Highness attended a working breakfast hosted by His Excellency President Ricardo Lagos of Chile at the Presidential Palace, and later attended a plenary session of the first Ministerial Meeting.

His Royal Highness also joined other foreign ministers and heads of delegation at a luncheon hosted by Her Excellency Maria Soledad Alvear, during which representatives of the International Development Bank (IDB) and Economic Commission for Latin American Countries (EALAC) delivered their speeches.

This was followed in the afternoon by a Retreat of the Forum, where the ministers discussed economic and political development, and educational and cultural cooperation.

While in Santiago, His Royal Highness held a bilateral meeting with Her Excellency Maria Soledad Alvear, the Foreign Minister of Chile. They discussed ways to further enhance relations between the two countries.

Brunei Darussalam and Chile established diplomatic relations in 1984. Trade cooperation between the two countries began in 1977 when Chile exported its goods such as, foodstuffs, manufactured goods and tobacco to Brunei Darussalam. Besides being a member of FEALAC, Chile, Peru and Mexico are also members of Asia-Pacific Eco-



The Chilean President, His Excellency Ricardo Lagos and his wife greeting His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah on arrival at the Presidential Palace in Santiago for luncheon they hosted in honour of ministers and delegates attending the first FEALAC Meeting.

conomic Cooperation (APEC) Forum.

The two-day FEALAC Forum was co-chaired by Her Excellency Maria Soledad Alvear and Singapore's Foreign Minister, His Excellency Professor S. Jayakumar. The next FEALAC will be coordinated by Colombia and the Republic of the Philippines.

His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah said, sport marketing is an important element to upgrade the standard and quality of sports, and its management at both national and international levels.

The implementation of a wise marketing clinic makes more sports facilitators stronger and richer in the financial aspect, he said.

His Royal Highness further said being the host of major sport events

## Sport marketing helps upgrade standard and quality of sports

with own fund is a competition amongst countries in the world at this moment, as it gives high profit to the country, especially for the business community.

In a speech before he declared open an Olympic solidarity marketing seminar at the theatre hall of the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium on 21 March,

His Royal Highness in his capacity as the President of Brunei Darussalam's National Olympic Council, hoped that the seminar would help participants to better understand more matters on sport marketing to enable them to mutually help each other.

His Royal Highness added that the participation of sport community and business community in their respective sports marketing sector was hoped to benefit both parties.

The seminar was organised by the National Olympic Council of Brunei Darussalam with the cooperation of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, and the International Solidarity Olympic Committee. It aimed to give better understanding on the benefit and significance of marketing in sports.

The seminar was conducted by Svein Romstad from the Management of Meridian, Atlanta, USA, the General Secretary of Malaysia's Olympic Council, Dato Sieh Kok Chi; and the General Secretary of the Olympic Council of Singapore, Mr. Lau Teng Chuan.



The President of Brunei Darussalam's National Olympic Council, His Royal Highness Prince Haji Sufri Bolkiah speaking on the importance of sports marketing towards elevating sporting standards.

# Use knowledge and skill as a basis to further develop nursing profession

Her Royal Highness Princess Hajjah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah called on nurses in the country to use their knowledge and skill as a foundation to further develop their profession in the continuing effort to give quality and effective treatment for the community.

"Knowledge, skill, commitment, dedication and sense of responsibility in nursing profession will enable nurses to become a high quality and more productive manpower," she said.

Her Royal Highness also urged nurses to always be ready to face challenges in the technology and communication era, and be sensitive towards changes in the medical field.

Making the call at the seventh convocation of Princess Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah College of Nursing at the International Convention Centre on 31 March, Her Royal Highness who is also the patron of the college, pointed that successful nurses are those who always have the intention of broadening their knowledge and upgrading their skill.

By having the skill, caring attitude, patience, determination and good etiquette in giving services would enable nurses to maintain the good name and image of nursing profession, said Her Royal Highness.

Her Royal Highness also hoped that the increasing number of graduated nurses would meet the shortage of qualified local nurses.

Meanwhile, the principal of the college, Dayang Hajjah Suraya Nuraidah in a welcoming remark said that the college would continue to upgrade its quality of education through the scheme of encouragement.

This includes the sending overseas of best students, taking into account not only their academic performance but also their personality and nursing characteristics, especially in the aspects of knowledge, etiquette and sense of caring and loving, in order to achieve the objective of giving excellent treatment to patients.

Princess Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah College of Nursing is now conducting seven courses at professional level for diploma in advanced nursing. This year, the management board of the college has approved and offered two more professional courses at advanced diploma, namely diploma courses in eye treatment and diploma courses in anesthetic nursing.

She hoped that facilities at the college would continue to be upgraded through a relevant renovation programme, especially with regard to nurs-

ing laboratories, which will provide students with the true situation when they face patients and their family.

To date, the college has produced 605 graduates in diploma in basic nursing, while 480 students including registered nurses are currently undergoing various courses in advanced nursing, of whom seven are on the Commonwealth scholarship and six from Thailand.

Her Royal Highness Princess Hajjah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah later presented certificates and badges to 160 graduates from the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> intakes of 1996 – 1999 and 1997 – 2000 sessions respectively.

Present at the ceremony were Her Royal Highness' sisters, Their Royal Highnesses Princess Hajjah Muta-Wakkilah Hayatul Bolkiah, Princess Hajjah Majeedah Nuurul Bolqiah, Princess 'Azemah Ni'matul Bulkiah and Princess Fadzilah Lubabul Bulqiah.



Her Royal Highness Princess Hajjah Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah presents certificate to one of the graduates during the Princess Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah College of Nursing's seventh graduation ceremony, above, which was also attended by other members of the royal family, left.

mind his audience that cooperation in ICT would not only enable ASEAN to harness the technology effectively but, it would also serve the ultimate goal of tying south east Asia closer together culturally, socially and economically.

Realising the wide-ranging implications ICT entails for the regional organisation, the permanent secretary argued that the e-government programme requires ASEAN to harmonise policies, regulations and standards in ICT within ASEAN. Also warranted is the examination in legal and regulatory issues involved in the development of e-government policies that facilitate its growth and access to technology. The regulatory framework, he added, should be technology neutral and based on international norms.

Stressing the importance of institutionalism, Dato Haji Hazair said: "We need to promote frameworks that are conducive to entrepreneurship, innovation, open and competitive market. Otherwise the opportunities offered by new technologies might be delayed or missed entirely."

The permanent secretary's argument runs parallel with the rationale projected by a feature of an international publication that made an analysis of government and the Internet. Bearing similarity to Dato Haji Hazair's cause, the feature stressed that the starting point for most e-government projects is the desire to reduce costs and make tax revenues go further. The potential for savings, said the feature, comes from the sheer scale of public sector spending and from the opportunities to make internal processes more efficient. As with commercial businesses, it argued, the benefits come from the way the web can slash purchasing and fulfilment cycles, lower administrative costs by up to 75 per cent and halve stocks.

Optimally functional e-government, the feature argued require governments to first establish practicable regulatory and public policy environment for the digital economy – a competitive communications market, universal access, digital signatures, light taxation, online privacy, consumer protection for web shoppers and the like. With the kind of measures, rules and safeguard all this



*Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hazair bin Hj. Abdullah, Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, fourth from left front row, in a group photo with representatives from ASEAN member countries attending the ACCSM Seminar - Managing Electronic government in ASEAN Civil Service.*

entails e-government strategies, the feature argued can have catalytic effect on business in general.

Correspondingly as engines of motivation, governments, the feature reasoned will need committed leadership, a profound understanding of e-business principles and a clear strategy for overcoming the barriers to change: the departmental rivalries, the fears of the individuals and the sheer size of the entire operations and set up. Also worthy of consideration, the feature emphasised, is a realistic assessment of a government organisation's readiness for what is about to hit it.

Closely related to regulatory framework, the feature cautioned another realistic dilemma: once full scale e-government becomes a reality for a country, how far will that government allow Internet-driven private organisations to run public services hitherto done by State bureaucracy. The feature recalled a list of typical problems endured by such partnership: about the way licences are awarded, and over what periods; fair treatment for governments' other commercial partners; and the safeguarding of citizens' privacy.

Juxtaposed with progress is problems such as the so-called digital divide because of gap between those who have access to the ICT infrastructure and those deprived of access to such facilities due to certain factors such as income and level of education. The same logic is applicable to states, as emphasised by the permanent secretary: "The surge of information revolu-

tion could widen the gap between developed and developing countries."

Closer to home, the feature argued that the next evolving contentious issue is more basic than abstract: will all government departments still make sense once service are delivered electronically, with some public-orientated services run by web-based private companies?

In line with the current trend that stresses growth of ICT, Dato Haji Hazair recalled the establishment of the Brunei Information Technology Council (BIT), a national body designed to lead and facilitate the strategic development and diffusion of information technology (IT) nationwide.

Comprising of senior government officials and leading figures from the business sector, the BIT Council serves to identify the country's IT requirement and offers relevant guidance to the private sector. An international advisory body manned by prominent people in the IT world will be set up to advise and guide the Council.

Some of the preconditions needed for implementation in technology-driven workplace are new skills; and changes in mindset, economic and social policies; and a shift in cultural norms. Dato Haji Hazair argued that the current employment scenario calls for a new type of public servant: one who is comfortable in collaborative and horizontal relationship instead of one that relentlessly anticipates hierarchical decision making structures and clear distinction between

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policy discussion and programme execution.

Dato Haji Hazair's enthusiasm for full-scale utilisation of ICT in government and concern for the corresponding implications for the country relates to other aspects of the feature that can engender serious consideration by aspiring e-governments. The feature argued that success of an e-government depends on a number of factors – those that facilitate and challenge the current practice and approach employed by government.

Touching on governments' "ways-of-doing-things" the feature stressed that persuading public servants to abandon their paper shuffling ways and embrace change on a hitherto unimaginable scale will require relentless pressure – as well as some of the rewards and incentives that encourage people to excel in the private sector.

As for challenges endured by governments, the feature acknowledged one presumption: generally, governments regard their purpose as builders of environment conducive for Internet-spearheaded economic and social benefits instead of taking charge of such technology for their own advantage.

Being monopoly suppliers governments are not inclined to anticipate formidable rivalry from web-based competitor, however remote the possibility. The feature argued that transactions with government are rarely a matter of choice, and agencies collecting tax or managing entitlement programmes do not see the Internet as a challenge to their existence. Moreover it claimed that people running government services are unlikely to be rewarded with share options for devising innovative Internet strategy, for example.

More specifically applicable to civil servants, said the feature is the unanswered organisational question: how to motivate people to accept massive change in the absence of overwhelming market pressure?

Entrenched institutional attributes the likes of these account for the slow application of e-government. In retrospect and on balance, the dithering approach to full-scale implementation of e-government projects (read: total and unquestioning embrace of the digital revolution) is justified given the newness of the entire set up plus a few other important factors that touch the very purpose of government. As a salient point for consideration, the feature did cautioned would-be e-governments

with a stark reality: one-stop, non-stop e-government portals will revolutionise not just the way public services are delivered, but government itself as well. It then said that the trouble with revolutions is that they rarely go according to plan. And it also said that they have a nasty habit of eating their own young.

As food for thought, apply that abstract in practice against the backdrop of the very purpose of government and two important matters emerge. Therefore the argument in support for governments' concern can be found in the following quotes from the feature: "Governments cannot choose their customers; the services they provide must be for everyone, and much of what they do involves dealing with the poor, the less well-educated and the elderly – precisely the people least likely to be wired. Security and trust are even bigger concerns for governments than for the private sector. Banks and insurance companies may know quite a lot about their customers, but nothing matches the range and detail of information that governments require from their citizens. Unless the integrity of that information can be guaranteed, the scope for governments to make constructive use of the Internet will remain limited."

## Brunei Darussalam still needs strategies and methods of forests conservation

**B**runei Darussalam still needs strategies or methods of protection and prevention of forests from ruins or deteriorations caused by irresponsible parties or people – acts, which will bring about calamity and loss to the country, said the Permanent Secretary of Home Affairs Ministry.

Brunei Darussalam has a strong National Forest Policy, which proves to have been able to give better balance between physical growth requirements and the need to conserve the greenish and healthy environment for continued progress and its future generation.

With the policy, the country has been able to properly manage its forests and the environment. In the country's rapid pace of development, Brunei

*The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Mohiddin plants a royal palm at the Tumpuan Telisai recreational park in Tutong district at the start of celebration in observance of World Forestry Day.*



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Darussalam manages to maintain 80 percent of its area covered with primary forests.

However, people in the country should not be complacent with the efficiency and effectiveness of the current management of the forests, as there are already signs of disaster, such as erosion, landslides and forest fires caused by irresponsible individuals, he said.

Speaking at the launching of World Forestry Day 2001 at Danau beach in the Tutong district on 21 March, Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Mohiddin urged the communities at all ranks to work together and be committed in the management of the forests.

He said, the theme of this year's World Forestry Day - 'Cultivate While Donating', is timely and relevant with the challenges in the new millennium. The launching ceremony was highlighted with the cultivation of trees and watermelon along the Tumpuan Telisai beach area in the Tutong district and the breeding of prawn.

The Permanent Secretary hoped the activities would encourage local community to conduct many more social and economic events for their own benefits.

He further called on all parties, the villagers in particular, to look after the facilities provided and maintain the cleanliness and beauty of the environment, in line with the effort of the Ministry of Home Affairs to promote the identity of the village and mukim, and encourage the active involvement of the community through the concept of 'one village - one product'.

## Korean media professionals' visit to Brunei



The Director of Information, Awang Abdul Ghani bin Pengiran Haji Metussin and officers of the department in a group photo with visiting journalists from the Republic of Korea under the ASEAN-ROK Media Exchange Programme.

The Department of Information of the Prime Minister's Office played host to an 11-member media entourage from the Republic of Korea (ROK) that made a one-day working visit to Brunei Darussalam on March 21. The working visit is manifestation of the ASEAN-ROK media exchange programme.

In his welcoming speech the Director of Information, Awang Abd Ghani Pengiran Haji Metusin said: "Fair and accurate reporting has always been an important balance in the media world because of its powerful influence on the mindset of a society. And this is ever more crucial with the advent of technology where the event happening at one corner of the globe can be instantly relayed to the far end of the world."

Promising reciprocal response, the information director added: "We hope the briefings and talks during your short stay in our country will become useful references in your future reports of Brunei Darussalam."

The one-day itinerary for the Korean visitors comprised of a courtesy call on the permanent secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, Dato Paduka Haji Hazair bin Haji Abdullah at the State Secretariat building; a briefing on the structure of the Brunei government conducted by the acting deputy director of Information, Haji Yusof bin Haji Ladi at the Information Department; a briefing by the director of Economic Planning and Development, Haji Abdul Wahab bin Juned at the department's headquarters at Beribi; and a talk on the "Visit Brunei Year 2001" by the director of Industrial Promotion and Tourism Section, Sheikh Jamaluddin bin Sheikh Mohamed at the

Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources.

The 11-member entourage headed by Mr. Seung-il Kim of the *Han Kook libo* newspaper comprised mainly of journalism professionals from Korean newspapers and broadcasting organisations. The entourage also included a senior officer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea.

Mooted in 1996, the ASEAN-ROK media exchange programme is supported by the ASEAN-ROK Future Oriented Cooperation projects. The ASEAN-ROK projects are under the remit of the ASEAN-Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) subcommittee on information.

Ten other journalists from the Republic of Korea have visited Thailand, Laos, and Viet Nam from January 26-February 26, 1999. To date, ASEAN media professionals have yet to make corresponding visit to the Republic of Korea under the media exchange programme.

The media exchange programme aims to strengthen interpersonal contacts and enhance mutual understanding between media professionals of ASEAN member countries and the Republic of Korea. It also hopes to enhance better understanding of the overall politics, society and culture of the participating countries through visits to government institutions; media organisations; and industrial and cultural sites.

Other ASEAN-ROK projects include: the ASEAN-ROK youth exchange programme, and the ASEAN-ROK cultural exchange programme.

Right: Accompanied by an entourage of officials and eager residents, His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam walks from one house to another for an insight into the lives of his subjects during his visit to Kampong Batu Marang in Brunei-Muara district.



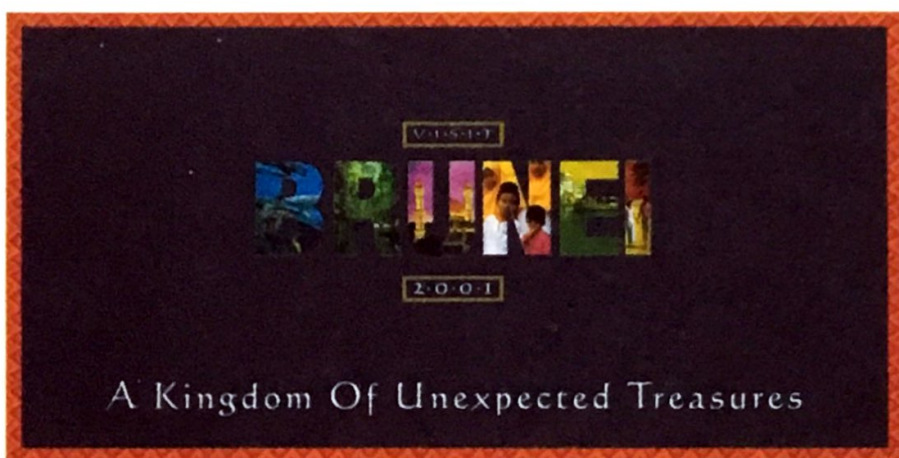
Left: A snapshot of the scenes during His Majesty's visit to Kampong Limau Manis, also in Brunei-Muara district, where residents eagerly awaited turns to greet the ruler.

### **What's happening NEXT month in Brunei Darussalam?**

#### **April**

Sample a wide assortment of seafoods in our month-long seafood festival; and have fun in a freshwater fishing competition. For the more adventurous, why not go on a both thrilling and challenging 4x4 off-road safari over some of Borneo's most rugged terrains in the surroundings of lush-green tropical jungles.

Visit [www.visitbrunei.com](http://www.visitbrunei.com) or email [bruneitourism@brunet.bn](mailto:bruneitourism@brunet.bn) for more details.



### **Brunei In Brief**

**Official name:** Negara Brunei Darussalam  
**Capital:** Bandar Seri Begawan  
**Land size:** 5675 sq. km  
**Geographical Position:** North-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia  
**Population:** 336,376 (July 2000 estimate)  
**National Carrier:** Royal Brunei Airlines

**Official Language:** Malay  
**Official Religion:** Islam  
**Official Website:** [www.brunei.gov.bn](http://www.brunei.gov.bn)  
**February Rainfall:** 192.6 mm

**The Trafficking and illegal importation of Controlled Drugs are very serious offences in Brunei Darussalam and the penalty is death.**