



برونى دارالسلام

Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam newsletter

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Public Service Vision to fulfil needs of society

Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam had produced the Public Service Vision of the 21st Century. It was produced as nation-building is highly dependent on public service machinery that is capable of fulfilling the needs and expectations of society.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam made the *titah* on the eve of the 21st National Day of Brunei Darussalam, on February 22.

The sovereign said that each government agency must fulfil that vision. Government ministries and departments are required to identify issues concerning national interest so they may be tabled for discussion and coordination.

Government and citizens should also share a strong relationship to realise the future ambitions. Therefore, sound ideas from citizens on how to improve the quality of government performance in areas of development and administration are welcomed. Thus, the State-Legislative Council was reactivated to enable citizens to express their views and requirements formally.

His Majesty also said that Brunei does not neglect regional and international affairs. Brunei, ever since she gained her independence, shoulders the responsibility as member of the international community of sovereign states.

"We also endured challenges such as economic, security and health crises, and natural disasters that had afflicted our region in the past decade. Throughout those difficult times, we have chosen our own way of coming to terms with them. Nevertheless, we do listen and evaluate the views from other nation-states," said His Majesty.

The sovereign also said that Brunei's foreign relations with other nation-states are based on dialogues, discussions and cooperations.

Brunei Darussalam celebrates her National Day every February 23. This year is Brunei's 21st National Day anniversary which carries the theme "Together We Strengthen National Self-Reliance".



His Majesty waves to the crowd prior to leaving Taman Haji Sir Muzaffar Omar Ali Saifuddin

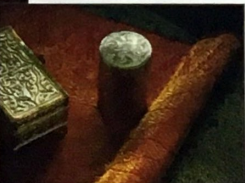
* More pictures on centrepage

21st National Day of Brunei Darussalam
TOGETHER WE STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SELF-RELIANCE

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PALACE NEWSROUND...



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam presented diplomatic accreditations and received credentials from newly appointed foreign envoys at the Istana Nurul Iman:

- ① His Excellency Pengiran Haji Sahari bin Pengiran Haji Salleh, Ambassador of Brunei to the Islamic Republic of Iran on February 3.
- ② Her Excellency Pengiran Datin Paduka Hajah Masrainah binti Pengiran Haji Ahmad, High Commissioner of Brunei to Australia on February 3.
- ③ His Excellency Butshikan Singh, the High Commissioner of the Republic of India to Brunei on February 3.
- ④ His Excellency Abbas Talibefar, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Brunei on February 3.
- ⑤ His Excellency Mr. Sornsilp Polteja, Ambassador of Thailand to Brunei on February 3.
- ⑥ His Excellency Pehin Datu Panglima Colonel (R) Haji Abdul Jalil bin Haji Ahmad, High Commissioner of Brunei to Islamic Republic of Pakistan on February 5.
- ⑦ Her Excellency Emaleen binti Abdul Rahman Teo, Ambassador of Brunei to the Republic of Philippines on February 5.
- ⑧ Her Excellency Ms. Yang Yanyi, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Brunei on February 5.
- ⑨ His Excellency Andreas G. Skarparis, non-resident High Commissioner of the Republic of Cyprus to Brunei on February 5.
- ⑩ His Excellency Alfredo Raul Morelli, non-resident Ambassador of the Republic of Argentina to Brunei on February 5.



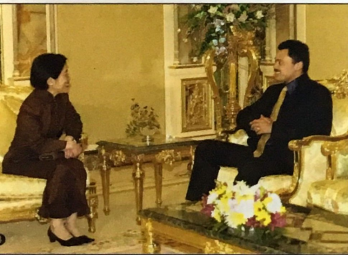
His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

- ① Dato Paduka Seri Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Johan, the outgoing Commissioner of Police on February 7.
- ② Pehin Datu Kerma Setia Awang Haji Zainuddin bin Jalani, the newly appointed Acting Commissioner of Police on February 7.
- ③ His Excellency Dr. Oswald Soukop, the outgoing non-resident ambassador of Austria to Brunei on February 24.
- ④ His Excellency General Ehsan Ul Haq, Chairman Joint Chief-of-Staff Committee, Pakistan on February 26.



Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha granted audiences at the Istana Nurul Iman for:

- ❶ Pengiran Datin Hajah Sharifah binti Pengiran Haji Zaini, the spouse of outgoing Commissioner of Police on February 7.
- ❷ Dayang Suriati binti Haji Morneh, the spouse of newly appointed Acting Commissioner of Police February 7.
- ❸ Her Excellency Emaleen binti Abdul Rahman Teo, the newly appointed Ambassador of Brunei to the Republic of Philippines on February 14.
- ❹ Dayang Hamidah binti Haji Harris, the spouse of newly appointed Ambassador of Brunei to the Islamic Republic of Iran on February 14.
- ❺ Dayang Umi Kalthum binti Pehin Orang Kaya Maharaja Seri Raja Dato Haji Mohamad, the spouse of newly appointed High Commissioner of Brunei to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on February 14.
- ❻ Mrs Begum Yasmin Ehsan, the spouse of Chairman Joint Chief-of-Staff Committee, Pakistan on February 26.
- ❼ Mrs Sukhvinder Kaur Grewal, the spouse of High Commissioner of India to Brunei on February 26.



Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah received audiences on February 25 at the Istana Nurul Iman from:

- Madam Sukhvinder Kaur Garwal, the spouse of newly appointed High Commissioner of India to Brunei.
- Madam Sopa Polteja, the spouse of newly appointed Ambassador of Thailand to Brunei.

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

- ❶ His Excellency Butshikan Singh, the newly appointed High Commissioner of India to Brunei on February 8.
- ❷ His Excellency Abbas Talebifar, the newly appointed Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Brunei on February 8.
- ❸ His Excellency Mr. Sornsilp Polteja, the newly appointed Ambassador of Thailand to Brunei on February 15.
- ❹ Her Excellency Ms. Yang Yani, the newly appointed Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Brunei on February 15.
- ❺ His Excellency Pehin Datu Panglima Colonel (rtd) Haji Abdul Jaiil bin Haji Ahmad, High Commissioner of Brunei to Islamic Republic of Pakistan on February 16.
- ❻ His Excellency Pengiran Haji Sahari bin Pengiran Haji Salleh, Ambassador of Brunei to the Islamic Republic of Iran on February 16.
- ❼ Her Excellency Emaleen binti Abdul Rahman Teo, Ambassador of Brunei to the Republic of Philippines on February 16.

TSUNAMI...

His Majesty in Aceh

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was in Aceh for a one-day visit to take a closer look at the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami waves that had badly hit Aceh and other countries in South East Asia.

The sovereign was in Aceh on February 1, where he was briefed by the Coordinating Minister for the People's Welfare of Indonesia, His Excellency Dr. Alwi Abdurrahman Shihab and the Acting Governor of Aceh Province, Haji Azwar Abu Bakar.

In Aceh, His Majesty visited the Baitur Rahman Mosque and the Baitur Rahim Mosque. Here, the sovereign presented copies of the Holy Book of Quran to these mosques.

His Majesty also visited Sabang by piloting the "Blackhawk", owned by the Royal Brunei Air Forces. Two "Blackhawk" which are owned by the government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam were in Aceh as part of Brunei's humanitarian mission.

The sovereign also visited the Sabang Hospital where Brunei's medical officers from the Ministry of Health and Royal Brunei Armed Forces carried out their duties.

From Sabang Hospital, His Majesty took the aerial view to witness the areas affected by the earthquake and tsunami by manoeuvring the helicopter himself. His Majesty then visited Tepin Rambot where Royal Brunei Armed Forces set up their regimental post.



His Majesty presents a copy of the Quran



His Majesty meets the locals during his visit to Aceh

Brunei Association Of Banks hold charity walkathon For Tsunami funds

Brunei Association of Banks held a charity walkathon on January 31 to collect funds for the Tsunami Disaster Relief Fund.

The walkathon was launched by the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports.

Chairman for the Brunei Association of Banks, Haji Mohd Roselan bin Haji Mohd Daud handed the donations amounting to B\$47,530.09 for the Tsunami Disaster Victim Fund Secretary cum Director of Social Development Department, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Datin Hajah Adina binti Othman.

The 3.5 Kilometer walk was participated by more than 500 people comprising the bank's board of directors, executive officers and personnel, most of who were accompanied by family members.

Tsunami disaster relief fund receives contributions from Ministry of Education

More contributions have been received for the Tsunami Disaster victims including a B\$300 thousand cash contribution from the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdul Aziz presented the contributions to the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah (SHHB) Foundation initiatives for the victims as well as to

the Tsunami Disaster Relief Fund launched by the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports on February 2.

Contributions from the Ministry of education included cash contributions amounting to B\$200 thousand for the SHHB Foundation initiatives along with B\$100,081.68 for the Tsunami Disaster Relief Fund of the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports.

These contributions from the Ministry were received from the B\$2.50 pledged by each of the students in the country recently along with a B\$30 thousand cash donation from a private company, said the Minister.

Red Crescent receives contribution from RBPf

More contributions were received by the Red Crescent Association in Kuala Belait for the Tsunami relief funds.

Relief aid comprising of clothing items were contributed by the Royal Brunei Police Force in Belait district on February 2.

Commanding Officer Pengiran Kamaludin who presented the contributions said the donation is a product of the collective efforts of officers and uniformed personnel in the district in response to the cry for help by victims of the tsunami.

Financial donations have already been submitted to the associated authorities in the capital, he said.

The Red Crescent Association also plans to hold activities to raise funds for the Tsunami disaster victims to purchase food, medicine, as well as essential infant items such as powdered milk, baby bottles, and diapers which are much needed.

RBA flies to Aceh on second humanitarian flight

Brunei Darussalam's National carrier, Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA), operated its second direct humanitarian flight to Aceh, Indonesia.

The operation on February 4, which brought more relief items for the Tsunami victims, was transported by the airline's Boeing 767 aircraft for the delivery of 17 tonnes of relief aid from the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah (SHHB) Foundation derived from public donations.

Meanwhile RBA's flight BI 5743 departed Brunei at 1:55pm and arrived in Bandar Aceh at 4pm which involved Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation volunteers, who will be distributing relief items to tsunami survivors in Banda Aceh.

Leading the delegation were Chairman of RBA, Yang Berhormat Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Hazair bin Haji Abdullah and the Chairman of SHHB Foundation, Pehin Dato Paduka Ustaz Haji Awang Badaruddin bin Pengarah Dato Paduka Hj Awg

* From page 5

TSUNAMI...

Othman.

A survey on repair costs of the Baitur Rahman Mosque in Banda Aceh was also conducted upon arrival in Aceh by the SHHB Chairman.

SHHB Foundation Relief Aids enter second phase in Aceh

Recovery projects by the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah (SHHB) Foundation Relief Aid has entered its second phase.

The second phase to restore the devastation caused by the recent Tsunami disaster in Aceh, Indonesia include the restoration of mosque, school, orphanage homes and housing.

Chairman of the Foundation, Pehin Dato Paduka Ustaz Haji Awang Badaruddin on February 7, said that the task has been handed over to volunteers after Royal Brunei Armed Forces completed relief efforts in Aceh in early February.

He added that the Foundation's initiative has already received financial assistance amounting to B\$600,000.

Contributions from the public to the tsunami victims in Aceh have also been transported via a Royal Brunei Armed Forces helicopter to the rural and coastline areas.

Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) has also successfully transported 16 to 17 tonnes of contributions on February 4.

Tsunami Disaster Relief Fund receives contributions from SKS

Financial contribution was received by the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports for the Tsunami Disaster Relief Funds by SKS Wood Company Sdn Bhd.

The contributions amounting to B\$10,000 was presented by the company's chairman, Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Anak Haji Abdul Wadood to Dato Paduka Haji Mohd Yussof bin Bakar, the Belait District Officer at the Belait District Office on February 7.

SKS Wood Company Sdn Bhd also participated in the nationwide charity walkathon hosted by the Belait District Office where they managed to raise over B\$2000.

IDBB holds two day roadshow

Islamic Development Bank Brunei (IDBB) held a two-day road show at the Mall in Gadong which highlighted its products and services.

Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports, Awang Haji Jemat bin Hj Ampal officiated the event on February 11.

The event also featured an introduction of new IDBB products such as the country's first *Syaria* compliant global investment fund.

Among those attending the event included Pengiran Datin Paduka Hajah Urai bte Pengiran Ali, IDBB Managing Director as well as Pehin Dato Paduka Awang Haji Ahmad Wally Skinner, IDBB Chairman.

More than 50 IDBB bank customers participated in the SME Bazaar featured at the road show. Twenty per cent of the proceeds made during the event was collected for the Tsunami Disaster Relief Fund.



Utilise examples as guidance

The new Islamic year, 1426 Hijrah should be treated as a year of self-realisation and redemption. It should be a year where we benefit all the lessons or examples given by Allah The Almighty.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said on the eve of the new Islamic year 1426, in correspondence with February 9.

The sovereign said we should not look at lessons or examples lightly as it acts as guidance. This guidance does not come from anybody else but from Allah The Almighty.

The new Islamic calendar is celebrated nation wide every year.

His Majesty also presented the Hijrah Meritorious Award 1426.



Citizens receive land titles

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam presented land titles to 43 Temporary Occupied Land (TOL) holders in Brunei Muara Districts on February 28. The ceremony was held at Junjongan Primary School in Lumapas.

The recipients received land titles based at Mukim Berakas; Mukim Kilanas; Mukim Sengkurong; Mukim Pengkalan Batu; Mukim Lumapas; Mukim Mentiri and Mukim Serasa.

His Majesty also toured the school; several homes of recipients including the homes of village head of Junjongan and Limau Manis and *Penghulu* of Pengkalan Batu; Immigration Control Post in Kuala Lurah; shop house and filling station owned by Badan TANMIAH; post office; police station; and health clinic. The sovereign also visited Golden Chicks Abattoir Sendirian Berhad; agricultural market (*pasar tani*) and Brunei Agricultural Research Centre.

Crown Prince visits C-130J Aircraft



His Royal Highness Prince General Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, on February 17 witnessed a static display of the C-130J Aircraft which is currently in the country in conjunction with the C-130J Technical and Product Exhibition.

During the visit, His Royal Highness board the C-130J aircraft to take a closer look at the facilities and equipment available in the aircraft whilst being briefed by the aircraft pilot on the aircraft's profile and operational function.

Crown Prince on work visit



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah was on working visit to *Mukim* Kota Batu in Brunei Muara District and *Mukim* Rambai in Tutong District on February 12 and 26 respectively.

At *Mukim* Kota Batu, His Royal Highness visited schools, health clinics, mosques, police post and entrepreneurial sites. The Crown Prince also visited residence of *Penghulu* of *Mukim* Kota Batu and several homes of village head of village located in *Mukim* Kota Batu.

Mukim Kota Batu is about

60.10 sq. km. wide comprising of 13 villages under it with population around 12,861 people. There are eight mosques, four clinics, eight schools including one private school, a telecommunication station, two museums and one police post.

At *Mukim* Rambai, His Royal Highness visited schools, health clinic, mosque, fire station, Tasek Merimbun Heritage Park, *padi* plantation and Benutan Dam Complex. Also visited were residence of *Penghulu* of *Mukim* Rambai and village head of *Kampung* Rambai.

Congratulatory Messages

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam received congratulatory messages from the heads of state and other foreign dignitaries in conjunction with the 21st anniversary of Brunei Darussalam's National Day.

The messages were from Their Majesties Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin ibni Almarhum Tuanku Syed Putra Jamalulail, Yang Di-Pertuan Agung of Malaysia; King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand; King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia; Sultan Qaboos bin Said of Oman; Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates; Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, King of Bahrain; Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir of Qatar; Queen Koningin Beatrix Wilhelmina Armgrad of the Netherlands; King Harald V of Norway; King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, King Norodom Sihamoni of Cambodia and King Albert of Belgium.

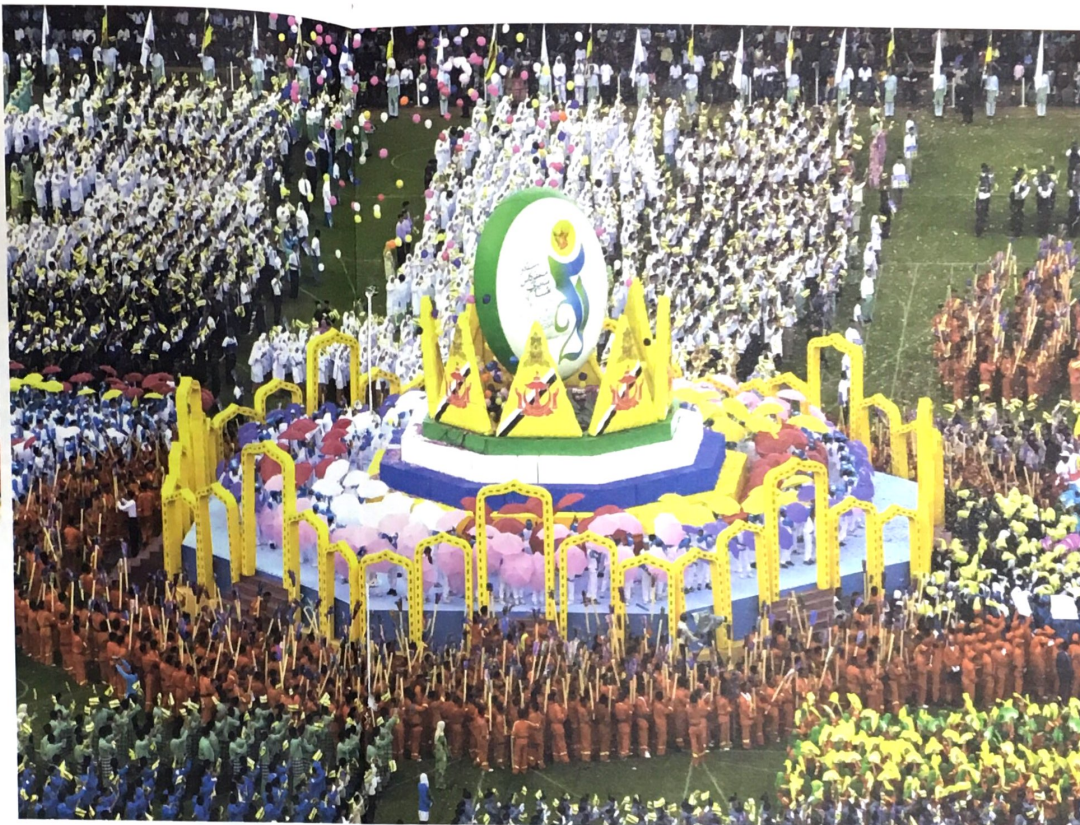
Also sending congratulatory messages were Their Excellencies President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia; President S.R.Nathan of Singapore; President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of Philippines; President Tran Duc Luong of Socialist Republic of Vietnam; President Khamtay Siphandone of the Lao People's Democratic Republic; Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council of the Union of Myanmar; President Hu Jiantao of the People's Republic of China; General Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; President George W. Bush of the United States of America; Mr Horst Kohler, President of Germany; President Jacques Chirac of the Republic of France; President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia; Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; Colonel Muammar Al-Gadafi, Leader of the Great Al-Fateh Revoluton Libya; Roh Moo-Hyun of Korea; and the Right Honourable Governor General Adrienne Clarkson of Canada.

Their Excellencies Major-General Michael Jeffery, Governor-General of Australia; Kim Yong Nam, President of Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Mr Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of Republic of Tunisia; President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom of Republic of Maldives; Dr. Edward Fenech Adami, President of Malta; President Stjepan Mesic of Republic of Croatia; Mr Viktor Yushchenko, President of Ukraine; President Samuel Schmid of Swiss Confederation; President Heinz Fischer of Republic of Austria; President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Republic of Kyrgyzstan; Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, President of Nigeria Confederation Republic; President Laurent Gbagbo of Republic of Cote D'Ivoire; President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso; His Royal Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates; and the Right Honourable Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah Haji Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia.

Their Excellencies Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore; Prime Minister Phan Van Khai of Socialist Republic of Viet Nam; Prime Minister Bounnhang Vorachith of the Lao People's Democratic Republic; Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen of Cambodia; Lieutenant-General Soe Win, Prime Minister of State Peace and Development Council of Union of Myanmar; Mr. Koizumi Jun-ichiro, Prime Minister of Japan; His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa, Prime Minister of Bahrain; Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain; Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi of Republic of Tunisia; and Kofi A. Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations.



Thanksgiving prayers on the eve of National Day at Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque



Colourful mass performance at Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar Ali Saifuddien to celebrate 21st National Day



His Majesty waves to the crowd



Foreign envoys watching the Brunei Darussalam 21st National Day celebration



Giant flag hoisted to mark the National Day celebration

21st National Day of Brunei Darussalam



Mini flags to show the spirit of patriotism



His Majesty's state visit to Australia

Bilateral relations between Brunei and Australia was further enhance through a recent six-day state visit of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam to Australia.

During the state visit, His Majesty visited three states namely; Canberra on February 15, Sydney on February 16 and Perth, Western Australia on February 18.

The visit was significant as Brunei and Australia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on counter-terrorism. Present as signatories, on behalf of the government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was Pehin Dato Awang Haji Abdul Rahman, the Minister of Industry and Primary Resources. While his counterpart was His Excellency Alexander Downer, the Foreign Minister of Australia.

Upon arrival in Canberra on February 15, His Majesty was welcomed by His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffrey AC CVO MC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Her Excellency Mrs Marlena Jeffery; The Honourable John Anderson, Deputy Prime Minister, representing the Prime Minister of Australia; and Wing Commander Lynton Dixon, Director of Protocols and Visits, Department of Defence.

His Majesty was greeted by a Guard of Honour and a 21 gun salute.

His Majesty began his state visit by meeting The Honourable Prime Minister John Howard at the Prime Minister's Suite, Parliament House. Both leaders exchanged views on broad range of bilateral and regional affairs.

A luncheon was hosted by the Prime Minister in honour of His Majesty's state visit to Australia also held at the Parliament House.

Next on the itinerary was a visit to the Australian Institute of Sport. At the Institute, His Majesty was briefed on the features of the Institute's Campus and the role and functions of the Australian Sports Commission.

In the afternoon, His Majesty visited the Australian War Memorial. His Majesty laid a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier during the world war in 1914 to 1918. His Majesty also toured the World War II Gallery.

In the evening, His Majesty attended a state dinner hosted by Their Excellencies the Governor-

General and Mrs Jeffery at Government House.

On February 16, His Majesty joined The Honourable Prime Minister John Howard in a private morning walk starting from The Lodge, the official residence of the Prime Minister.

Later, His Majesty continued his state visit by touring the Transport Industry Skills Centre. Here, His Majesty was briefed on the Holden Monaro car and later drove the vehicle.

The sovereign departed Canberra for Sydney on the same day where he was greeted by Mr Brian Davies, Official Secretary to Her Excellency the Governor of New South Wales.

His Majesty attended a luncheon at Government House, hosted by Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC, Governor of New South Wales and Sir Nicholas Shehadie AC OBE, in honour of His Majesty's visit.

Later in the afternoon, His Majesty received a courtesy call from the Honourable Bob Carr, Premier of New South Wales.

On February 17, His Majesty visited the University of New South Wales where he was greeted by Professor Mark Wainwright, the Vice Chancellor of UNSW. Here, His Majesty met Brunei students undertaking their studies at the university.

His Majesty left Sydney for Perth on the last leg of his state visit to Australia on February 18.

Present to bid farewell were Mr Brian Davies, Official Secretary to Her Excellency the Governor of New South Wales.

Upon arrival in Western Australia, His Majesty was greeted by Mr Kevin Skipworth LVO, Official Secretary to His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia.

His Majesty then proceeded to Government House where he met His Excellency Lieutenant General John M Sanderson, AC, Governor of Western Australia and Mrs Sanderson. His Majesty also attended

a luncheon hosted by the Governor.

In the afternoon, His Majesty toured the Special Air Services Regiment, Campbell Barracks at Swanbourne.

On February 19, His Majesty toured the "Sunken Treasures of Brunei Darussalam Exhibition" in the Western Australian Maritime Museum at Fremantle.

The sovereign then attended a reception hosted by the Western Australian Maritime Museum where His Majesty met Brunei students studying at various education institutions in Western Australia.

His Majesty concluded his state visit to Australia on February 20.



His Majesty upon arrival in Australia



A luncheon hosted in honour of His Majesty's visit



His Majesty and The Honourable Prime Minister in a private morning walk



Guard-of-Honour and 21 gun salute to welcome His Majesty's visit



His Majesty with His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery and consort, Her Excellency Marlena Jeffery



His Majesty at the Maritime Museum in Fremantle



keen sports person, His Majesty test drive the Holden Monaro



Leaders of the two nation-state discussed on bilateral matters



An informal discussion prior to dinner banquet

Brunei-Australia share strong bilateral relations

Brunei regards Australia as one of its closest friends and partners in the Asia Pacific Region. There are many strong and practical ties between the two nation-states where programmes of formal cooperation have been set up and highly valued in Brunei Darussalam.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said on February 15 at the Parliament House in Canberra of Australia.

The sovereign outlined several areas of cooperation existing between the two nation-states such as trade and investment where cooperation is rapidly increasing.

"Several areas are now firmly established. A wide range of Australian goods have been on sale in Brunei Darussalam for many years and quite a number of our own people have invested in Australian enterprises," said His Majesty.

At the same time, investment from Australia is currently assuming great new significance for us. We are particularly pleased with the interest Australian companies have expressed in our national plans for the diversification of our economy, said His Majesty.

Other areas of cooperations include air services and educational trainings. In educational aspect, number of Bruneians graduating from Australia academic institutions has increased. This also applies in training and cooperation among the armed forces. A significant major area of cooperation is the approach which the two nation-states share to security in the region. Brunei-Australia has signed a memorandum of understanding on Counter Terrorism.

His Majesty delivered the royal address during a luncheon hosted by The Honourable John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia during His Majesty's state visit to Australia.

Brunei, the Kingdom of Unexpected Treasures

Brunei Darussalam located just 443 km north of the equator covers only 5, 765 kilometer square of the island of Borneo.

Its land area wedged between the Malaysian Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak comprises of four districts namely Brunei Muara, Tutong, Kuala Belait and Temburong.

The discovery of oil and gas on shore as well as off shore has turned it into one of the world's wealthiest countries on a per capita basis.

The country has emerged as an active and influential participant in the international and regional core groups such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Brunei Indonesia Malaysia and Philippines-

PLACES OF INTEREST

One of the remarkable statues of Islam here is the magnificent Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkiah, a gift from His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam to his beloved nation.

Another symbol of the presence of the strong Islamic religion in this country is the equally impressive Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin mosque built by His Majesty's late father in the early 1950's.

The capital city Bandar Seri Begawan features the impressive largest 'water village' or 'Kampong Ayer' in the world that is home to over 30 thousand local people.

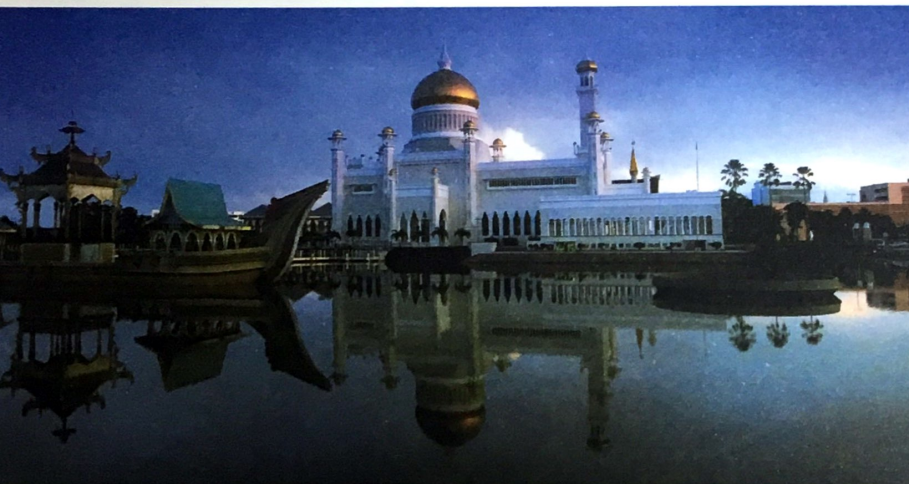
Kampong Ayer that boasts stilt houses built on water is linked to the

The center holds the history and preservation of arts and handicrafts of various Brunei artistic heritage including Cloth weaving, silver and gold smithing, bronze tooling, wood carving, metal crafting, traditional music instruments similar to those used in the Malay Archipelago among many others.

The centre also aims to encourage local craftsmen to be active in the production of Brunei Arts and Handicrafts, to disseminate knowledge as well as to provide necessary training for youths.

The Art Gallery which is located at the Arts and Handicrafts Centre, aims to nurture, promote and strengthen the National Cultural Policy by means of arts activities in implementing and upholding the state philosophy of Malay Islamic Monarchy.

The art gallery also actively participates in various exhibitions in Brunei as well as organising seminars and workshops to benefit the general public and to facilitate and improve the quality and standard of arts.



East Asia Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA).

Although it is little known as a gem of a destination, the country is a haven for eco-tourism with more than half of its land area covered by unspoiled forest reserves.

The majority of forest reserves that is located at the Temburong district have made an impact to foreign visitors who name it 'Asia's best kept secret'.

HISTORY IN BRIEF

The rich cultural heritage in the sultanate is also the profusion of the evolution of Malay culture in the region covering Indonesia, Malaysia and the Island of Borneo.

Brunei Darussalam with its own unique culture and heritage has been around for hundreds of years and has been practising strong Islamic beliefs since the 15th to 16th century when Brunei played a major role in the propagation of Islam soon after Islamic religion was introduced to this part of the region.

Photography © David Kirkland
(photo 1,2,3,4)



mainland where people commute via water taxis.

It is a practise that every major state function is always conducted in accordance with the ancient customs and tradition such as the ceremonies to confer titles bestowed by His Majesty to the eligible recipients for their loyal contribution to the country.

The Royal Regalia Building which is situated in the heart of the capital, houses various regalia and items of the Brunei Royalty used during royal ceremonies such as the Royal Chariot, Ceremonial armory and others.

The Arts and Culture of the Sultanate, which is pervaded by the strong influence of the Islamic faith, can be clearly observed at the Brunei Arts and Handicrafts center, which was established in 1975.

The Brunei Museum, which was officially opened in 1972 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during her official visit to Brunei, is one of the most remarkable and original edifices in Brunei.

Located at Kota Batu, the museum exterior is decorated with a collection of traditional Malay designs, which was copied by the architect from ancient tombstones found in the vicinity. The museum, which consists of six galleries, includes the Brunei life, History, Natural history, Artifacts and Antiques.

The Islamic arts collection which displays several items documenting the Islamic influence in Brunei contains woven fabrics embossed with holy verses from the Quran, hand scripted copies of the Quran, ceramics and ancient weaponry.

Rapid development of modern technology has gradually forced the cottage industry handicraft into the brink of extinction and the Malay Technology Museum located at Kota Batu has made efforts to properly document such indigenous technologies of the daily lifestyle of Brunei that once was.

The museum consists of three main exhibits such as the Water Village Traditional House Gallery, Water Village Traditional Technology Gallery and the Inland Traditional Technology Gallery. Such galleries exhibits several mannequins duplicating the lifestyle of the water village and inland people doing various activities and making various types of handicrafts and cottage industries such as boat making, cloth weaving, gold smithing and others.

The efforts of His Majesty's Government especially the Ministry Of Culture, Youth and Sports have made various continuous activities to promote and document the rich cultural heritage of Brunei especially for the benefit of the younger generation as well as the future generation.

Brunei Darussalam's mainly oil and gas based economy offers a high standard of living to its population resulting in positive social indicators.

This is clearly seen in its high literacy rates, long life expectancy, low infant mortality rates, low unemployment and low crime rates.

recorded over 100 foreign print and electronic journalists along with some 215 travel agents and tour operators participating in the familiarisation trips to the country.

This has clearly played a part in the visibility of the nation as one of the great destinations in Asia.

As a result of their active participation in familiarisation trips, images of Brunei Darussalam's tourist attractions has already appeared in several other major international newsletters, magazines as well as several other travel documentaries filmed by foreign TV crews during one of the trips.

Brunei Tourism has also actively participated in several tourism trade shows overseas including 15 events in 2004 targeting at the lucrative Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) Market.

In year 2004, the tourism industry in Brunei Darussalam has already achieved close to its target of 7 percent annual growth above the estimated 100 thousand foreign visitor arrivals in 2003.

By the end of the year, a huge print media campaign will take off to promote the country to the global market that is valued at BND\$1.6 million.

As part of the 8th National Development Plan covering the month of April this year to March next year, marketing strategies and budget plans have been submitted for approval to boost the activities in the tourism market industry of Brunei Darussalam.

Propositions include increased participation in travel trade fairs, larger advertisement campaigns,

setting up of overseas marketing and public relations representative offices in key market areas, overseas road shows and sales missions, joint marketing activities with overseas partners, more participation of media and industry familiarisation trips to the country.

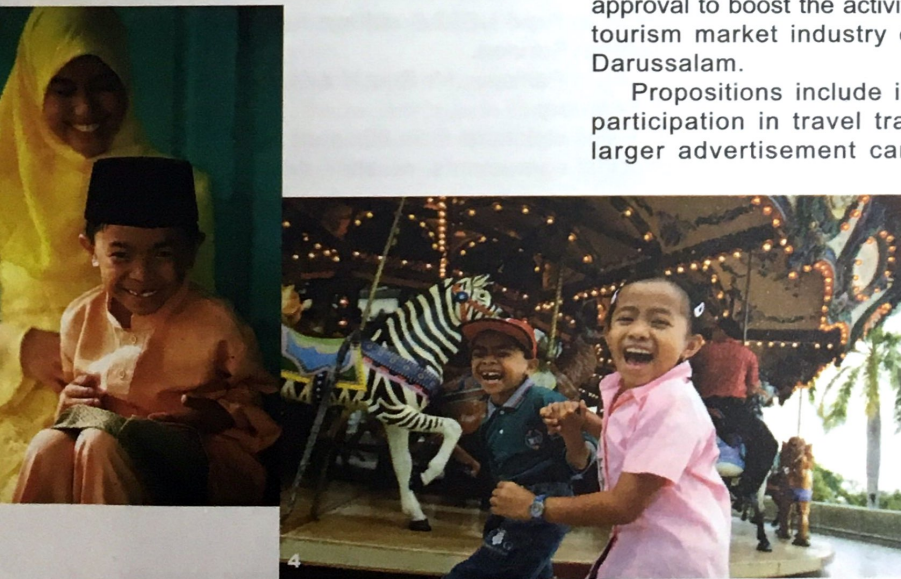
The recent new tag line of 'The Green Heart of Borneo, Brunei, A Kingdom of Unexpected Treasures' calls on to potential travellers to explore the natural, cultural and heritage aspects of the country.

Brunei Darussalam's tourism promotion tag line that emphasises on the abundant ecological treasures can be found in several forest reserves in Temburong District including the Taman Batang Duri, Kuala Belalong Forest Reserve, Batu Apoi Forest Reserve & The Ulu Temburong National Park, the Kuala Belalong Mini Park as well as the Peradayan Forest Recreational Park.

Travel agents in the country are making the most of their tourist packages to appeal especially to those with special interests in the tropical rainforests, Malay culture and history as well as adventure enthusiasts looking for new challenges.

Several joint strategies have been planned by the Royal Brunei Airlines and the private travel agencies in the country to create exciting tour packages for tourists to explore the wonderful treasures that lies within the kingdom of unexpected treasures.

A range of international sporting event have been planned out for 2005 including the first ever Asian PGA Golf Tournament in the country scheduled for late June, an ASEAN Level Tug-of-War competition in conjunction with His Majesty's birthday, Le Tour De Brunei Cycling Championships from March 2 to 6, Shell Rimula Basketball Tournament, Endurance Marathon for December and several others are expected to attract crowds especially from neighbouring countries.



TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS

Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA), the national carrier flies non-stop or direct to several major destinations in Asia-Pacific, South Asia, the Middle East and to London and Frankfurt in Europe.

Last year alone has already

Photo of Empire Hotel & Country Resort extracted from www.theempirehotel.com



CIPTA Award 2005

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah on February 19 presented Crown Prince CIPTA Award 2005 at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Berakas.

Crown Prince CIPTA Award was divided into two categories namely Category 1 for Product, Process or Creative/Innovative Technology; and Category 2 for Innovative and Creative Modification to existing Product, Process and Technology.

The award was hoped to act as a cornerstone and as an encouragement to produce the culture of desire to invent something new and the creativity attitude to expand in the community.

The event held for the first time, is the project of Institute Technology of Brunei (ITB) with Brunei Liquefied Natural Gas (BLNG) Sendirian Berhad. The award will be held every two years.

Societies Order replaces Societies Act

Clubs, companies, partnerships or associations are informed to register themselves or risk being fined and jailed under various sections with the recent Societies Order consented by His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Deputy Senior Council of Attorney General's Chambers, Dayang Zuraini binti Haji Sharbawi and Acting Police Commissioner, Pehin Awang Zainuddin bin Jalani stated during a press conference at the Police Headquarters' in Gadong on February 8.

The new regulation which replaced the Societies Act (Chapter 61) and Societies regulations are similar to laws found in neighboring countries.

Belait District shares the nation's development

Belait District is not exempted from experiencing national development and progress. These progresses implemented in several phases and according to its significance.

Under the National Development Plan, a huge amount of finance had been allocated for the development of the Belait District. The programmes, among others were industrial development, education, road infrastructure, ports and housing.

These were stated by Yang Berhormat Pehin Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hazair, the Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office at the dialogue session between senior government officials and locals of Mukim Kuala Belait on February 13.

Objectives of these programmes were for the well-being of the citizens and residents of this nation-state. This is aligned with the nation's policy on progress where it emphasised on the total quality of life for the citizens.

According to Pehin Dato, individuals and the society in general do play a role. Without their strong support to the government, development plan would not be achieved completely and would not run efficiently.

The dialogue session held that day was a symbol of a good rapport and trust between the government and the citizens, especially locals of *Mukim* Kuala Belait. This relationship, according to Pehin Dato, is significant as the government and citizens of this nation-state share the same aspirations in maintaining peace, well-being and continuous development of this country.

The same principle should be maintained for the country to be peaceful and where it could guarantee the future generation.

Brunei government to fund Pakistan Foreign Service institute

Brunei government has agreed to fund US\$2.6 million for the training Institute for the Pakistan Foreign Service.

Foreign Secretary of the Republic of Pakistan, Mr Riaz H. Khokhar disclosed this during a media interview on February 2.

The Pakistan Foreign Service trains diplomats from 35 countries from Africa and Asia, which is one of the principal agreements, reached during talks with Brunei counterparts, he said.

Pakistan runs a comprehensive one-year training programme including the training of Foreign Service officers as well as diplomats from other countries.

There are also plans to get more people from Brunei to train in Islamabad where a number of training facilities to Brunei people are offered in a number of institutions including the Armed Forces.

The Pakistani government is extremely grateful to His Majesty and the Brunei government for the funding of this project, he added.

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

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

- His Excellency Hajatole Eslam Seyyed Mohamed Khatami, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran in conjunction with the republic's National Day on February 11.
- His Royal Highness Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, The Amir of Kuwait and his Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah in conjunction with Kuwait's National Day on February 25.

Snippets...

Launching of *Healthy Brunei Sihat* Newsletter

Ministry of Health in cooperation with Brunei Press Sdn Bhd launched a newsletter 'Healthy Brunei Sihat' on February 16 at the Mall in Gadong. Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Abu Bakar launched the newsletter.

The bilingual newsletter would be published twice a month, 10,000 copies per issue and distributed for free. Healthy Brunei Sihat consist various information on health; and also profile of individual or organisations that is active in promoting health through healthy life styles.

Specialists and Health Officers from Ministry of Health would also contribute articles or features related to own expert.

A health carnival was also held in conjunction with the launching ceremony.

Local food directory online

Brunei Darussalam has proven the efficiency of on-line information with the recent launch of the local eatery directory.

Pioneer of the latest free service on line covers a variety of food establishments in the country available at food.direct3.com or www.direct3.com.

CEO of BSearch Company, Mr David Ting on the recent launch said by bridging Info-Communication Technology with the food industry, diners can save time and money by comparing prices on-line.

Brunei Motor Transport Licensing Board: More permits issued

Brunei's Motor Transport Licensing Board for the past three years has issued 3,381 private

permits and leased 2,801 permits.

Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Awang Haji Zakaria stated this during the opening ceremony of the first board meeting at the Land Transport Office in Gadong on February 7.

The transportation industry in the country is a crucial field judging by its contribution to the economic growth in view of the increasing population and expansion in business, he said.

For permits relating to business vehicles, some 1,937 vehicles have been recorded passing through the control post for transit and delivery of goods through special approval.

The encouraging achievements by the board have been made possible with the frequent dialogue sessions held with bus and taxi operators and transport companies and issuing approval and control to vehicles crossing the border.

Stressing the importance of the board, the Minister also informed that its role in forwarding and outlining transport policies is in line with the vision and mission of the Land Transport Department for efficient, effective and safe passenger and goods transportation while at the same time giving a close attention to various services to the public.

RBA: Best economy class of Asia and new miles for Royal Skies

National carrier of Brunei Darussalam, Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA), expands her excellent track of record when it was awarded 'Best Economy Class of Asia' by a German travel magazine 'Clever reisen!'.

'Clever reisen!' (Clever Travels) has a readership of more than 100,000 readers. It provides the latest reports on travel information on airlines, hotels and holidays.

According to 'Clever reisen!', the determining factor for the award was

the generous 32 inch seat pitch as well as the 8.4 inch personal TV which provides excellent in-flight entertainment on board.

RBA has also announced that it has added additional destinations to its Royal Skies members.

Members of Royal Skies, as of January 31, are now eligible to earn miles at participating Taj Hotel resorts and Palaces. Members can now experience the pinnacle of luxury and service of "India's premier business house" from a choice of its 58 hotels in 38 locations across India with additional 14 international hotels in Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, United Kingdom, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Africa and the Middle East.

By February 1, Royal Skies members would receive extra miles when they apply for membership subscriptions to Golfing Elite. Golfing elite is a world-wide collection of over 200 of the world's most famous golf clubs and resorts across 40 countries.

Thanksgiving prayer for Crown Prince's 31st birthday

Thanksgiving prayers were held on February 16 in conjunction with His Royal Highness The Crown Prince's 31st birthday anniversary. The ceremonies were conducted by Ministry of Defence at Bolkih Garrison's Surau and Ministry of Education at the University of Brunei Darussalam's mosque.

Pengiran Muda Mahkota Al-Muhtadee Billah Fund for Orphan (DANA) also organised the prayer at the Multi-purpose hall of The Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkih Foundation Building Complex.

Brunei In Brief

Official name: Negara Brunei Darussalam

Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan

Land size: 5765 sq. km

Geographical Position: North-west of Borneo Island in Southeast Asia

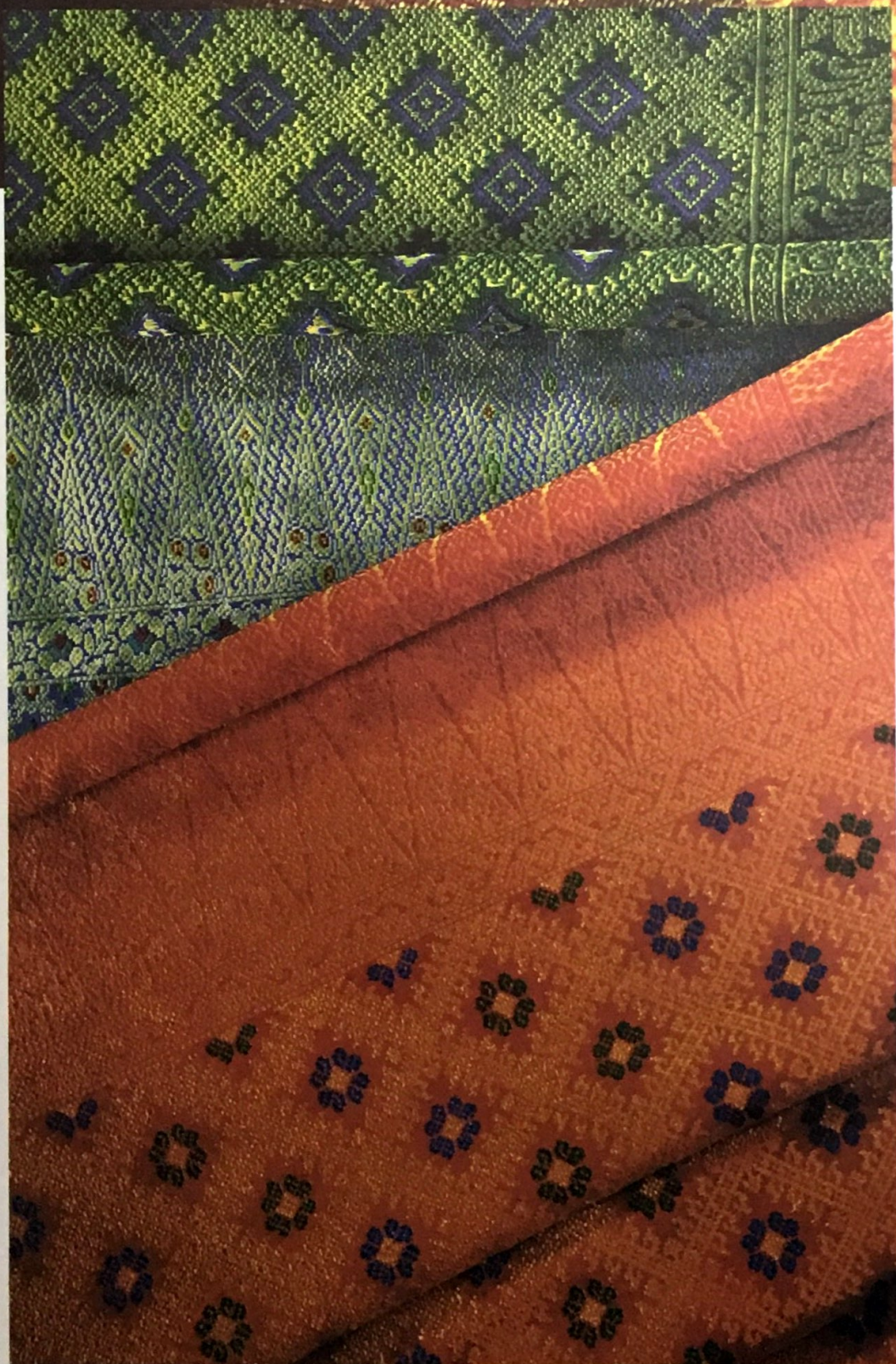
Population: 349,600 (2003 estimate)

National Carrier: Royal Brunei Airlines

Official Language: Malay

Official Religion: Islam

Official Website: www.brunei.gov.bn



Arts and Handicraft Centre

The Arts and Handicraft Centre is one of 'must visited' places for those interested in Brunei's arts and handicraft. Built on the banks of Brunei River, the Centre was launched to revive the tradition of local crafts. The Centre is a training centre offering courses like silver-craft, brass-craft, weaving and engraving. It also operates a marketing section to promote the marketing and sales of the Centre's products. (Photos show intricately designed brocade called *kain tenunan* and crafted silverware - among the products made at the Centre).

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