



# برونى دارالسلام

## Brunei Darussalam

# Brunei Darussalam newsletter

Published by the Department of Information, Prime Minister's Office

JUNE, 2005  
VOLUME 20 ISSUE 6

## Brunei-Russia: Relations developed through international & regional cooperation

International and regional cooperation has widened the opportunities to develop closer and practical bilateral cooperation between Brunei and Russia. These could be seen through current work to widen the scope of cooperation namely; tourism, defence, education and culture.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said during his official visit to the Russian Federation on June 7.

The sovereign said that Brunei would be delighted if she could attract interest from the Russian government and people. It was hoped that the visit would develop such interest.

His Majesty also said that he was very pleased with the progress made in developing the bilateral relations. The progress was founded on the basis of friendship and mutual respect.

"I believe, however, that the best way to ensure that they remain strong and lasting is through the simple human agency. By this, I mean finding ways for our people to get to know each other better, share experiences, deepened their understanding and appreciation of each other and enjoy the pleasures of true international goodwill," said His Majesty.

\* more on page 3 & centrepage



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam with His Excellency Vladimir V. Putin, the President of the Russian Federation at a state banquet held at Alexandra Hall, Grand Kremlin Palace.



The sovereign at the G77 and China Second South Summit 2005 at Doha, Qatar.



## Unification and cooperation key to success

Group 77 would be more successful with unification and strong cooperations between countries of the South.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said at the First Session of the G77 and China Second South Summit 2005 on June 15 in Doha, Qatar.

According to the sovereign, G77 countries would be in a better position to face and examine issues resulted from globalisation, development in science and technology and the concept of South-South cooperation.

The first summit held in 2000, said His Majesty, provided a foundation for

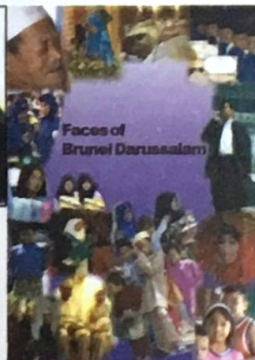
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# CONTENTS

Volume 20 Issue 6 JUNE, 2005

Brunei-Russia: Relations developed through international & regional cooperation	1
Unification and cooperation key to success	1
Brunei-Russia: Shows strong commitment to enhance bilateral relations	3
Palace Newsround	4
Congratulatory Messages	4
Major power plant construction in July	5
G77 Summit	6
His Majesty visits Russia	8
Senior Minister visits Health Ministry	10
Brunei-Philippines ties progressive and continuously enhanced	11
Brunei ready for Asian Golf players	11
Brunei partakes in free-trade agreement	12
\$8 million to preserve beach	12
Strategic Plan to harmonise structure of ASEAN customs	12
Prevention from drug abuse starts at home	13
Good Manufacturing Practise (GMP) Workshop	13
Pesta Sukan Kebangsaan (PSK)	13
Entrepreneurial Development Programme	13
Development of Education in Brunei Darussalam	14
Snippets	15
Faces of Brunei Darussalam	16



## BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER

is published monthly by the Department of Information. It reports on government, social and business events in the country. All money values are expressed in Brunei dollars \$, unless otherwise stated. Any information in this newsletter may be reproduced; a clipping of the publication would be appreciated. For free subscription (excluding postage) write to the Distribution Division, The Department of Information, Old Airport, Berakas BB 3510, Brunei Darussalam.

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## Brunei-Russia: Shows strong commitment to enhance bilateral relations

During the four-day official visit to the Russian Federation, His Majesty The Sultan and Yang di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam held bilateral talks with His Excellency Vladimir V. Putin on June 7.

Brunei Darussalam had shown her strong commitment towards enhancing the bilateral relations between Brunei and Russia.

Brunei, as a nation, recognised and values the importance of maintaining dialogue and high-level contacts on bilateral cooperation matters. It was also assured that Brunei is prepared and ready to step up her efforts aimed towards expanding her trade and economic relations and investment cooperation with Russia. It was also agreed to promote direct contacts between the business communities of the two nation-states.

At the bilateral talk, Brunei agreed to strengthen interactions in the military-technical cooperation with a view for a possible signing of corresponding bilateral documents at a later stage.

Other areas of cooperations to be developed mutually are in the fields of science and technology, culture, education and sports and to encourage people-to-people contacts in these areas.

Brunei has expressed her appreciation on the signing of the Agreement on Cooperation between the University Brunei Darussalam and the Moscow State Institute of International Relations University of MFA of Russia.

Also agreed was to continue discussions and preparations for the eventual signing of a number of bilateral documents including those related to the promotion and mutual protection of investments, cooperation in tourism, and mutual visa waiver arrangement for diplomatic and official passport holders.

Brunei shares a common perception on major regional and international issues. She has agreed to cooperate in the maintenance of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific and other regions of the world. She has reaffirmed her commitment to implement the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes in accordance to the principles of international law.

Brunei stressed the importance for all States to strictly comply with existing international agreements in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Cooperation and taking initiative measures within the bilateral and multilateral context would be intensified.

The bilateral talks touched on regional and international matters. The talks had opened a new stage in relations between both countries. This had given an impetus to the development of friendly ties and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two nation-states based on principles of mutual respect for national sovereignty, non-interference in each other's internal affairs and sovereign equality, and made an important contribution to maintaining peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region and the world as a whole.

Both sides had expressed satisfaction with the development of bilateral relations since the establishment of diplomatic relations in October 1991 and recognised the great importance of maintaining dialogue and high-level contacts on matters of bilateral cooperation.

Both sides had confirmed their readiness to step up their efforts aimed at expanding trade and economic relations and investment cooperation. It was also agreed that there would a promotion of direct contacts between business communities of the two countries and to strengthen interaction in military-technical cooperation with a view to a possible signing of corresponding bilateral documents at a later stage.

Another agreed areas of cooperation are science and technology, culture, education and sports and to encourage people-to-people contacts in these areas. Both sides also agreed to continue discussions and preparations for the eventual signing of a number of bilateral documents including those related to the promotion and mutual

protection of investments, cooperation in tourism, and mutual visa waiver arrangement for diplomatic and official passport holders.

Both parties agreed to cooperate in the maintenance of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific and other regions of the world. Their commitment to implement the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes in accordance to the principles of international law was also reiterated.

Importance for all States to strictly comply with existing international agreements in the field of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction were also stressed.

Also agreed was to intensify cooperation and initiate necessary measures within the bilateral and multilateral formats.

Brunei also stressed a great importance to ensure security and confidence-building in the Asia-Pacific region and enhancing the efficiency of the existing multilateral structures and mechanisms of cooperation within the context of ASEAN, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

At the bilateral meeting, Brunei has stress that Russia's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia has contributed to the enhancement of security and stability in the region and the continuation of dialogue between Russia and ASEAN at a higher level.

Both parties had also attached importance to the convening of the first ASEAN-Russia Summit to be held in Kuala Lumpur at the end of this year. It would provide further boost for a wider interaction between Russia and ASEAN in all fields of mutual interest.

Brunei has also welcomed the intention of Russia to participate in the activities of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).



Bilateral meeting between both nation-states.



## PALACE NEWSROUND...

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

- ❶ His Excellency John Saville, the new British High Commissioner to Brunei on June 2.
- ❷ His Excellency Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Adam bin Haji Ahmad, the newly appointed Ambassador of Brunei to Oman on June 7.



### CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES

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

- His Excellency Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, the President of the Republic of Italy and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Silvio Berlusconi in conjunction with the anniversary of the Republic of Italy on June 2.
- His Majesty Carl Gustaf XVI, the King of the Kingdom of Sweden and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Goran Persson in conjunction with the National Day of the Kingdom of Sweden on June 6.
- Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, The Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Island and her Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Tony Blair in conjunction with the Queen's Birthday on June 11.
- Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, President of the Republic of the Philippines in conjunction with the republic's Independence Day anniversary on June 12.



## PALACE NEWSROUND...



# Deputy Sultan receives audiences

His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Deputy Sultan received audiences at the Balai Penghadapan Bukit Kayangan from:

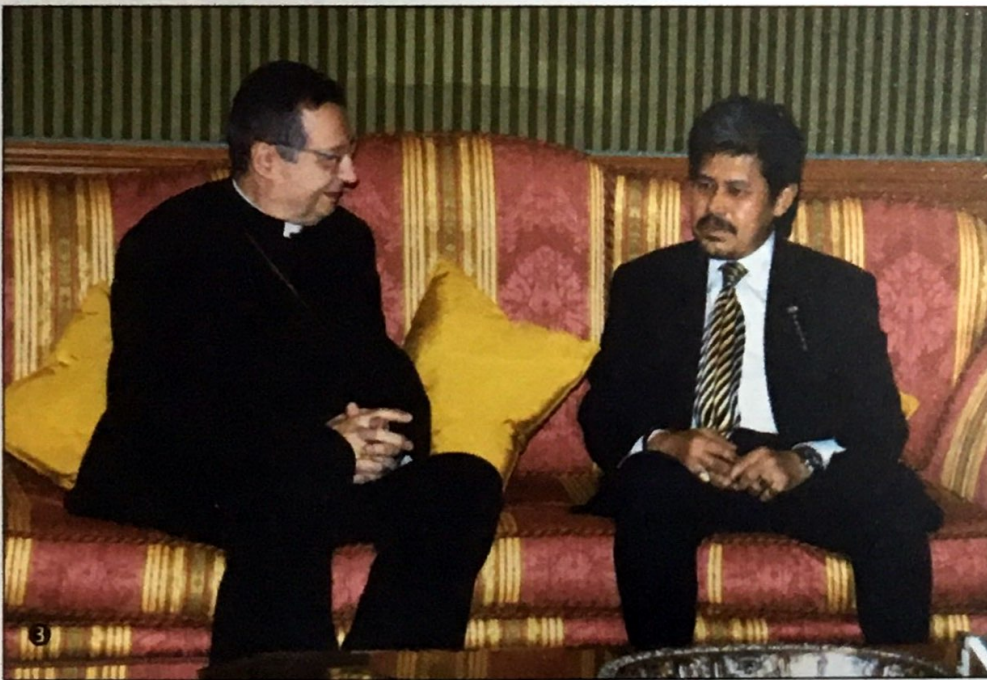
❶ The Honourable De-Anne Kelly MP, Ex-Soldiers Affairs Minister and Assistant Minister for Australia's Defence Minister on June 11.

❷ His Excellency Luiz Augusto de Araujo Castro, Brazil's Ambassador to Mexico and special envoy of Brazil's President on June 13.

❸ His Excellency Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo, Secretary for the Holy See's Relations with States on June 20.

❹ Her Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa on June 22.

His Royal Highness was appointed as the Deputy Sultan as His Majesty was away on official visit.



## Major power plant construction in July

A massive power plant that is likely to be constructed this year in July is expected to generate cheaper electricity. It will benefit local industries as well as household consumers in the country.

The major electrical generating complex to be constructed in Tutong district is estimated at B\$200 million. It will also supply sufficient electricity to propel planned developments like the

aluminium-smelting plant in Lumut and other schemes aimed at economic diversification.

The project that will provide the country with sufficient power for years to come was initially estimated at B\$165 million. It is managed by a local consulting firm, Baharuddin & Associates.

Meanwhile, the huge project has already been assigned to Japan's

leading construction company, Marubeni Corporation and General Electric that will carry out the civil works and provide gas turbines respectively.

Huge development projects undertaken by the country including the Parliament Building, Radio Television Brunei and a major water project are expected to bring in more labour force.





The sovereign delivering a speech at the Summit where he stressed on the vital aspects of cooperation as key to success



His Royal Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Amir Qatar and consort hosted a luncheon for His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

## G77 Summit

\* From front page

countries of the South to be more successful in cooperating with developed nation-states.

As a whole, the importance of G77 is expanding as a unified force in the international affairs.

At the G77 Summit, His Majesty held bilateral meetings with two of G77 leaders.

His Majesty first held a bilateral meeting with His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal; and followed by His Excellency President Mathieu Kerekou of Republic of Benin.

Among the itineraries of the sovereign at the G77 Summit include attending the official opening ceremony of the summit on June 15, and a luncheon hosted by His Royal Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the Emir of Qatar at Wajba Palace on June 16.



His Excellency Sheikh Mohammad bin 'Eid Al-Thani welcomed the arrival of His Majesty at Doha



His Majesty meets the Doha-based Brunei's foreign mission



His Majesty and His Excellency President Mathieu Kerekou, the President of the Republic of Benin in a bilateral meeting



A bilateral meeting was held between His Majesty and His Majesty King Gyanendra Bir Bikram, the King of Nepal



The sovereign at the opening of the summit at Sheraton Hotel in Doha

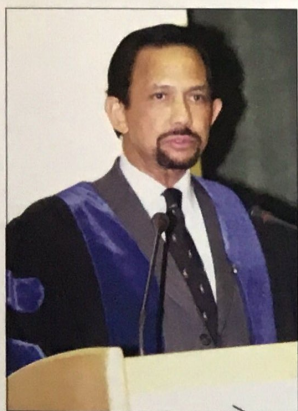


His Majesty (front row 2<sup>nd</sup> from left) and other world leaders in a group photo at the Summit





His Majesty and His Excellency at a state banquet



His Majesty was conferred with Honorary Doctorate by Moscow State Institute of International Relations University



One of the itineraries during the official visit to Russia was a visit to the Special Weapon Firing Range in Klimosk Town



A pilot briefs His Majesty on SU-30 aircraft



The sovereign delivers a royal speech

## His Majesty visits Russia

His Majesty The Sultan Yang-Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam was on official visit to Russia from June 6 to 9.

Upon arrival at Vnukovo Airport, His Majesty was welcomed by His Excellency Alexander Saltanov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia. At this official visit, His Majesty had a bilateral meeting with his Excellency President Vladimir V. Putin at Grand Kremlin Palace. Both leaders held a Plenary Bilateral Meeting between both countries.

During His Majesty's call, the sovereign visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers in Alexanderovsky, Special Weapon Firing Range (Tsniitochmash) in Klimosk Town and Zhukhovskiy Airfield. His Majesty also went to Saint Petersburg, where he visited the world's largest museum, the Hermitage Museum and Peterhoff Palace and watched a ballet performance at Bolshoi Theatre.

On this official visit, His Majesty was conferred with Honorary Doctorate by Moscow State Institute International Relations University (MGIMO University).

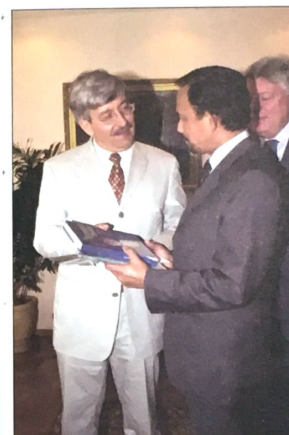
His Majesty also attended a state banquet hosted by His Excellency the President and a luncheon hosted by Her Excellency Valentina Matviyenko, the Governor of Saint Petersburg.

Brunei-Russia official relations were sealed on October 1, 1990 at the United Nations (UN) in New York. Brunei established its representative office in Moscow in 1998.

His Majesty watches techniques of shooting in water at the Special Firing Range in Klimosk Town



His Excellency Alexander Saltanov, the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation bids His Majesty farewell before His Majesty leaves for Saint Petersburg



Another itinerary during the visit to Russia is watching a ballet performance at the Russian Ballet at Bolshoi Theatre



His Majesty lays a wreath at the 'Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers' Monument at Alexanderovsky Park



One of the itineraries during the visit was a visit to Peterhoff Palace at Saint Petersburg



A guard-of-honour to welcome His Majesty's arrival



The sovereign examines an art display at the Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg



The Deputy General Director of Maritime Theatre bids His Majesty during the visit



# Crown Prince visits Health Ministry

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office was on series of visit to the Ministry of Health.

First visited was the Ministry's headquarter on June 1.

Later on June 4, His Royal Highness went to Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha (RIPAS) hospital and toured various divisions. Also visited were two health centres located in Berakas.

The visit continued on June 7 to the National Dental Centre in Berakas, Child Development Centre and Community Psychiatric Day Care Centre based in Kiarong.



**His Royal Highness takes a closer look at one of the specimens**



**A health officer explains part of tasks and responsibilities at the Child Development Centre**



**Another place visited was the National Dental Centre in Berakas**



**One of the divisions visited was at the Child Development Centre**



**A Matron explains more at the National Dental Centre**



## Brunei-Philippines ties progressive and continuously enhanced



Brunei-Philippines bilateral relations are more progressive today

Brunei-Philippines bilateral relations are more progressive, while co-operations in various fields are continuously enhanced.

Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna, Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said at a reception to commemorate the 107<sup>th</sup> Philippines' Independence Day on June 14. The ceremony took place at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

Her Royal Highness also said that Brunei-Philippines have the potential to further develop its tourism industry especially through air transportation and shipping. She also highlighted the various areas of co-operation such as through trade and defence. In defence, Brunei has given co-operation by deploying ten of her Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) personnel to Mindanao as part of the International Monitoring Team (IMT) in October 2004.

Her Royal Highness also expressed her gratitude to the Filipinos in the country where they had contributed towards the development of this nation-state.

## Brunei Open Tees Off

Brunei Open 2005, one of the major events in the country's sporting events calendar for this year officially teed off at the Empire Hotel & Country Club on June 23.

Among faces that were seen on the greens included the Asian Tour Order of Merit, Thailand's Thawom Wiratchant, and two of the continent's top golfers such as Australia's Scott Barr and Amandeep Johl from India.

According to Brunei Tourism Director Sheikh Jamaluddin Sheikh Mohammed, the tournament will be supported by the Brunei government for at least five years and it would create greater awareness among golfers of Brunei as a golfing destination.

The historical event of professional golfing tournament featuring Asian Tour players is a milestone in the country's sporting achievements, he added.

"The event venue is one of the best courses played in Asia and by bringing the premier events into Brunei Darussalam, the country can match itself with other big national opens in the region," said Asian Tour Chief Executive, Louis Martin.



Terry Pilkadaris from Australia, winner of the Brunei Open 2005 in a group photo with the Deputy Minister Industry and Primary Resources (5<sup>th</sup> from left) and the Director of Tourism (3<sup>rd</sup> from left)

Representing Brunei at the event were the nation's top players such as Seruji Haji Setia, Haji Arfian Haji Abd Kadir, Johari Haji Ahmad, Haji Shahminan Haji Damit and Suhaimi Ibrahim.

Over 150 of Asian's finest professional golfers were involved in the first ever US\$300,000 four-day Brunei Open Tournament. It was the last round in the Asian tour before the summer break.



# Brunei partakes in free-trade agreement

Brunei Darussalam joins Chile, New Zealand and Singapore as founding members of the first ever Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement.

The announcement came after successful negotiations for the Trans-Pacific SEP held in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea on June 3.

Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masha, Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was present at the joint press conference to announce the new agreement.

Other officials at the conference include His Excellency Ignacio Walker, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile, Hon. Jim Sutton, New Zealand's Minister for

Trade Negotiations, and His Excellency Lim Hng Kiang, Singapore's Minister for Trade and Industry.

According to officials, the new agreement indicates the beginning of a partnership that bridges Latin America, the Pacific and Asia.

The ministers have stated that the Trans-Pacific SEP formally known as the Pacific Three Closer Economic Partnership (P3-CEP), would bring in strategic benefits to all four members and help advance the shared objectives in APEC and WTO.

The ministers also announced that the parallel negotiations on Environment Cooperation Agreement and Labour Cooperation Memorandum

of Understanding had been reached including plans to establish the mechanisms for ongoing cooperation and dialogue on labour and environmental issues.

Negotiations on trade in goods had reached a comprehensive agreement where more than 90 per cent of the total trade among the four parties would be duty free.

According to the Joint Press Statement, Ministers from Chile, New Zealand and Singapore, they formally accepted Brunei as a founding member of the agreement, on terms that allow Brunei to progressively implement some of its commitments over the next two years.

## \$8 million to preserve beach

Brunei is serious in protecting its natural heritage. Recently, Serasa Beach had undergone a facelift which cost about \$8 million. The project was aimed towards conserving the beach from erosion. Serasa Beach which is based at Brunei cape is one of the popular beaches for family outings.

This was highlighted at the World Environment Day 2005 on June 5 by the Minister of Development, Yang Berhormat Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdullah at Serasa Beach.

According to the Minister, we should be aware of the negative effects on the environment due to negligence. One scenario is when the drainage system is blocked which would cause floods. This could lead to damage on assets leading to loss and high cost for repairs. It is more saddening when it involved loss of lives and damage to ecology.

Brunei with other member-states of the United Nations, celebrates World Environment Day every June 5. This year carries the theme 'Green-Cities – Plan For The Planet'.



Minister of Development officially launched 'World Environment Day'



The Minister of Finance II said that a greater emphasis had been given on combating commercial fraud, money laundering and terrorism financing since the September 11 incident

## Strategic Plan to harmonise structure of ASEAN customs

The ASEAN Customs management had formulated a Strategic Plan of Customs Development for 2005 to 2010. It is aimed towards the harmonising of ASEAN customs structure and to facilitate trade and investment in this region.

Minister of Finance II, Yang Berhormat Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdul Rahman said at the official opening of the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Director-General of Customs meeting held at the Centrepont Hotel in Gadong on June 6.

According to the Minister, Customs Administrations play a vital role in facilitating the flow of goods in the region. At the same time, it would combat smuggling, commercial fraud and terrorism.

He also said that since the September 11 incident, a greater emphasis had been given on combating commercial fraud, money laundering and terrorism financing.

The ASEAN Director-General of Customs meeting was first held in 1993. This is the first time Brunei became the hosting country.



# Prevention from drug abuse starts at home

Various measures had been implemented to ensure that this country is safe from unlawful acts. This includes the prevention in distribution of controlled drugs.

This was highlighted by the Acting Director of Narcotics Control Bureau, Awang Haji Abdul Majid at an anti-drugs carnival organised by BASMIDA on June 5.

He also said that the vital steps to prevent a child from drug abuse are through their homes. Parents should instill good values, religious knowledge, and an inner-strength to avoid drugs.

"Parents are good models for their children. If the parents failed to be a good model, the children would be confused and could use their friends

that introduced them to bad elements as models," he said.

BASMIDA (Persatuan Membasmi Dadah Brunei Darussalam) is a non-governmental association where its main objective is to deliver anti-drug messages. It also aims to create awareness on the dangers and misuse of drugs.

## Good Manufacturing Practise (GMP) Workshop

Food entrepreneurs are responsible to ensure that their products are safe to consume.

Therefore the Post Harvest and Food Technology unit, Department of Agriculture had conducted a three-day workshop on Good Manufacturing Practise (GMP).

The GMP workshop which began on June 7 was attended by more than 40 small-and-medium enterprises (SMEs) and facilitated by two food experts from Malaysia.

The objective was to introduce the GMP Programme to local SMEs involved in food business to ensure that quality and food safety standards are maintained continuously.

The workshop was opened by Pengiran Hajah Mariana, Acting Director of Agriculture who also launched 17 types of GMP poster produces by her department.



Good Manufacturing Practice Workshop to emphasise on importance of products' safety

## Pesta Sukan Kebangsaan (PSK)



Athletes at the 7<sup>th</sup> National Sports Festival to compete in 15 games

Brunei Darussalam held its Pesta Sukan Kebangsaan (7<sup>th</sup> National Sports Festival) from June 11 to 19.

The festival witnessed 10 contingents comprising of 1,934 athletes competing in 15 games. Brunei Muara contingents' emerged as champions with 72 medals. Best Male and Female Athletes Award were also presented.

Pesta Sukan Kebangsaan is a bi-annual sports events. It is organised by Youth and Sport Department in their effort to develop local sports and also to deliver a healthier community.

## Entrepreneurial Development Programme

The launching of Entrepreneurial Development Programme for secondary schools students was held on June 13 at the Standards and Resource Centre in Tutong.

The six-day programme named 'Program Membentuk Rebung Keusahawanan Sekolah-Sekolah Menengah Seluruh Negara' was launched by Haji Mutalib bin Haji Idris, Acting District Officer of Tutong.

Fifty students from five secondary schools throughout the country joined the programme which was organised by Standards and Resource Centre of the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources.

Among the programme's objectives were to develop the participants knowledge and understanding in entrepreneurial activities.



Secondary school students listen to a briefing at the Entrepreneurial Development Programme



# DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

## INTRODUCTION

Ministry of Education plays a significant role in producing future leaders who will contribute to the country's economy.

Nonetheless, instilling a strong Islamic and MIB value among scholars are one of the main goals of the Ministry.

The Ministry of Education has therefore established educational policies for the country based on these main expectations.

Education in Brunei Darussalam has achieved an impressive progress through the continuous effort by the country's Ministry of Education to provide education for all.

Such efforts implemented through the provision of formal and non-formal education has already reached a significant increase of over 92.5 per cent literacy rate compared to just 69 per cent in the year 2001.

## SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Primary and Secondary level schools adopt a common curriculum approved by the Ministry of Education.

Lessons are taught in Malay Language from the pre-school level to Primary three.

However, from Primary four onwards a bilingual system of curriculum where Malay and English are used for specific subjects.

Lessons requiring the usage of Malay language as a teaching medium include classroom lessons and other school activities such as Malay Language, Islamic Religious Knowledge, Physical Education, Arts and Crafts, Civics and Melayu Islam Beraja (MIB).

Meanwhile, English language is used for teaching subjects such as Science, Mathematics, Geography, History and English Language lessons.

Primary education in Government-run schools is provided for free to citizens and permanent residents of Brunei Darussalam. Non-citizens could also be enrolled on a fee-paying basis. However, education is not primarily obtained only through the public system.

Parents have the choice to send their children to non-government schools in the country.

The schools run on a four term basis. It starts from January to December set by the Ministry of

Education.

In general, school days in a year will vary between 202 and 210 days.

## EDUCATION STATISTICS

A total of 168 Government-run schools were listed in Brunei Darussalam in 2004 including Pre-School, Primary and Secondary Schools, Pre-University, Technical and Vocational Institutions, Arabic Schools, Religious Teachers' College and University.

Over 72,023 students in these schools and institutions were also recorded last year along with a total of 6357 teachers.

Meanwhile non-government schools; Kindergarten, Pre-school, Primary, Secondary and Pre-University levels registered a total of 29,846 students. A total of 1858 teachers and lecturers are accounted for in the same year.

## DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION

Great challenges undertaken by the Ministry includes propagating the unification of religious schools under the authority of the Ministry of Religious Affairs with the schools under the Ministry of Education.

The policy was implemented following the call from His Majesty for 'Unity in Education' under the concept of 'one roof'.

Under the direction of the National Education Council set up in 1999, the amalgamation was implemented in phases beginning with the placement of three sections of Government agencies.

These include the Department of Islamic Studies, Ministry of Religious Affairs, namely the Inspectorate Section, the Examinations Section and the Curriculum Section are now under the existing School Inspectorate, Examinations and Curriculum Development Departments of the Ministry Education.

The move was launched on March 1, 2004 followed by the transfer of other sections under the merger project.

It was fully implemented in January 2005 with the transfer of the Department



of Islamic Studies and all the religious schools under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.

The merger of religious and regular schools under one roof allows the whole day schooling to be implemented as a pilot project in several primary and secondary schools.

Under the policy, schools share the same building and facilities which come under one school management where different curriculums are still followed.

In order to establish an integrated educational system, the Ministry has also reshuffled the contents of three educational syllabuses as part of the project.

Subjects that came under the restructure included the religious curriculum where one religious subject is taught in the primary and secondary school curriculum.

Meanwhile, Al-Quran and Islamic Religious Knowledge taught in several schools are combined into one curricular component of Islamic Education within the integrated education system.

The streamlining of the project that covered 37 selected schools were implemented on January 3, where Islamic Education is a compulsory subject for Muslim students from pre-school to lower primary level.

Non-Muslims students however, are provided with the option of taking Extended Civics, Arabic language and Info-communications Technology (ICT) which are introduced in stages beginning with Primary One children.

The merger of these particular subjects into the school curriculum is also in line with the Ministry's mission towards ensuring that the two fields of education, religious and academic, will balance, complement and supplement each other.



## Snippets...

### Xiamen eyes Brunei as potential hub

An influx of Chinese tourists are expected to visit Brunei Darussalam following a recent visit by Senior representatives from China's Xiamen Airlines. They were in the country to conduct a marketing research on the potential of Borneo as a hub for tourists.

The new route for Xiamen Airlines is expected to bring in tourists from Xiamen and Fujian to the Sultanate and neighbouring countries including Sibiu, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu by September this year.

According to Mr Deng Dong Tao, the airline's Passenger Marketing Department Vice-General Manager in a statement on June 3, the move was recommended by China's Civil Aviation Department to set up links between Brunei and China.

He added that by establishing the new route, tourists from Xiamen and Fujian province would be able to discover the "Kingdom of Unexpected Treasures".

During their stay, the airline representatives had the opportunity to develop their business networks with various agencies in Brunei, including Royal Brunei Airlines, various travel agencies and government authorities.

Currently, Xiamen flies from Fujian to Kuala Lumpur and Singapore seven times a week and Penang three times a week. Xiamen Airlines has been operating for over 20 years and currently operates to over 100 domestic and International routes for passengers and cargo to the major cities in China and Southeast Asian countries.

### Brunei to host special Olympics Bocce event

Brunei Darussalam will be hosting the Special Olympics Asia Pacific Bocce Competition from August 11 to 15 this year.

The event will be held at the Hassanal Bolkiah Stadium in Berakas. Five countries will be participating; Brunei Darussalam, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand and Philippines.

Organised by the Brunei Darussalam Special Olympics, the event aims to encourage the intellectually disabled to realise their potential in the sporting arena and enhance their unique potential while developing new friendships with other participants from other countries.

Brunei Darussalam will be represented by 24 special athletes from Pusat Ehsan, Pusat Bahagia Pulaie and Special Educations Unit under the Ministry of Education.

Over 150 volunteers had registered to assist in the upcoming event including students, scouts and Girl Guide association, Red Crescent society as well as other individuals.

According to Chairperson of the Brunei Darussalam Special Olympics, Pengiran Datin Hj Noraini, "The local participants have already undergone their bocce competition trainings at Pusat Ehsan and I am confident that they will be able to perform their very best at the event."

### International Conference on Special Education

The Second International Conference on Special Education was held at the Chancellor Hall of University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD).

The four-day conference which began on June 6 carried the theme 'Our Children Our Future' was organised by Special Education Unit, Ministry of Education in cooperation with UBD.

The conference was aimed to share ideas and experiences particularly in Special Education Principle, procedures and practices from all over the world.

### Brunei to showcase food products

Brunei Darussalam will be participating in the 'Malaysia International Halal Showcase 2005' (MIHAS). It will be held from July 28 to 31 at the Malaysian International Exhibition & Convention Centre, Mines Resort in Kuala Lumpur.

This year is the second time for the Malaysian-host event to be held. This year's theme is 'Repositioning the Global Halal Business'.

## 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.brunel.gov.bn](http://www.brunel.gov.bn)

PUBLIC WARNING. The trafficking of **controlled drugs** carries the **death penalty** in Brunei Darussalam.



## Faces of Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam's population at mid-year 2003 was estimated at 348,800 persons. 176,300 were male and 172,500 were female. With these, largest racial group is Malay (66.6%), followed by Chinese (10.9%), other Indigenous group (3.6%) and 18.9% are others. About 103,300 people are below the age of 15 and 10,300 persons are those aged 65 above.