



برونى دارالسلام

Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam newsletter

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Brunei Darussalam celebrates Nuzul Al-Quran

Muslims throughout the nation-state celebrated Nuzul Al-Quran on October 20 corresponding with the 17th day of Ramadhan. Nuzul Al-Quran is a celebration in honour with the first revelation of the Al-Quran revealed to Prophet Muhammad.

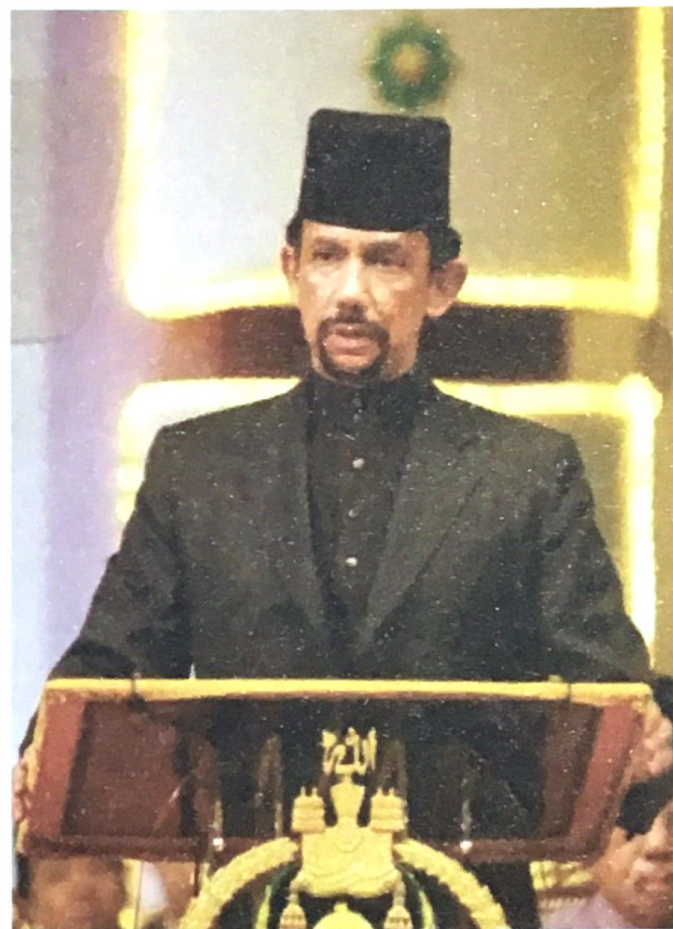
In Brunei Darussalam, celebrations to commemorate the significant date are usually organised, such as the 'Memorisation of Al-Quran and Selected Surahs Competition'. As such, a prize awarding ceremony was held for the winners of the competition.

Present to award the prize was His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam on October 20 at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

His Majesty also delivered a royal speech in conjunction with Nuzul Al-Quran where the sovereign reminded citizens to be grateful with the blessings that have been given by Allah The Almighty. The blessings come in form of the country being peaceful and constantly safeguarded from undesired incidents.

The sovereign also touched on the need to have proper religious education. The sovereign said that religious education which has now returned to the ambit of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, should be conducted well based on close research and planning. He said it should not be conducted merely by trial and error where results predicted by such tries are still obscure.

"Our goal is to instill a proper religious education. The country is always in need of citizens who are educated, have faith and are pious, so that fortunes may overflow from the sky and grow from the earth. This is the ambition of citizens guided by the Quran, the revelation of which we are celebrating tonight," said His Majesty.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam reminded citizens to grateful with blessings bestowed by Allah.

Increase in CPI for August 2005

Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the month of August increased by 0.1 per cent compared from the previous month. According to Department of Economic Planning and Development, the increase was partly due to most prices reverting to its original level after the Mid Year Sale.

For the month of August, the cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages increased by 0.2 per cent. This was resulted from higher prices of fresh

and frozen beef; fresh buffalo and lamb; fresh fish; chocolate bars; cordial syrups; and selected take away foodstuffs.

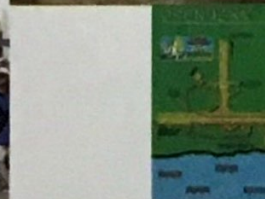
Cost of clothing and footwear also experienced an increase up to 8.9 per cent due to dearer prices of ready-made clothing and accessories; materials for male and female; tailoring charges; and footwear.

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Members of the royal family at the Nuzul-Al Quran celebration



His Majesty presents a trophy to the winner of Category C of the Memorisation of Al-Quran and Selected Surahs Competition, Dayang Norasilah binti Haji Putting.

Nuzul Al-Quran is a religious event celebrated nation wide. It is in commemoration of the revelation of the first verse of the Al-Quran which fell on 17 Ramadhan.



Winner of Category A of the Memorisation of Al-Quran and Selected Surahs Competition, Awang Mohammad Raihan bin Haji Mohd Sahri (left).



Guests at the celebration of Nuzul Al-Quran held at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

PALACE NEWSROUND...

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Deputy Sultan received an audience at the Istana Nurul Iman from His Excellency Patrick Bonneville, the newly appointed Ambassador of Republic of France to Brunei on October 3.



Congratulatory Messages

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

- His Excellency Hu Jintao, President of the Republic of China and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Wen Jinbao in conjunction with the republic's National Day on October 1.

- His Excellency Roh Moo-hyun, President of the Republic of Korea and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Lee Hae-Chan in conjunction with the republic's National Foundation Day on October 3.

- His Excellency Horst Kohler, President of Federal Republic of Germany and His Excellency Gerhard Schroder, the Federal Republic of German's Chancellor in conjunction with the German Unification Day on Oct 3.

- His Majesty King Juan Carlos I, the King of the Kingdom of Spain and his Prime Minister, His Excellency Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero in conjunction with Spain National Day on October 12.

Brunei's first *Syariah* compliant co-branded card

The Islamic Development Bank of Brunei (IDBB) launched its co-branding card with Mulaut Abattoir Sdn Bhd (MASB) on October 8. The card "IDBB-Mulaut" is Brunei's first *syariah* compliant co-branded card launched by the Managing Director of IDBB, Pengiran Datin Hajah Urai binti Pengiran Ali.

The IDBB-Mulaut co-branded card is a collaboration between Mastercard International, IDBB Card and MASB, which is aimed at providing incentives to card

members. The co-brand Mastercard is also specially created to cater for easy purchase of daily meat and poultry needs of Mulaut Abattoir's customers.

IDBB had launched its first *Syariah* compliant Mastercard in 2004. Present IDBB cardholders will be issued with the IDBB-Mulaut co-branded card on a pre-approved basis, without additional charges.

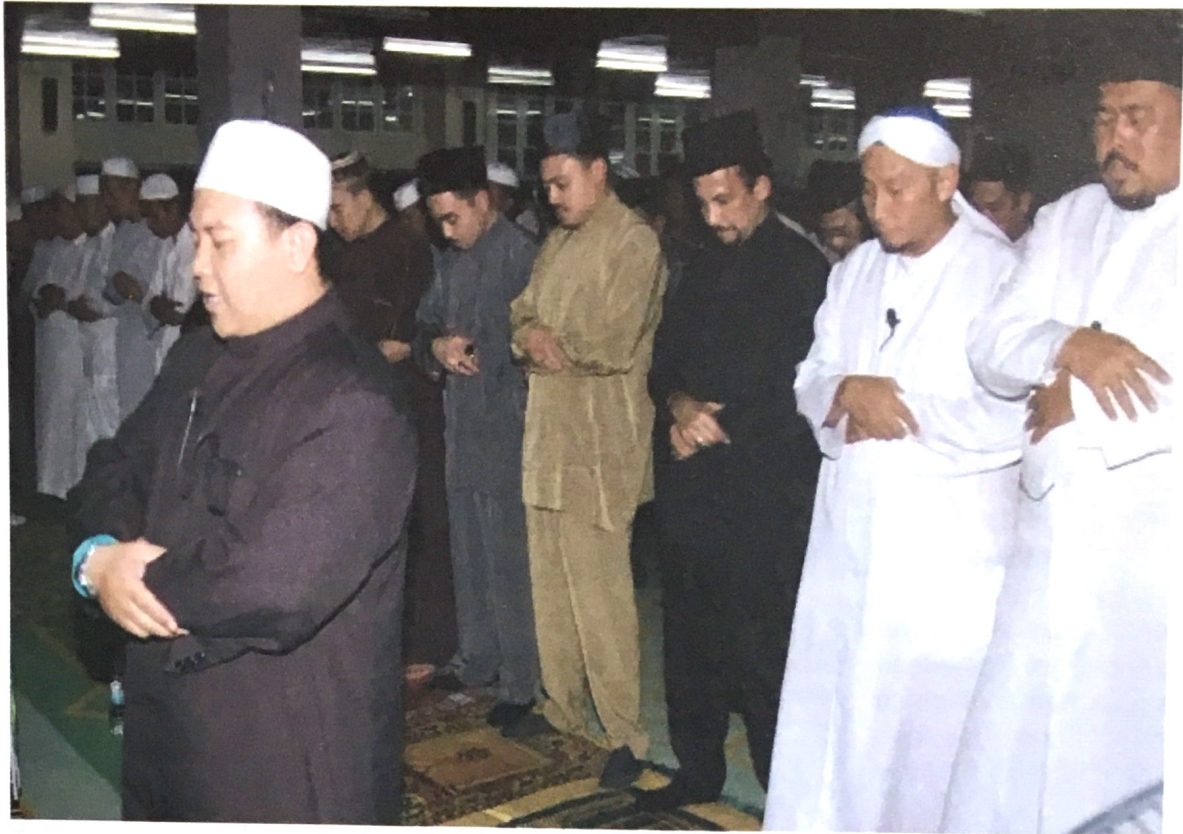
MASB was formerly a department under the management of the Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources and

formerly known as "*Pusat Penjualan Ternakan Mulaut*".

The main function of the department was to provide slaughtering of livestock particularly those supplied by local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) which MASB today still supports at all outlets.

The department was then privatised on August 31, 1990 and became a subsidiary of Royal Brunei Airlines. MASB, was established on November 20, 1991.

His Majesty joined Terawih Prayers



His Majesty and entourage performing Terawih prayers at one of the mosques during the holy month of Ramadhan.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and members of the royal family joined scores of Muslims to perform the *Isyak* and *Terawih* prayers at various mosques in the country during the holy month of Ramadhan.



Condolence message

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

- His Excellency General Pervez Musharraf, the President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan following the recent earthquake in the republic on October 9.
- The Right Honourable Datuk Seri Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi, the Prime Minister of Malaysia and his family, following the demise of his wife, Datin Seri Endon binti Mahmood on October 20.

Ramadhan stalls receive royal visit

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam made a surprise visit to the Ramadhan stalls situated at the Gadong wet market on October 24.

During the visit, His Majesty met stall operators and members of the public.

The Ramadhan stalls are set up only during the month of Ramadhan where Muslims are given a variety of menu selections to break their fast. The foods are as cheap as \$1 for a packet of fried noodles.

In the capital, there are usually two main popular areas of Ramadhan stalls namely; Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium and the Gadong wet market parking areas.



His Majesty meets stall owners at the Ramadhan stalls.



Their Royal Highnesses pouring 'air asah-asahan' and scented flowers onto the burial ground.

Royal couple attends funeral

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, personal representative of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah attended the funeral of Datin Seri Endon Mahmood, the wife of Malaysia's Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Datuk Seri Haji Abdullah bin Haji Ahmad Badawi on October 20 at Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur.



Launching of ‘Brunei Darussalam in ASEAN’

A book titled ‘Brunei Darussalam in ASEAN’ was launched by Awang Haji Bujang bin Haji Masu’ut, Chairman of Sub-committee of Information, ASEAN-COCI (Committee on Culture and Information), Brunei Darussalam on October 1.

The book is one of the projects under the ASEAN-COCI aimed at disseminating and promoting to ASEAN community through ASEAN-COCI Sub-committee on Information of respective countries.

ASEAN Minister Responsible for Information (AMRI) and ASEAN-COCI agreed to make continuous effort to enhance awareness on ASEAN among ASEAN and international communities.

The publishing of ‘Brunei Darussalam in ASEAN’ was an initiative of the Chairman of Sub-committee of Information, ASEAN-COCI.

Among the places the books would be distributed are public libraries, higher academic institutions in Brunei and other ASEAN countries, and Brunei’s High Commissioners and Embassies in foreign countries.



‘Brunei Darussalam in ASEAN’ is one of the projects under the ASEAN-COCI.

ASEAN India Journalist Exchange Programme

Eleven journalists from India were in the country for the ASEAN India Journalist Exchange Programme. Also present was a representative from ASEAN Secretariat. The three-day programme started on October 2 and organised by Brunei’s Sub-Committee on Information of ASEAN Committee of Culture and Information (COCI).

Among the places visited during the programme were Information Department; Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources; Department of Radio and Television Brunei (RTB); Brunei Press, a local company publishing daily newspaper; and Kampong Ayer (water village).

The journalists also made courtesy calls to High Commissioner of India to Brunei; and Acting Director of RTB.

Brunei-India diplomatic relations were established on May 10, 1984. His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam had made a state visit to India in



ASEAN-India Journalist Exchange Programme foster closer relationship.

September 1992.

The Bilateral Joint Committee Meeting between Brunei and India was set up on February 24, 1995. The Joint Committee is intended to promote closer bilateral cooperation between both countries.

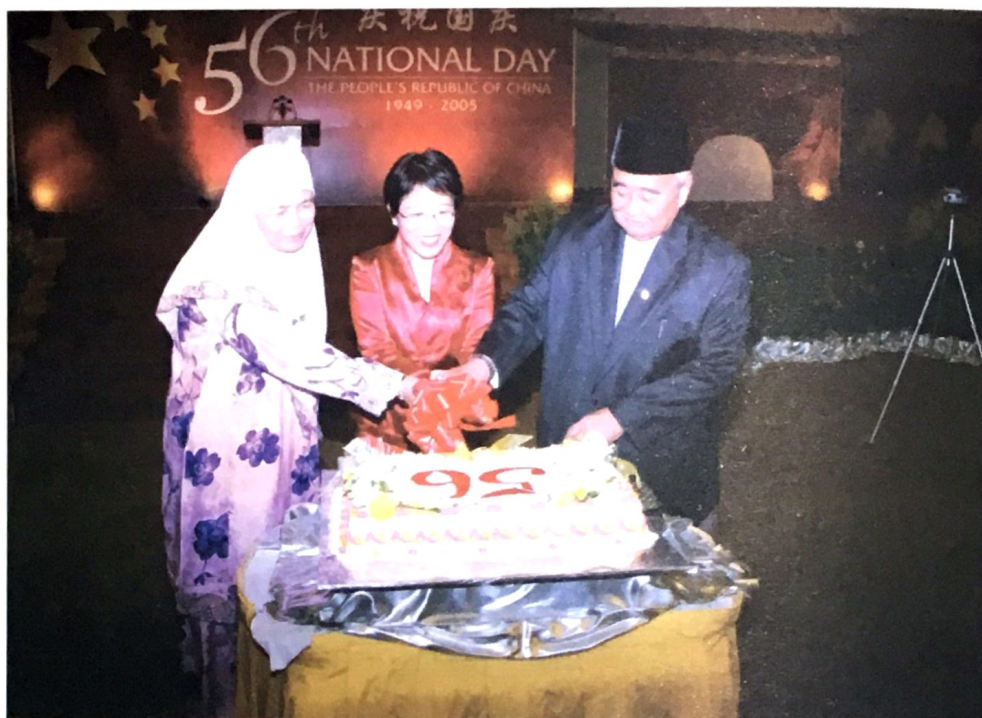
Brunei and India signed an air services agreement in January 1995; and an agreement on the setting up of a Telemetry Tracking and Telecommand Station in Brunei on August 5, 1997.

Brunei-China bilateral ties remain strong

The Embassy of the Republic of China celebrated its 56th Republic of China National Day on October 1 held at the International Convention Centre in Berakas.

The guest of honour, Pehin Dato Seri Utama Dr. Ustaz Haji Mohd Zain, Minister of Religious Affairs and wife were present on behalf of the Government of His Majesty and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Brunei Darussalam and the People's Republic of China have formalised bilateral cooperation since 1991 and until today, the bilateral ties remain strong. One of the highlights of Brunei Darussalam and China's bilateral relations has been the working visit of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan to China in 2004. Brunei Darussalam and China have signed a number of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in different fields of cooperation, including education, finance and legal matters.



Pehin Dato Seri Utama Dr. Ustaz Haji Mohd Zain and wife with the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Brunei Darussalam at a reception celebrating the 56th National Day of the Republic.

* From front page (Consumer Price Index)

There was also an increase of 1.9 per cent for the cost of household goods, services and operation. This was due to higher prices of furniture; floor coverings; household furnishings; household equipment and electrical appliances; kitchen appliances and utensils; and crockery and cutlery.

The cost of medical and health increased by 1.2 per cent resulted from higher prices of therapeutical appliances.

Cost of miscellaneous goods and services also experienced an increase of 0.9 per cent resulted from higher prices of personal care products and accessories.

However, there were a few groups that experienced a decrease in percentage due to a number of reasons.

For transportation cost, there was a decline of 2.3 per cent due to lower prices of selected motor vehicles.

While lower prices of selected mobile phones and accessories led to the fall in the cost of communication by 0.2 per cent.

The cost of recreation and entertainment had contracted by 0.6 per cent due to lower prices of animal feeds and package tour.

While the cost of housing, water, electricity and maintenance remained unchanged from the previous month.

The CPI in August 2005 was 1.0 per cent higher than that of the same month in 2004.



Banking sector urged to assist SME

Banking sector should give due attention to the development of small- and- medium entrepreneurs (SME). The sector should also provide financial facilities that could stimulate, develop and diversify the country's economy.

Minister of Finance II, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Abdul Rahman said at the official opening of Standard Chartered Bank's new branch at Hua Ho Mall at Jalan Muara on October 11.

The Minister also hoped that the banking sector would contribute to the growth of the economy in various fields. This is in the effort to reduce the country's dependence on oil and gas and assist the government to develop identified sectors to diversify the nation's economy.

He also said that in May this year, the Ministry of Finance had issued policy directives to banks which among others would allow banks to fix their prime rate. This was aimed at ensuring that banks could offer a



Minister of Finance II, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Abdul Rahman cuts the ribbon to mark the official opening of the new Standard Chartered Bank's branch at Hua Ho Mall in Jalan Muara.

much more competitive prime rate to reduce the burden of businessmen, entrepreneurs and the public. It is

also to enhance cost-efficiency in the bank's operation and facilitate the economic growth.

Good Governance attracts FDI

Good governance attracts foreign direct investment (FDI) to invest or to establish trade activities in a particular country. With that, the Government through its Civil Service would continuously enhance its effectiveness, productivity and quality of services to members of the public.

These were outlined by the Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office, Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Hamid at the opening of the ASEAN-EC 2005 Economic Forum – Foreign Direct Investment: Strategic Revisited at the ASEAN-EC Centre in Gadong on October 3.

According to the Permanent Secretary, the 100 hours of training and local scheme of services are currently under review and updated. This is to enhance the level of professionalism among civil servants.

The Economic Forum was participated by 130 people both local and overseas. Six papers were presented from Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam.



Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Hamid, Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office said that good governance attracts foreign direct investment.

Institute of Medicine as the leading centre by 2010



Dr. Zulkarnain, the Dean of Institute of Medicine at the launching of 'Leadership Enhancement' programme

A highly motivated human resources equipped with leadership and management resources based on the teachings of Islam are highly important in realising the vision of the Institute of Medicine to become the leading centre for medical-education, medical research and medical community. The Institute hopes to be the leading centre by 2010.

These were highlighted by the Dean of Institute of Medicine of University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD), Dr.

Zulkarnain. He was speaking at the launch of 'Leadership Enhancement' programme at The Empire Hotel and Country Club in Jerudong on October 1.

Dr. Zulkarnain also said that in light of realising the vision, the Institute of Medicine would be undertaking a series of 'Executive Enhancement Programmes' (LEP) to be conducted over the next six months.

Present to officially launch the programme was the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar.

UOB opens new branch

United Overseas Bank Limited (UOB) has officially opened a new branch at Kiarong on October 1.

Present on behalf of the Ministry of Finance II, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Rahman was the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Ali.

UOB initially began its operations in Brunei Darussalam 1974. She was founded on August 6, 1935. Today, it is one of the leading banks in Singapore. As of December 31, 2004, the UOB Group had total assets of \$134.9 billion and shareholders' funds of \$13.4 billion.

UOB has a vast network of 385 offices around the world comprising of 61 branches in Singapore and over 280 offices in Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, France, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, United Kingdom, USA and Viet Nam.

Humanitarian Earthquake Fund for Pakistan

The Humanitarian Earthquake Fund for Pakistan was launched on October 19 in the effort to ease the burden of recent earthquake victims in Kashmir, Pakistan.

Public are welcome to give financial donation until the next six months. Any fund-raising functions can also be held within the stated time. Donations can be made to the fund's secretariat at Finance Division, Second Floor, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports building or the fund box located at various banks and commercial complex.

Brunei to work closely with UNESCO

In the bid to provide education for all, Brunei Darussalam has achieved a number of goals such as high literacy rate and equal education between male and female.

Minister of Education, Pehin Dato Haji Awang Abdul Rahman said at the 33rd United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) General Conference in Paris on October 7.

The Minister also said that Brunei Darussalam would continuously work to achieve its goals especially in achieving quality education. He also said that Brunei Darussalam looks forward to working closely with UNESCO in areas that are mutually beneficial and contributes to world understanding, tolerance and peace.

Brunei Darussalam joined



Minister of Education, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abdul Rahman at the 33rd UNESCO General Conference in Paris.

UNESCO on March 17 this year. His Excellency Dato Paduka Zainidi Sidup, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Brunei Darussalam to France is the Permanent Delegate to UNESCO. On October 7, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Abdul Rahman official installed the flag of Brunei Darussalam along side those of the other 190 member states of the organisation.

UNESCO was founded on

November 16, 1945. Today, UNESCO functions as a laboratory of ideas and a standard-setter to forge universal agreements on emerging ethical issues. She also serves as a clearinghouse – for the dissemination and sharing of information and knowledge – while helping Member States to build their human and institutional capacities in diverse fields.

Housing scheme meets international standards



Habitek Exhibition 2005 officially opened by the Minister of Development, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Abdullah.

Brunei Darussalam has met the standard of Millenium Development Goals (MDG) in providing good housing for both her rural and urban population with necessities such as clean sanitary water and electrical supply.

This was highlighted by the Minister of Development, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Abdullah at the official opening of Habitek Exhibition on October 6 at the Mall in Gadong.

The Minister also said that it is the responsibility of the participants of National Housing Scheme to ensure that their payments are made without further delay.

In an effort to provide housing to its citizens, the Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam through the National Housing Scheme has been providing housing for the citizens for many years now.

There are two types of National Housing Scheme namely; National Housing Scheme and the Landless Indigenous Housing Scheme. The types of housings are catagorised according to the income of the owner.

Postal Services plans 20-year road map

The Department of Postal Services is currently planning a 20-year road map by taking into serious consideration of the challenges that could lie ahead. The department would also enhance its efforts and planning in the bid to diversify its services. This is to ensure that the services would remain relevant from the ever-changing environment.

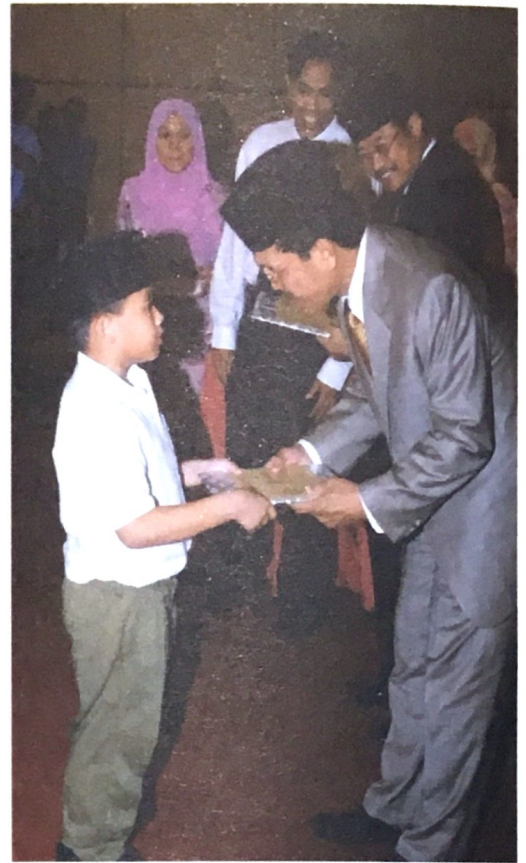
These were highlighted by the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar at the 131st World Postal Day celebration on October 11 at Dewan Amar Pahlawan.

However, the Minister said that the relevant party particularly at the Department of Postal Services should be committed in realising the vision as a centre of business, services and information. The vision requires a change in mind set and attitude as a major part of the success depends on human resource.

The Minister also launched the E-Post Services; presented awards for best clerks; awarded prizes for winners for the '100 years Postal Stamp Drawing Contest'; and awarded license to two stamp dealers.

The E-Post services could be checked at <http://www.post.gov.bn>. Among the new feature is the stamp and philatelic bulletin that showed a collection of stamps issued by the department. The E-Post Service also has the ability as a search engine for Brunei's postal code.

Brunei Postal Services Department was established on July 22, 1859 in Brunei Town (now known as Bandar Seri Begawan). Currently, there are 21 post offices throughout the nation-state.



One of the winners of the '100 years Postal Stamp Drawing Contest' receives his prize from the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar.

New Mobile X-Ray Van For Police

Royal Brunei Police Force upgraded its facilities and security by purchasing the latest model of Scan Van Mobile X-Ray-Heimann Hi-Scan 8585 worth about \$500,000. The first Mercedes Scan Van Mobile X-Ray was fully used during the APEC Meeting in 2000.

A blessing ceremony was held at Logistics Department of RBPF in Gadong by Pehin Dato Paduka Seri Awang Haji Zainuddin, Police Commissioner of RBPF on October 3.

The new Mercedes Scan Van Mobile X-Ray-Heimann Hi-Scan is used at the checkpoints of the airport for any big events in the country. It uses an ideal application system which is the ideal solution for incorporating transporters, vans, trailers in different sites quickly and flexibly. The systems serve to inspect mail, luggage or freight for weapons, explosives and contraband such as drugs. The systems stand out by an innovative, customer-oriented concept in addition of robust vehicles, high-quality components and optimum equipment providing many accessories. The operator's work is supported by an ergonomic workstation.



New mobile x-ray vans to upgrade security



Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah leading the Queen's Baton Relay in Bandar Seri Begawan.

Melbourne 2006 Queen's Baton Relay in Bandar Seri Begawan

The much awaited 16th Commonwealth Games is only a few months away from the official opening scheduled to take place in Melbourne in March 2006. This was more visible with the Melbourne 2006 Queen's Baton Relay making a short journey to Bandar Seri Begawan on October 2.

Present to lead the relay in Bandar Seri Begawan was Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah. The relay baton was launched by His Royal Highness Prince Sufri Bolkiah, the President of Brunei Darussalam National Olympic Council (BDNOC) on October 1 at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium.

The relay began at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium headed towards the Empire Hotel and Country Club in Jerudong. The relay continued the next day from the Empire Hotel and Country Club to Bandar Seri Begawan and back to the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium.

More than 200 participants were involved in the Queen's Baton Relay. Brunei Darussalam was the 56th from 71 countries involved in the relay. The next destination of the baton was to Singapore.

The relay was officially launched at Buckingham Palace on Commonwealth Day – March 14 this year.

Melbourne 2006 Queen's Baton Relay is the world's longest, most inclusive relay travelling to all 71 nations of the Commonwealth in a year and a day. The final destination of the baton would be at Australia on January 24, 2006.



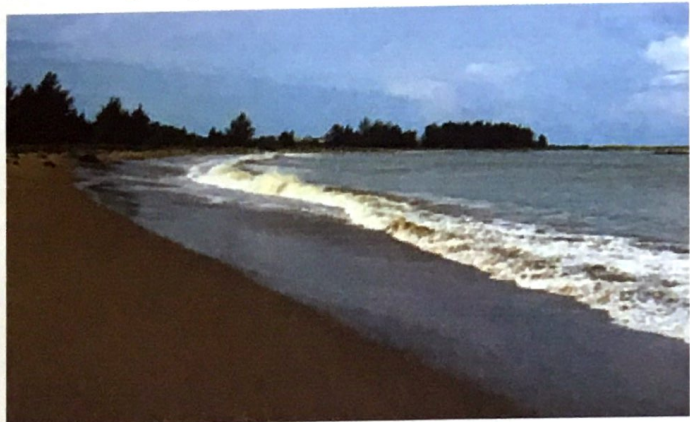
His Royal Highness Prince Sufri Bolkiah takes a closer look at the unique Queen's Baton.



Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports at the launching of the 1st Brunei Marathon 2005 campaign in March this year.



Part of a highway that would be used by joggers.



A breathtaking sight of Tungku Beach that is part of the route for the marathon.



A challenging hilly track of the Bukit Shahbandar Forest Recreational park

Brunei geared up for 1st regional marathon

Brunei Darussalam would soon be hosting its inaugural Brunei Marathon on December 11.

Promised to be 'The Most Gruelling Run in Southeast Asia', the organiser has allocated an attractive sum of \$500,000 total cash prize. This makes Brunei Marathon as one of the best prized marathons in the region.

The 1st Brunei Marathon would witness a mixture of run which would combine flat running, running on the beach and trekking at the Bukit Shahbandar Forest Recreational Park.

Runners would be using the route across the Jerudong where Jerudong Park and Country Club (JPCC), Jerudong Park Medical Centre, Jerudong Park Play Ground (JPPG) – one of the best and biggest playground in the region, Bukit Shahbandar Forest Recreational Park – a famous hilly track popular among joggers, University Brunei Darussalam and Tungku Beach are located.

The race would commence and end at one of the best hotel in the region, The Empire Hotel & Country Club.

The race itself would be divided into four sectors;

Sector 1: 5km highway and 4km beach (Tungku Beach)

Sector 2: 10km run on highway road tarmac through University of Brunei Darussalam's Campus

Sector 3: Trekking and hiking the nine hills which is about 5km run at Bukit Shahbandar Forest Recreational Park

Sector 4: 18km run on highway road tarmac through JPCC and JPPG)

On average, this marathon is expected to take about four hours and 15 minutes to complete. While all sectors are expected to be completed comfortably between five to six hours 30 minutes.

Prior to the Brunei Marathon, a Sports and Fitness Expo would be held at the Indoor Stadium in Berakas. The expo would display more information on the 1st Brunei Marathon, sports-related activities from local sports associations, exhibition and selling of sport-related products from both local and regional sports shop.



One of the routes to be used during the marathon.

Brunei on alert for influenza pandemic

Brunei Darussalam has stepped up measures to prevent the outbreak of avian influenza which could lead to an influenza pandemic.

Among the initial precautionary measures taken was the setting up of an Influenza Pandemic Committee by the Ministry of Health. This committee holds the responsibility in arranging the Preparedness Action Plan to combat the pandemic.

Following the setting up of this committee, several sub-committees were formed for a detailed Action Plan that covers;

- Surveillance, to control and prevent
- Management of patients
- Technical and Logistic assistance
- Media and Public Relations
- Laboratory services
- Human Resources

This Action Plan gives a strong emphasis on main issues include ensuring that the supply of medicines, vaccines, health facilities and medical tools are sufficient.

It has also been identified that one of the referral hospital in the country that is the Pengiran Muda Mahkota Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah Hospital in the Tutong district

would be treated as the centre of isolation for influenza patients.

In its effort to create awareness, the Ministry of Health has also distributed flyers that contained information about Avian Influenza.

Members of the public are constantly informed of the symptoms of influenza such as suffering sudden fever (usually 39 C or above), headache, extreme tiredness, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.

If a person has the flu, the person should rest, drink plenty of fluid, avoid alcohol and tobacco, and take medication to relieve symptoms.

To prevent infection, close contact should be avoided and stay at home when you are sick, cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, wash your hands frequently and avoid touching your eyes, mouth or nose.

For those who recently arrived from avian influenza affected areas, have visited zoo, poultry farms and markets and had developed the symptoms of the avian influenza, they are advised to seek medical attention at the nearest health centre or hospital.

The Avian influenza is an infectious disease amongst avians

such as chickens, ducks, and wild birds which is caused by A influenza virus. The first case of Avian influenza was reported to infect humans in 1997 when the epidemic occurred in Hong Kong.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Avian influenza epidemic occurring in humans in Asia today, could trigger a worldwide influenza pandemic.

However, according to Dr Ahmad Fakhri Dato Pasuka Haji Junaidi from the Disease Control Division of Ministry of Health, the flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses which share similar symptoms that may be difficult to differentiate based on symptoms alone. The pathogens are different and could only be ascertained by special laboratory tests. In general, the flu is worse than the common cold and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness and dry cough are more intense. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems such as pneumonia, bacterial infections or require hospitalisations.

Complications of flu could include bacterial pneumonia, dehydration and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes. Children may get sinus problems and bacterial ear infections.



Brunei Darussalam has taken preventive measures to prevent the outbreak of avian influenza which is an infectious disease amongst avian such as chickens, ducks and while birds. The influenza has the capability to infect humans.



Nation-state vigilant for Dengue

Ministry of Health is continuously monitoring dengue outbreak in the nation-state as neighbouring countries had reported several cases of fatalities.

Eighteen cases had been reported from early this year until September 26. Most cases reported were in the Brunei-Muara district; five in Temburong district and two in Tutong district.

However, no fatalities were reported as all of the affected people had recovered.

The ministry has taken several proactive preventive measures in the effort to control and prevent the outbreak. The ministry had also taken measures to promote awareness regarding dengue to members of the public.

The ministry is on constant surveillance on the environmental cleanliness especially around residential areas to control the breeding Aedes mosquitoes. Heavy campaign were undertaken where health officials would go house to house to educate the public on health education; and brief explanation on how to prevent from the breeding of

Aedes mosquitoes were also given.

Fuming and insecticides spraying were also done to eradicate the Aedes. To ensure that there are no longer signs of Aedes, a thorough investigation would be carried for any reported cases.

Plampets and posters on dengue were also published. Hotlines were also set up for public enquiries.

However, the efforts in combating against the outbreak of dengue requires close cooperation with members of the public. The public plays an important role in prevention of Aedes by destroying the breeding areas and by keeping a clean environment. Among actions that should be taken are:

- Removing water from plant pots and change the water at least once a week.
- Cleaning drains regularly to prevent the collection of stagnant water.
- Ensuring that all artificial containers like bottle and cans are buried or disposed properly.
- Ensuring that all pails and basins are always stored upside

down when not in use and the storage of water containers are covered tightly.

Do not leave old tyres out in the open that could collect water.

Cover or turn over boats when not in use to prevent the collection of water.

Apply granular insecticides into potential breeding sites of Aedes mosquitoes

Dengue is a viral infection that is transmitted to humans through the bite of the female Aedes mosquito. There are two forms of dengue; dengue fever and dengue haemorrhagic fever.

Aedes mosquitoes have black and white stripes on its legs and body. It usually bites during the day; and breed in clean stagnant water around homes.

The signs and symptoms of dengue fever are usually flu-like and may include; high fever, severe headache, skin rash, muscle and joint pains, and eye pains. Some patients may also experience severe symptoms like stomach pains, nausea, vomiting and blood clotting.





Empire Hotel wins Best Resort award

The Empire Hotel & Country Club, Brunei's premier hotel was announced 'Best Resort Hotel' for the second running year by Travel Trade Gazette (TTG) Asia annual travel awards.

The hotel's great accomplishment in TTG Asia's 16th Annual Travel Awards 2005 was received by the hotel's Director of Events Shafar Jamaludin in Pattaya, Thailand recently.

According to a press release dated October 14, readers of the TTG magazine have voted The Empire Hotel & Country Club 'Best New Resort', 'Best Independent Hotel' and 'Best Resort Hotel' over the past three years.

The hotel has also maintained its status as one of the world's largest and most luxurious resorts and a member of the prestigious WORLDHOTELS' Deluxe Collection.

The hotel was also the recipient for the recent three prestigious honours in World Travel Awards 2004 including Asia's Leading Golf Resort, Asia's Leading Resort and Brunei's Leading Hotel.

Known as the most lavish in Asia, it's 360-room resort with 63 grand suites and private villas is spread over 180, hectares (445 acres) of manicured gardens.

Its doors which are ready to greet royalties and prominent figures boasts a breathtaking Emperor Suite which true to it's name has also won the 'World's Leading Presidential Suite' in previous World Travel Awards.

The Emperor suite, one of the world's largest at 666 m² also features its own indoor swimming pool.

Its Jack Nicklaus designed golf course also gained the ultimate recognition by pro golfers during the Asian Tour for the inaugural Brunei Open.

Its latest appeal which features the latest PADI certified dive centre has opened a new attraction towards promoting the country's spectacular underwater reefs and shipwrecks to scuba-tourism for the first time.

35 years of BSB

Various activities were organised to commemorate the 35th year anniversary of change of name from Bandar Brunei to Bandar Seri Begawan (BSB) on October 2.

Among the activities held were aerobics, Walk-A-Hunt, final of tug-of-war tournament, drawing and colouring competition for children and

adult, mini basketball tournament, live flowers arrangement competition and final of Brunei Strongest Man 2005.

The one-day activities took place at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddien in the capital.

The change of name from Bandar Brunei to BSB took place on October 4, 1970. Within 35 years, BSB had

received international recognitions such as becoming one of the Asia Best Cities (survey by Asiaweek), BSB was "Asia Best Cities" number 6 and 7 in year 1999 and 2000 respectively.

Other activities held were 10-day international bazaar and recital of *Surah Yassin* and *Tahlil* at the Royal Mausoleum for the late Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien.



Snippets...

New Managing Director for BLNG

Brunei LNG Sdn Bhd has appointed a new Managing Director, Mr Fred Smeenck with effect from October 1, 2005.

Mr Smeenck was the former General Manager of Elbe Manufacturing Company in Germany. In 1980's, he worked with BLNG as Operations Manager. He has held a variety of leadership assignments in locations and organisations such as Moerdijk Chemicals Manufacturing, Shell Global Solutions, Nigeria LNG and more recently, Elbe.

Celebration of World Architecture Day

Public Works Department and PUJA Association celebrated the World Architecture Day on October 3. A seminar on Brunei Architecture and Planning was held in conjunction with the celebration.

More than 50 people consisted of architect, engineer, surveyor and designer participated in the seminar titled 'Sharing the City'.

Minister of Development, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Abdullah was present as the guest of honour.

Red tide still present in Brunei Waters

Fisheries Department on October 19 had announced that from their continuous monitoring, it showed that presence of red tide organisms is still indicated in Brunei waters. Affected areas are the green and red outer beacons, Pelompong, Serasa Beach, Ujung Sapuh, Pulau Keingaran, area near Pulau Badukang and Pelompong Cage.

The public, especially fishermen, are banned from catching and harvesting of fish from affected areas.

As a precautionary measure, the Department advised that prior to cooking any fishes, the gills, guts and other internal organs should be completely removed and thoroughly cleaned.

The public is also advised not to consume small fishes of which their gills, stomach and internal organs that cannot be removed, and also shellfish from the affected areas or of unknown origin.

Brunei waters had been affected by red tide early February this year.

Brunei to host 23rd EAIC in 2006

Brunei Darussalam will be hosting the 23rd East Asian Insurance Congress (EAIC) from July 30 to August 2, 2006.

The theme for this conference is "East Asian Insurance at the Crossroads of Growth and Profitability". The conference will feature formal and informal sessions, address critical issues that is face by life and non-life insurance industry.

According to Chairperson of the 23rd EAIC Organising Committee, Dorothy Newn; Brunei being a small insurance market is more determined to make bigger impact at the upcoming EAIC. The conference is also specially timed to coincide with the 60th birthday celebration of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

East Asian Insurance Congress has eleven members namely; Brunei, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Macau, Manila, Seoul, Singapore, Taipei and Tokyo. The EAIC was founded in 1962 with the aim of furthering and developing international collaboration in the field of insurance of every sort.

Further details on the 23rd EAIC can be found at <http://www.eaic2006bsb.com.bn>. The website was launched on October 26 by Dato Paduka Haji Ali, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance.

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

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

Scenes during Ramadhan



Ramadhan is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar. It is a significant month where the first revelation of the Al-Quran took place. It is also when Muslims perform the fifth pillar of Islam where fasting is observed from dawn to sunset. During Ramadhan, Muslims are able to perform Terawih prayers where it is a special prayer only available during this month. Performing Terawih every night promises different rewards for the life hereafter.