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Brunei Darussalam

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Their Majesties at Thai King's accession to the throne anniversary celebration

BANGKOK, June 12 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha were among the world's royalties to have graced the historic occasion to mark the king of Thailand's 60th anniversary accession to the throne.

Clad in Royal Brunei Armed Forces' ceremonial suit, His Majesty's presence was pleasantly noticeable in a crowd of kings, queens and head of states, especially as His Majesty walked the red carpet to congratulate His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, for the 60th successful years on the throne.

The ceremony took place at the Ananda Samakhon Throne Hall in Bangkok.

Also present was Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna.

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Her Majesty Queen Sirikit also received royalties from 12 countries, as well as representatives of government around the world.

In his address, King Bhumibol Adulyadej expressed his gratitude to the Kings, Queens and Heads of States as well as the representatives. His Majesty also thanked his citizens who are involved in the celebration, and urged them to be always united and help each other for the prosperity and the development of their country. The highlight of the celebration was the traditional Royal Barge Procession down the Chao Phraya River and the opening ceremony of an exhibition of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Royal initiatives.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam congratulates His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej for the royal achievement.

Also in the picture are members of the Thai royal family who accompanied His Majesty King Bhumibol to greet and receive most of the world's monarchs at the Ananda Samakhon Throne Hall in Thailand's capital city, Bangkok.

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Sultan's Scholar award for three

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 8 - Three exceedingly outstanding students have been awarded the prestigious 'Sultan's Scholar' award to enable them to pursue higher qualifications abroad.

The award, dispensed through the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation, is reflective of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's commitment on developing the potentials of young Bruneians who have excelled in their GCE 'A' level studies.

The monarch personally handed over the awards to the three recipients; Samuel Tay Zhi Jian, Zaty Erwinna Haji Ali Adin and Dayangku Nur Hidayatul Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Othman. The special function was held at Istana Nurul Iman.

The three will study at prestigious universities in the United Kingdom.

Samuel will undertake a five-year course in Computer Aided Mechanical Engineering at the School of Physical Sciences and Engineering, King's College, University of London.

Zaty will do medicine at St. Georges Hospital, College of Medicine, University of London, along with Dayangku Nur Hidayah who will also study for her medicine degree at Guy's and St. Thomas Hospital, King's College, University of London.

The three are the first batch of students to receive the prestigious Sultan's Scholar award.



His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam with the recipients of Sultan's Scholars.

Humanitarian Fund for Indonesian earthquake victims set up

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 1 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to the establishment of an aid fund to help victims of the recent earthquake in Indonesia.

The Earthquake Humanitarian Fund has been set up to collect aid from individuals and organisations in the country. Funds collected is hoped to help alleviate the sufferings of the quake victims in Yogyakarta and the surrounding areas.

Donations can be sent to the Yogyakarta Earthquake Humanitarian Fund National Committee, based in Bandar Seri Begawan.

The committee is co-chaired by the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and Permanent Secretary at Ministry of Religious Affairs with members comprised of

officials from several government and non-government agencies. On hand to witness the formation of the committee was the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Pehin Major General (R) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Awang Mohammad.

The donation will be collected for the period of three months starting June 1. The period will give donors the opportunity to donate money or organise charity and welfare activities to collect donations. Contributions can also be deposited through the fund box provided at banks, business premises and public buildings nationwide or send their donations directly to the secretariat of the fund at the Community Department, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports in Jalan Kebangsaan during office hours.

The public can also contribute through 'sms' (short messaging services) facilitated by Brunei Darussalam's mobilephone service providers, DST Group and B.Mobile.



A poster to raise fund

His Majesty meets Lesotho's King Letsie III

BANGKOK, June 13 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to receive in audience His Majesty King Letsie III of Lesotho.

The audience which took place in Bangkok, Thailand coincided with Their Majesties' visit to Bangkok for the grand 60th Anniversary Celebration of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's, accession to the throne.



His Majesty with His Majesty King Letsie III of Lesotho

Royal audience for Swedish envoy

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 26 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam accorded His Excellency Teppo Markus Tauriainen, the non-resident Swedish Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam the privilege of an audience at the Istana Nurul Iman.

His Excellency Teppo Markus Tauriainen who has an office in Singapore will end his tour of duty in July.

His Excellency has been the non-resident Swedish Ambassador to Brunei Darussalam since March 25, 2003.



The outgoing ambassador of Sweden in an audience with His Majesty



His Majesty greets His Excellency Fadhilatush Sheikh Dr. Muhammad Tantawi

His Majesty receives in audience Sheikh Al-Azhar

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 1 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to receive in audience Sheikh Al-Azhar of Egypt, His Excellency Fadhilatush Sheikh Doctor Muhammad Sayed Tantawi at the Istana Nurul Iman.

His Excellency was on a 10-day tour to ASEAN countries and was accompanied in the royal audience by His Excellency Mohammed Ali Afifi, Egypt's non-resident Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Brunei Darussalam.

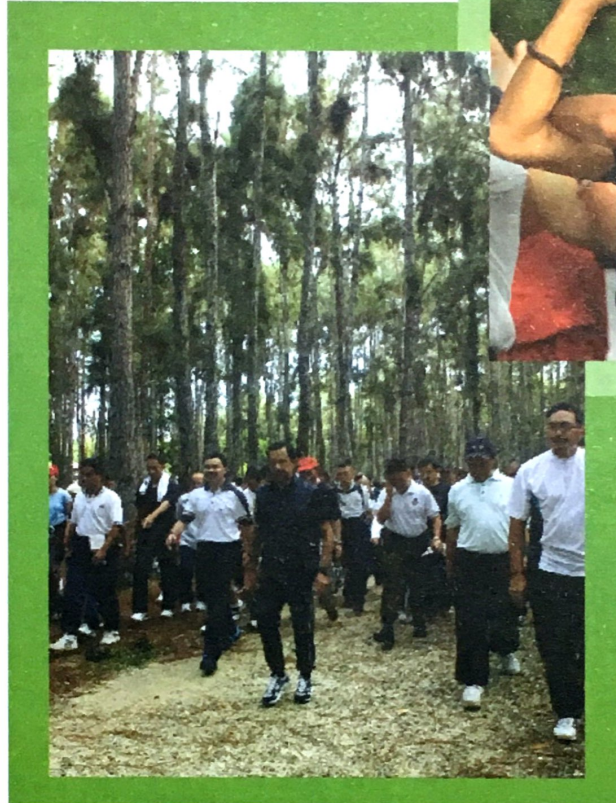
His Majesty leads brisk walk

JERUDONG, June 18 - His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam showed business community leaders the way to healthy life style.

The monarch led representatives of Brunei Darussalam's private sector in a 3.5 kilometre brisk walk along the challenging tracks of Bukit Shahbandar Recreational Forest Park. The brisk walk was a joint initiative of the private sector and the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources.

His Majesty, accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at Prime Minister's Office, His Royal Highness Prince Haji 'Abdul Azim and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen did some warming up exercises by participating in an 'aerobic' session prior to commencing the fast paced walk. The 3.5 kilometre walk was in fact an enduring experience for it involved climbing and descent of the steep Bukit Shahbandar.

More than 1,000 people comprising all sectors of the business community, including representatives of business chambers and associations as well as cooperatives, took part in the brisk walk.



The sovereign leads the 3.5 kilometre

An aerobic session prior to the walk.

Brunei Darussalam introduces Children and Young Person Order 2006

BERAKAS, June 7 - Brunei Darussalam has taken a major step forward to protect her children and the young segment of the population.

The Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's latest move called for the implementation of the 'Children and Young Person Order 2006' to replace the 'Children Order 2000.'

The 'Children and Young Person Order 2006' provides wider programmes to rehabilitate and protect socially challenged children and young persons.

This was disclosed by Pehin Major General (R) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Awang Mohammad, the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport during the launching of the Family Development Programme Seminar at the International Convention Centre.

The seminar, entitled 'A Happy Family For Harmony Living' was organised by the Community Development Department.

The Minister explained that a number of initiatives have been taken to create a passionate generation, people of high esteem and responsible for the creation of a happy family.

He also noted that legal instruments are necessary to safeguard family institutions and especially, to ensure the safety of children are well catered for.

The Minister highlighted an increase in divorce cases in Brunei Darussalam but at the same time there has also been an increase in marriages.

Most divorces, according to the Minister, were attributed to misunderstanding between couples and these are contributive to problems to family members when they are denied parental responsibility.

The Minister reinforced the notion that knowledge and skills on family development as well as better capability of communication are vital to strengthen the family institutions in Brunei Darussalam.

Farewell to second Battalion of the Royal Gurkha Rifle

His Majesty inspects a royal guard of honour mounted by 77 army personnel and picture below shows His Majesty trying a smoke dispensing rifle for crowd control



SERIA, June 7 - His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam visited the Brunei Garrison in Seria to bid farewell to army personnel and family members of the Second Battalion of the Royal Gurkha Rifle who have completed their tour of duty in this country.

Upon arrival at the Garrison's Sport Stadium, His Majesty proceeded to inspect a royal guard-of-honour mounted by 77 personnel. His Majesty then presented the Long Service and Good Conduct (LSGC) medals to three personnel who completed their 15 years of service with the Battalion.

His Majesty also consented to review the battalion's combat training exercises, mock operations to control demonstrations as well as the battalion's latest communication equipment.



Royal Congratulatory Messages

HIS MAJESTY THE SULTAN YANG DI-PERTUAN OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM SENT CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES TO:

- HIS EXCELLENCY GIORGIO NAPOLITANO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY AND HIS PRIME MINISTER, HIS EXCELLENCY ROMANO PRODI IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE 145TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF REPUBLIC OF ITALY DAY ON JUNE 2.
- HER EXCELLENCY GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF PHILIPPINES ON THE OCCASSION OF THE REPUBLIC'S 60TH INDEPENDENCE DAY ON JUNE 12.

Her Majesty presents prizes to Quran reading champions



Her Majesty and other members of the royal family at the competition.

JERUDONG, June 16 - Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha consented to present prizes to winners of a Quran reading competition organised by the Girl Guides' Association of Brunei Darussalam.

Masyitah Batu Bara of the Brunei/Muara District emerged champion in the leaders category, Maizatunnazirah Haji Mohd. Daud did the Tutong District proud by becoming champion in the girlguides category while Belait District's Salihah Abang Ali was champion in the brownies category.

On hand to accompany Her Majesty were Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna, the President of the Girl Guides Association of Brunei Darussalam and Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Amal Umi Kalthum Al-Islam.



Her Majesty presenting the prize to the winner.

- HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II, QUEEN OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND HIS EXCELLENCY TONY BLAIR, THE PRIME MINISTER OF UNITED KINGDOM, ON THE OCCASSION OF THE 80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II ON JUNE 11.

- HIS EXCELLENCY NGUYEN MINH TRIET, PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AND HIS EXCELLENCY NGUYEN TAN DUNG, PRIME MINISTER OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR EXCELLENCY'S APPOINTMENT AS THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ON JUNE 29.

Their Royal Highness on official visit to Paris

PARIS, June 5 - France accorded distinctive degree of hospitality to Their Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah. The royal couple were on an official four-day visit to France early this month.

Also present to accompany the royal couple were His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik and Yang Amat Mulia Prince Abdul Qawi.

During the four-day official visit His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah met French President, His Excellency Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace prior to visiting the operations centre of the France Police Force.

Their Royal Highness then toured Thales, an electronic industry of global influence servicing the world's aviation industry, defence and information technology.

Their Royal Highness' itinerary included a guided tour of the world's renowned Versailles Palace, some 20 kilometres away from Paris.

On top of its structural beauty, the Versailles Palace holds secrets of bygone era. The grand palace was home to King Louis XIV until 1682.

Their Royal Highness' visit revitalised the cordial relationship between Brunei Darussalam and France.

Both countries established diplomatic relations since 1984.



His Royal Highness greeted by His Excellency Jacques Chirac, President of France.



Their Royal Highness at the Versailles Palace, among the places visited during the official visit to France.



His Royal Highness receives in audience the newly appointed Bangladesh's High Commissioner.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince receives Bangladeshi envoy

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 19 - His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office consented to receive His Excellency Mohd. Hedayetul Islam Chowdhury, the newly appointed Bangladeshi High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam at the Istana Nurul Iman.

His Excellency presented his letter of appointment to His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-pertuan of Brunei Darussalam at the Istana Nurul Iman on May 29.

Their Royal Highness' working visit to Berlin



Touring the Reichstag Building, this formerly houses the original Parliament of the German Empire.



Visit to History Museum which exhibits German's artifacts and historic documents.

BERLIN, June 11 - His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office, and Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah were on a working visit in Germany beginning June 11.

On arrival at the Tegel Airport in Berlin, the Ambassador of Brunei to Germany, His Excellency Dato Paduka Haji Ali Bin Haji Hassan, welcomed Their Royal Highness.

Their Royal Highness' itinerary included a tour of the Reichstag Building, which houses the original parliament of the German Empire. It was opened in 1894 and became the seat of the German Parliament in 1999.

The second day saw Their Royal Highness visiting the History Museum which holds artifacts and documents of historic significance. Their Royal Highness then proceeded to Potsdam to visit Cecilienhof, the last palace to be built by the Hohenzollern Dynasty from 1914 - 1917.

Accompanying Their Royal Highness during the tour were His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik and Yang Amat Mulia Prince Abdul Qawi.

The royal entourage ended their tour on June 14.

His Royal Highness meets Hesse Prime Minister

FRANKFURT, June 11 - His Royal Highness Crown Prince Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office met His Excellency Roland Koch, Hesse Prime Minister at the Chancery Building, Hesse.

The meeting allowed His Royal Highness and His Excellency Roland Koch to exchange ideas to promote cooperations, especially in the field of education.

Also present in the meeting were His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik, His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Mateen and Yang Amat Mulia Prince Abdul Qawi.



In discussion with His Excellency Roland Koch, Prime Minister of Hesse.

Their Majesties among world's monarch at Thai King's anniversary celebrations



Their Majesties, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Her Majesties Queen Sirikit with kings and king's representatives in a group photo at the Ananda Samakhon Throne Chamber.



Their Majesties, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej with kings and king representatives at the State Banquet.

BANGKOK, June 12 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and Her Majesty Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Hajah Saleha paid tribute to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, King of Thailand, in conjunction with the 60th Anniversary of the King's Accession to the Throne. The ceremony took place at the Ananda Samakhon Throne Hall in Bangkok. Also present was Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna.

His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said that the 60th anniversary celebration is not just sixty years in the history of Thailand, but, in many ways, the history of our times, the good and the bad, the joyous and the sad, the exciting and the desperate.

"These times have brought the most rapid and far-reaching changes ever seen in Man's history. They have challenged every aspect of our existence, above all as sovereign nations. They have presented moments when great decisions and judgment have been called for," said His Majesty.

His Majesty said that His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej has brought the dignity, wisdom, courage of a leader and in doing so, His Majesty has never sought to distance himself from the lives of his people.

"You have never asked them to be followers or mere subjects. You have shared their joys, fears and disappointments. You have made them deeply proud of their heritage and their identity. You have made your people feel the Kingdom of Thailand is indeed their own Kingdom. Above all, I feel, you have given them confidence."

"Much of this comes from Your Majesty's own personal achievements. These have rightly been a source of great inspiration to your people whether academic, artistic and scientific, or in the most human of terms the simple example of a good and loving father. All these achievements have now been recognised by the international community. And we offer you our warmest congratulations on the Lifetime Achievement Award that has been conferred by the United Nations," His Majesty added.

His Majesty expressed His Majesty's appreciation to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej and to Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra for the opportunity to attend the unique gathering and to share their celebrations on the wonderful occasion.

"We wish Your Majesties and the people of the Kingdom of Thailand many more years of great happiness and prosperity," remarked His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.



His Majesty with His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, King of Thailand.



Their Majesties greeted by His Excellency Thaksin Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand and spouse.



Their Majesties on a vehicle to witness the traditional Royal Barge Procession down the Chao Phraya River



Prince Mohamed attends Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers



Group photo of Foreign Ministers and representatives attending the 33rd Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN, June 21 - His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade attended the 33rd Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers from June 19 to 21.

Addressing the conference, His Royal Highness highlighted the problems currently encountered by Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) members, especially those in Iraq and Palestine.

His Royal Highness commended the OIC Secretariat for providing useful report on situations prevailing in member countries, and acknowledged the significance of the conference where information could be obtained from colleagues directly.

"It gives us a good opportunity to get our colleagues' personal views, their ideas and their hopes for the future," said His Royal Highness.

Commenting on the roles of member countries to help fellow members in need, His Royal Highness felt that moral support alone was never enough in situations where practical cooperation and assistance are required.

In retrospect, His Royal Highness noted positive results achieved by OIC especially after the meetings in Yemen and also the December's Summit in Mecca.

"So my thanks to Saudi Arabia and our Summit Chairman and to the eminent persons group and the Muslim scholars and



His Royal Highness in a conversation with Bahrain's Head of Representatives.

intellectuals for the Action Programme we now have. It certainly helps us to focus on where we think we can do something to help," said His Royal Highness.

His Royal Highness made special mention on the roles played by colleagues in Malaysia who, according to His Royal Highness, did an excellent job in one very important part of the programme, namely to find ways to help ordinary people.

"The Secretariat's report calls it 'capacity building,' but for us what it amounts to is very simple, helping people to help themselves so that they can handle day-to-day life and work in the modern world successfully. At the same time, it encourages them to see that the OIC means something real to them in their own lives and I think this is very important indeed," said His Royal Highness.



His Royal Highness meets Conference Chairman

Picture at left shows His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah being greeted by His Excellency Elmar Mammadyarov, the Chairman of the 33rd Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers at the Gulistan Palace in Baku, Azerbaijan on June 19. The brief meeting enabled His Royal Highness and His Excellency to exchange views and ideas on matters of mutual interest.

Equal access to education promotes employment opportunities for women

TOKYO, June 30 - Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna, Brunei Darussalam's Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade said the Government of His Majesty's policy of providing both female and male equal access to education has enabled women to take up employment opportunities in various specialised professions. Under the policy, more than 90 per cent female children are literate. Her Royal Highness made the address at the East Asia Gender Equality Meeting of Ministers in Tokyo, Japan.

With regard to Brunei Darussalam's regional and international commitment on gender issues, Her Royal Highness informed that the country had achieved almost all of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and acceded into the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Her Royal Highness also reiterated the country's commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as other regional and international declarations.

In terms of economic activities, said Her Royal Highness, about 59 per cent of Bruneian women are active in Small-and Medium-Enterprises which contributes to 92 per cent of the employment opportunities in the private sector and that nearly two-thirds of the beneficiaries of financial assistance are women.

Women in Brunei Darussalam, noted Her Royal Highness, have achieved life expectancy of 77.5 years and maternal mortality rate of three for every ten thousand live births.

Of the mass media, Her Royal Highness stressed on the role of the country's mass media in promoting and increasing awareness on the effective involvement of women in national development and the impact they have on modern economic life. Her Royal Highness also emphasised on the need for collecting quality data as well as conducting more research and analysis on gender issues to allow for more effective policy formulation.

The meeting was officially opened by Her Excellency Dr. Kuniko Inoguchi, Minister for Gender Equality and Social Affairs of Japan. Sixteen countries and two United Nations agencies were involved in the meeting. The meeting issued a Joint Communiqué, which among other things, stressed on equal partnership between women and men as a prerequisite for the achievement of gender equality.



Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna, Ambassador-at-Large at Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

"Brunei Darussalam had achieved almost all of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and acceded into the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women...," Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna

Brunei Darussalam to host first ASEAN tug-of-war tourney

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 30 - Brunei Darussalam will organise the first ever ASEAN tug-of-war contest to mark the 60th birthday anniversary of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam. It will take place at the Taman Haji Sir Muda Omar 'Ali Saifuddien in the capital in August this year.

Pengiran Haji Muhammad Jadid bin Pengiran Haji Omar Ali, the Co-Chairman of the Tug-of-War contest in conjunction with the 60th birthday anniversary of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam said that the sultanate will invite ASEAN member countries to join in the contest.

He said the winner will receive ten thousand dollars, first runner-up will be given seven thousand dollars and second runner-up will receive five thousand dollars and other participating teams will get one thousand dollars each.

Ambitious plans unveiled to lure tourists to Brunei Darussalam



Rich in flora and fauna, culture and traditions, Brunei Darussalam aims to increase tourists' arrival, increase hotel occupancy and have a new Cultural Village ready by end of 2007

GADONG, June 2 - The Brunei Tourism Board has underlined six objectives to make Visit Brunei Year 2008 a success.

Amongst the plans are to increase tourists' arrivals at a minimum of seven per cent annually, to increase hotel occupancy by a rate of between 50 and 60 per cent by 2008, to have a new Cultural Village in operation by the end of 2007 and to increase domestic tourism.

The Deputy Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Dato Paduka Haji Hamdillah disclosed the plans at the launch of the Third Abacus Holiday Travel Fair at the Mall in Gadong on June 2.

Dato Haji Hamdillah who is Chairman of the Brunei Tourism Board took the opportunity to urge High Commissions and Embassies in Brunei to strongly recommend their National Tourist Offices to participate in such fairs in the future. Such efforts, the Deputy Minister believed, will promote their countries to Bruneians as well as to promote Brunei, The Kingdom of Unexpected Treasures, to foreign countries.

The fair is a follow up to similar successful ones held in 2004 and 2005. At the events, prizes were presented to the winners of the Fly and Win Business Class Draw organised by the Royal Brunei Airlines. Events

during the fair included the "Kenali Negara Ketani" campaign, an initiative in capitalising on the abundance of exciting activities spearheaded by the National Organising Committee to celebrate His Majesty's 60th birthday celebration.

Apart from promoting international and regional destinations, the fair also highlighted Brunei tourism service providers, such as hotels, tour agencies and centres, which display their packages and tour programs especially designed for the domestic market. One of the key objectives is to encourage local job seekers and students thinking of their future to consider the main career opportunities that the fast growing industry is offering.



Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hamdillah, Deputy Minister of Industry and Primary Resources.



RBA opens new office in Ho Chi Minh City

HO CHI MINH, June 10 - Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) has opened a new branch office at the Ho Chi Minh City to service passengers' ticketing requirements and to sale Brunei Darussalam as an attractive tourists destination.

On hand to launch the opening of the office was the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar witnessed by the Deputy Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Hamdillah, Brunei Darussalam's Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, His Excellency Awang Haji Mohammad Mahadi Pehin Dato Laila Utama Haji Abdul Rahman, RBA's Board Members, Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office, Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Abu Bakar and other invited guests.

The office, located at level 3, Capital Palace, Thai Van Lung

Street, District 1 is manned by an officer and six local Vietnamese staff members.

RBA introduced three scheduled flights to the Ho Chi Minh City on May 11.

Brunei Darussalam has started aggressive promotional campaigns to support the Visit Brunei Year 2008 which was launched in Bandar Seri Begawan on June 2. The nation-state hopes to increase the number of tourists to Brunei Darussalam by seven per cent annually.

Besides its natural beauty, Brunei Darussalam, 'The Kingdom of Unexpected Treasures', is also rich in culture and tradition unavailable in other parts of the world.



Minister of Communications opens the new RBA branch office in Ho Chi Minh city.



The office equipped with facilities to accommodate passengers' ticketing requirement

Visit Brunei Year 2008 campaign in Vietnam

HO CHI MINH, June 2 - In a press conference to promote the Visit Brunei Year 2008, the Deputy Minister of Industry and Primary Resources, Dato Paduka Haji Hamdillah has called on the local press community and travel agents to help sell the message that Brunei Darussalam has a lot to offer to tourists from Vietnam.

To help the media personnel as well as the travel agents 'discover the mystery of Brunei Darussalam,' the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources along with the world renowned Empire Hotel & Country Club and RBA are inviting them to participate in the 'Media Press Trip' to Brunei Darussalam in July.

Dato Paduka Haji Hamdillah said that the month of July coincides with the 60th birthday celebration of His Majesty Sultan Haji

Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, a month of colourful events and festivities.

"And then comes the Hari Raya Aidil Fitri where people of all ages, local or tourists alike, are accorded the privilege of greeting His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam and members of the Royal family at the Istana Nurul Iman," added the Deputy Minister.

Efforts to promote tourism in Brunei Darussalam and Vietnam stand to gain a lot from the tourist industries could be enhanced in view of the existing cordial relationship between the two countries as well as the availability of frequent RBA flights between Bandar Seri Begawan and Ho Chi Minh City.

Brunei Darussalam marks 'World No Tobacco Day 2006'

GADONG, June 24 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to introduce the 'Tobacco Order 2005' to protect the people of Brunei Darussalam from the health risk posed by tobacco and related products.

Deputy Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Hazair who was chief guest of the ceremony to mark the 'World No Tobacco Day 2006,' at The Mall in Gadong said the 'Tobacco Order 2005' will be enforced soon.

"The Tobacco Order 2005 will prohibit all forms of advertisements related to smoking in view of their influence to the public, especially young people. The Order will also help to control and stop smoking among children and young people because it will be an offence for retailers to sell cigarettes to those under the age of 18," said the Deputy Minister.

Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Hazair explained that the Order will protect passive smokers and ensures the air quality in public places are maintained because the Order provides prohibition of smoking in public places and transportations.

The Ministry of Health will start installing sign boards carrying 'No Smoking Zone' messages and health warnings at hospital and health clinic parametres.

The 2001 statistic showed that there were more than 40,000 smokers in Brunei Darussalam, the majority of them are comprised of people between the ages of 20 to 34.

The Deputy Minister revealed that there are clinical evidence to prove that tobacco poses risks to human organs and contributive to 90 per cent of lung cancer.

The Ministry of Health has also started distributing pamphlets on smoking hazard, and to those wishing to stop the habit, support and assistance programmes are currently available at various designated clinics including some period of group counselling.



Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Hazair,
Deputy Minister of Health.

Remaja : Ramai para remaja berpendapat bahawa merokok adalah satu tabiat yang menampakkan kedewasaan. Tetapi mereka tidak mengetahui bahawa

- merokok mempercepatkan proses penuaan iaitu seseorang perokok akan kelihatan nampak tua. Kedut-kedut di muka dan proses berlaku penuaan disebabkan oleh pemusnahan Vitamin A dan C dalam badan oleh kimia-kimia yang terdapat dalam rokok.
- badan, rambut dan pakaian awda berbau busuk akibat merokok.
- nafas awda berbau juga walaupun selepas memakan gula-gula
- kalau awda merokok dari awal lagi, kuku dan gigi awda akan lama-kelamaan bertukar warna kekuningan akibat nikotin.
- merokok menyebabkan kurang ketahanan atau stamina semasa melakukan kegiatan fizikal atau bersukan. Ini telah dibuktikan dari kajian-kajian yang telah dibuat membandingkan 'pencapaian sukan' di antara atlit-atlit yang merokok dan tidak merokok.



Dewasa : Perubahan negatif akibat merokok berlaku walaupun pada awalnya kesan ini tidak ketara. Perubahan-perubahan ini berlaku pada kadar yang berlainan di antara seseorang, dari itu ada kalanya sebilangan perokok tidak mempunyai apa-apa penyakit hinggalah usia yang lanjut. Jika awda seorang perokok, awda berisiko mendapat penyakit-penyakit seperti :

- Penyakit ampu/asma, bronkitis dan emfisema
- Penyakit jantung dan serangan jantung
- Penyakit pembuluh darah yang boleh mengakibatkan stroke
- Penyakit ulser perut atau dugul
- Jangkitan telinga, hidung dan kerongkong
- Jangkitan paru-paru
- Kanser seperti kanser paru-paru, kanser pundi air, kanser kerongkong, kanser pankreas

Awda juga berisiko untuk mengalami kematian mengejut akibat serangan jantung atau stroke. Selain dari itu,

- asap rokok melambatkan pemulihan luka dan tulang yang patah.
- merokok meningkatkan 4 kali ganda risiko mengidap masalah sakit belakang.
- merokok juga boleh menjejaskan penglihatan dan kadang-kadang boleh menyebabkan buta sebab kimia yang terdapat dalam asap rokok menyebabkan darah menjadi pekat dan seterusnya menyekat bekalan darah ke saraf optik.

TAHUKAH AWDA?

- 85-90% PENGIDAP KANSER PARU-PARU ADALAH PEROKOK.
- 40% KEMATIAN YANG DISEBABKAN OLEH PENYAKIT JANTUNG DI KALANGAN ORANG-ORANG YANG BERUMUR DI BAWAH 65 TAHUN BERKAITAN DENGAN MEROKOK.

Among the pamphlets on smoking hazard

Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies established

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 30 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented for the formation of a 'think tank' establishment, the Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies (CSPS) to undertake the promotion and expansion of knowledge and to promote research activities on all areas of interest to Brunei Darussalam.

The CSPS will be operated as a corporate entity and established under the Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies Order 2006.

It is managed by an Executive Director who reports to the Board

of Directors.

The Chairman of the Board is Pengiran Dato Paduka Haji Ismail, Permanent Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office while the Board of Directors are: Dato Paduka Awang Haji Ali bin Haji Apong, Dato Paduka Awang Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Mohiddin, Dato Paduka Dr. Haji Ismail bin Haji Duraman, Dato Paduka Malai Haji Ali bin Malai Haji Othman, Awang Stephen Ong, Dayang Fauziah binti Dato Talib and Awang Haji Salleh Bostamam bin Zainal Abidin.

Its Executive Director is Dr. Awang Haji Azaharaini bin Haji Mohd Jamil.

Commonwealth Youth Ministers discuss Action Plan to eradicate poverty

BERAKAS, May 29 - ‘Action plan towards strengthening youths 2006-2015’ or *Pelan Tindakan Ke Arah Memperkasa Belia 2006-2015*, is inline with ‘Millennium Development Goal’ (MDGs) in preparing a draft work to eradicate poverty is among the proposals agreed during Commonwealth Youth Ministers summit (CYMM) at Nassau, Bahamas.

This was stated by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Pehin Major General (R) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Awang Mohammad during a press conference upon his arrival at the Brunei International Airport.

The summit also stressed on the plan and implementation program in all aspect including politic, law, economy and social. Strategic Plan for the year 2006-2008 said the Minister focuses on three area, which are Youth Enterprise and Sustainable Livelihoods; Governance, Development and Youth Network; and Youth Work, Education and Training.



Pehin Major General (R) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Awang Mohammad

BIMP-EAGA increases economy

JERUDONG, June 5 - A more conducive business environment is expected through a wider area of business, investment and tourism. This is through the formation of the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippine-East Asia Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA).

This was stated by the Minister of Communications, Pehin Dato Seri Setia Haji Awang Abu Bakar during BIMP-EAGA Ministers of Transports first meeting at Empire Hotel & Country Club. The minister also raised the issue which were discussed at the annual BIMP-EAGA meeting, infrastructure and ICT development, besides the efforts towards strengthening the transports and infrastructure policy networks.

Minister calls for reasonable energy usage



Pehin Dato Seri Paduka Haji Awang Yahya, Minister of Energy at the Prime Minister's Office.

BERAKAS, June 10 - Members of the public are urged to minimise the use of energy to reduce millions spent on fuel subsidy.

The Minister of Energy made the remark during the Oil and Gas Directors Dinner at the International Convention Centre. It was timely in view of the huge amount of money the Government of His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam have to spend on diesel and gasoline subsidies.

The Minister explained that in 2005, some B\$167 million were spent on diesel and motor gasoline and the figure is expected to rise to B\$226 million in 2006.

“The time when hydrocarbon could be obtained and produced cheaply is over. The market dictates that diesel is cheaper than a bottle of mineral water while at the same time increasing the rate of subsidy,” said the Minister.

Pehin Dato Seri Paduka Haji Yahya reiterated that the cost of subsidy in 2005 was not a small amount as the money could otherwise be used for beneficial developments like the construction of eight schools, each having a price tag of B\$20 million, or to construct a new more comfortable hospital.

Additionally, the Minister urged consumers to change their perception on energy usage by optimising the value of the nation’s oil and gas production as well as to become reasonable and smart user of energy.

Brunei Darussalam has been an oil producer for the past 80 years, and commercially producing gas since 32 years ago. Most of current productions come from mature and marginal reserves. This means that production costs from these reservoirs are higher since expensive technologies have to be employed.

Brunei Darussalam's Islamic Banking goes full gear

The recent merger of the Islamic Bank of Brunei and the Islamic Development Bank of Brunei boosts Brunei Darussalam's effort to provide an efficient alternative to conventional banking to the consumers.

Brunei Darussalam's effort was further strengthened with the introduction of the recently announced Syariah Financial Supervisory Board Order 2006 which provides the appointment of officers, and consequently, the authority to regulate Islamic Banking licences, related products and services.

A visit to the Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam revealed a diverse range of products and services presently available to its wide array of clients.

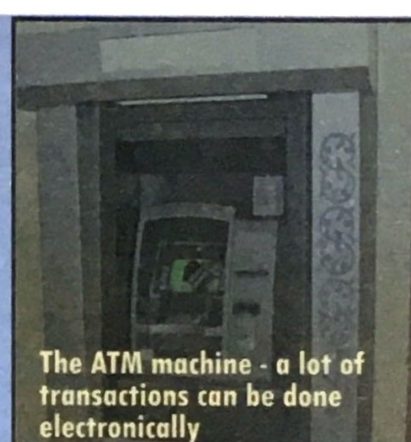
Appropriately named in Arabic, products and services extended by Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam cover almost all of our banking requirements, from education to business financing. And for our convenience, some of the transactions can be done electronically.

The Al-Bai Bithaman Ajil, for example, is a personal financing product which has a repayment period of six years and is disbursed on a 'quick process basis.'

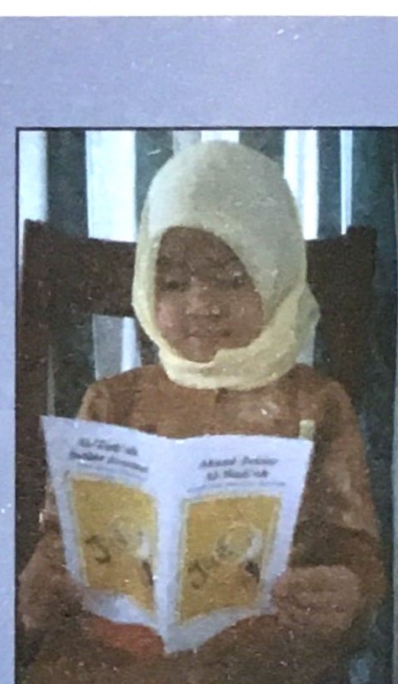
Notable also is the Al-Mudharabah Savings Account which actually is an investment account which enables depositors to gain benefits from the profit gained from the bank investment calculated on an agreed ratio during the opening of account.

The Akaun Junior Al-Wadi'ah is specifically introduced with our children's future in mind. This account enables us to deposit funds for our children, and at the same time, encourages a saving culture among the young.

If you are planning to perform the Haj -the Al Wasiah Yad Dhamanah is just the right account for you. By depositing your fund into this account, you will be eligible to gain profit from bank investment calculated on a daily basis and credited into your account on a monthly basis.



The ATM machine - a lot of transactions can be done electronically



Curiosity motivates five-year-old Jasmine Hidayah to go through the Akaun Junior Al-Wadi'ah pamphlet

Ministry of Finance announces establishment of Syariah Financial Supervisory Board Order

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 12 - A Syariah Financial Supervisory Board pursuant to the Syariah Financial Supervisory Board Order 2006 has been set up with effect from January 17.

The board shall be the authority for the ascertainment of the Laws of Islam for the purposes of Islamic Banking Business, Takaful Business, Islamic Financial Business, Islamic Development Financial Business and any other businesses, which is based on the Syariah principles, and to be supervised and regulated by the authority. The authority for the purposes of the order is the Minister of Finance.

With the enactment of this order, any business dealing of financial institutions in Brunei Darussalam concerning the distribution of Islamic products is required to be submitted to the board for approval. This is to ensure that the Islamic product is in accordance with Syaria before it enters into the business transaction and requires that a financial institution shall not appoint, engage or employ any person to become a member of any Syariah Advisory Body or act as a Syariah Consultant or Syariah Advisor of that financial institution without obtaining the approval of the board in writing.

In accordance with Section 6 of the Order, His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has graciously consented to the appointment of the board's membership with effect from February 25, 2006 .

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance Ex-Officio is the Statutory Member and Chairman; and the State Mufti Ex-Officio, Pehin Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Haji Abdul Aziz bin Juned as Statutory Member.

Members are Deputy State Mufti, Pehin Dato Paduka Seri Setia Haji Awang Suhaili bin Haji Awang Mohiddin; Sya'riah High Court Judge, Pehin Dato Paduka Seri Setia Haji Awang Salim Bin Haji Awang Besar; Sya'riah High Court Judge, Dato Seri Setia Haji Metussin bin Haji Baki; Islamic Legal Specialist Ministry of Religious Affairs; Dato Seri Laila Jasa Professor Dr. Anwarullah Shafiullah; Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, Awang Haji Bahrin Bin Abdullah; and Principal Counsel Attorney General's Chambers, Dayang Hajah Norhashimah binti Haji Mohd. Taib. Awang Haji Japar bin Haji Mat Dain @ Maidin of the State Mufti Office has been appointed as Alternate Member. The term of office shall be for a period of 3 years from the date of appointment.

BRIEFLY

Longer duration for business license

GADONG, June 1 - The duration for business license issued under the Miscellaneous License Regulations and the Municipal Board Act has been extended from two to five years starting June 1.

This was announced by the Minister of Home Affairs, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Adanan at a ceremony to receive contributions and sponsorships for events for the celebration to mark the 60th birthday of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

Indonesia champion in ASEAN badminton tournament

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, June 10 - Indonesia emerged champion in the 13th ASEAN Schools Badminton Championship which was held at the Hassanal Bolkiah Indoor Stadium. This year's tournament was participated by Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines and the host country, Brunei Darussalam.

ASEAN receives 44 millions visitors in 2005

BERAKAS, June 12 - Preliminary statistic shows international tourism in ASEAN countries have reached more than 44 million at the end of year 2005. It showed a 4.7 per cent increment compared to year 2004.

This was stated at the briefing and roadshow of mini tourism 'Visit ASEAN Pass' (VAP) held at the Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources. The Chairman of the Intra-ASEAN tourism Committee, Tungku Iskandar said, the association play an important role for the past years in promoting ASEAN tourism product following the implementation of ASEAN passable on the years 2004.

13 countries to participate in BIT

BERAKAS, June 12 - Brunei Darussalam is all set to organise the Brunei Darussalam International Tattoo 2006 (BIT 2006) in conjunction with the 60th birthday of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

To ensure a brilliant performance, representatives of 13 participating countries attended a coordination meeting held at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium. Shows are scheduled from July 27 to 31.

Website in conjunction with His Majesty 60th anniversary

BERAKAS, June 15 - Information Department, Prime Minister's Office as Promotion & Information Committee has launched an official website in conjunction with His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam's 60th birthday anniversary.

The website contains current news in conjunction with His Majesty's 60th birthday anniversary, collection of His Majesty's titah (royal address) in conjunction with his birthday anniversary, live television coverage, photo gallery, media room and event calendar during His Majesty's birthday celebration which will be held throughout the country.

Public can log on into the web at www.royalbirthday.info

Minister of Health discuss issues to overcome pandemic and natural disasters

BERAKAS, June 20 - Minister of Health, Pehin Dato Paduka Haji Awang Suyoi went to Yangon, Myanmar to attend the 8th ASEAN Ministers of Health meetings; 2nd ASEAN + 3 Ministers of Health meeting; and 1st ASEAN + China Ministers of Health meeting.

The meetings which were held from June 21 to 23 with the theme 'Unity In Health Emergency', discussed efforts of cooperation between ASEAN member countries in overcoming health emergency issues caused by Influenza Pandemic and natural disasters.

More than 1,000 people at Olympic Run

BERAKAS, June 25 - More than one thousand people joined the Olympic Run 2006 in conjunction with Olympic Day celebrated every June 23. It was to commemorate the starting of modern Olympic on June 23, 1894 in Paris.

The Olympic run was divided into six categories. It started with an aerobic session involving all the participants including special persons at the Hassanal Bolkiah National Stadium in Berakas.

Foundation donates

KUMBANG PASANG, May 26 - The Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Foundation donated \$60,900.00 to government and non-government agencies, including institution of higher learning to enable them to conduct research and initiate community development programmes. The contributions were presented by the Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs, Pehin Dato Paduka Seri Setia Haji Awang Badaruddin who is also the Chaiman of Board Directors of the SHHB Foundation.

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.

Commercial centres along outskirts of capital

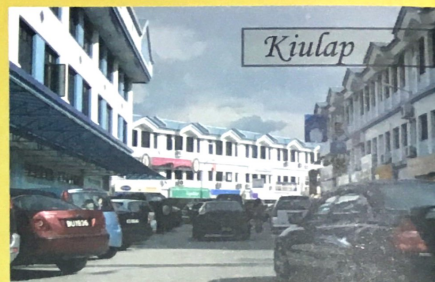
For the past recent years, more commercial areas are looming along the outskirts of Bandar Seri Begawan.

The capital used to be the centre of administration and business activities but today, it has slowly shifted to the suburbs like Gadong, Serusop, and Kiulap.

Gadong is one of the areas in the suburbs that houses various commercial entities from the popular, The Mall, to internationally recognised hotels like Rizqun International and the Centrepoint.

While Serusop is another bustling area with commercial joints accommodating more than 50 shop outlets ranging from supermarket to restaurants.

Kiulap is also another venue situated near to the capital where it also houses a number of business activities. A hotel will be based in the midst of this bustling area as well as more new shopping complexes.



BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER is now available online

www.bruneinewsletter.info and email us at: info@bruneinewsletter.info