



برونى دارالسلام

Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam newsletter

Published by the Department of Information
Prime Minister's Office

MAY 2020
VOLUME 35 ISSUE 05

Hari Raya Celebration: Be patient and heed health guidelines

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 23 - His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam asserted although the Hari Raya Aidilfitri was unable to be celebrated due to the threat of the coronavirus, the occasion can still be embraced by reciting the *Takbir Hari Raya* (praising Allah the Almighty) and performing the Sunat Hari Raya prayer.

The customary Sunat Hari Raya prayer cannot be held at places of worship this year, but it can still be performed in our home with our families.

His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam delivered the *titah* (royal speech) in conjunction with the Hari Raya Aidilfitri 1441 Hijrah / 2020 Masihi at Istana Nurul Iman.

His Majesty stated that Muslims around the world are celebrating Hari Raya Aidilfitri, and Brunei Darussalam is no exception. Normally, the celebration begins with Sunat Hari Raya Prayer at mosques, religious halls or *surau*.

Continue on page 3



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam delivered the *titah* (royal speech) in conjunction with the Hari Raya Aidilfitri 1441 Hijrah / 2020 Masihi at Istana Nurul Iman.

New achievement in downstream industry

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 18 - Hengyi Industries Sendirian Berhad (Hengyi) held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officiate the first supply of transportation fuels (Gasoline, Diesel and Jet A1 fuel) from Hengyi to Brunei Shell Marketing Company Sdn. Bhd. (BSM), marking the start of the Pulau Muara Besar Refinery's supply of refined fuel products to the domestic market.

The refinery is expected to reduce Brunei's dependency on imported fuel products while also generating products for export.

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam in a *titah* (royal speech) have urged to hasten economic growth and realise Brunei Vision 2035. This includes the materialisation of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) projects within the nation. The local manufacture of a range of fuel products by Hengyi, one of

the largest FDI companies in Brunei Darussalam, contributes to the development and diversification of the nation's downstream energy sector while supporting national self-sufficiency.

Held at Pulau Muara Besar's Gantry Yard, Western Tank Farm, the event was jointly officiated by Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II; Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Ir. Awang Haji Suhaimi bin Haji Gafar, Minister of Development; Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mat Suny bin Haji Md. Hussein; Minister of Energy, Manpower and Industry; Her Excellency Yu Hong, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to Brunei Darussalam; Mr. Chen Lian Cai, Hengyi Industries Chief Executive Officer; and Muhammad Norshafiee bin Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Jalil, BSM Managing Director.

Continue on page 12



3. Her Royal Highness gives birth to a Prince



3. 340 i-Ready apprenticeship programmes listed despite on-going pandemic



5. ASEAN Labour Ministers discuss the impact of COVID-19 in the labour market



6. Conference agrees to increase cooperation against COVID-19



7. Coordination and cooperation in addressing the global COVID-19 pandemic



8. Brunei anticipates freedom from COVID-19



13. Ensure a balanced education while COVID-19



14. UTB - BSP seal research contract

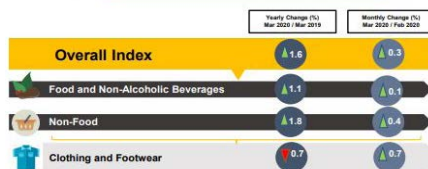


15. Politeknik Brunei launched CELL

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX (CPI) MARCH 2020



DPI measures the changes in prices of a fixed basket of goods and services purchased by the majority of household in Brunei Darussalam.



16. CPI rose 1.6 % in March 2020



MAY 2020 - VOLUME 35 ISSUE 05

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM NEWSLETTER

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

EMAIL US AT: info.dept@information.gov.bn

EDITORIAL Advisory Board:

Mawardi Haji Mohammad
(mawardi.mohammad@information.gov.bn)

Sastra Sarini Haji Julaini
(sarini.julaini@information.gov.bn)

Editor:

Mufidah Abdul Hakim
(mufidah.hakim@information.gov.bn)

Text:

Nurul Hazwani Abu Omar
(hazwani.omar@information.gov.bn)

Translation

Hajah Apsah Haji Sahdan @Shadan
(apsah.sahdan@information.gov.bn)

Layouter:

Khairul Shaharim Haji Abdul Ghafor
(shaharim.ghafor@information.gov.bn)

Proofread:

Siti Faizahanisah Awang Mahani
(faizahanisah.mahani@information.gov.bn)

Photographs

Photography Unit of Department of Information

General inquiries

Tel: (673) 2383 400/ext English Publications
Fax: (673) 2382 012

Information Department

www.information.gov.bn

Information Gallery

www.infofoto.gov.bn

Follow us



Download **InfoDeptBN**



Instagram - @infodept.bn



Twitter - @Infodept_bn



Facebook - Jabatan Penerangan
Jabatan Perdana Menteri
Brunei Darussalam

Congratulatory Message

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to send congratulatory message to His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al-Hussein, King of Jordan and members of the royal family as well as the Government and people of Jordan on the auspicious occasion of their Independence Day on May 25.

News

Hari Raya Celebration: Be patient and heed health guidelines

From page 1

His Majesty said that even though we may not be able to shake hands as a form of greeting, but there are other means of communication.

"Is this not an opportunity for us to foster ties and unite with family members and friends in conveying Hari Raya greetings and asking for forgiveness?"

Not only can we hear their voices, but we can also communicate through video conferencing and video chats instead of physical meetings.

However, His Majesty stressed that the guidelines set by the Ministry of Health, Hari Raya festivity can still be held with close family members, such as our children, siblings and parents.

According to His Majesty's *titah*, large families will need to adhere to gathering guidelines by limiting 20-30 people at a given time.

His Majesty added, for extended families, their visits can be arranged into schedules and by taking turns to ensure the number of people does not become a mass gathering.

"There is no question that all of us are affected by the current situation. The annual open palace at Istana Nurul Iman will not be open to the public this year; however, the citizens and residents of this country will always be in my heart," His Majesty said.

In the current situation, nothing is more meaningful than cultivating patience, as patience is the 'palace of faith'.

His Majesty in a *titah* said, those who are patient, loved by Allah, as stated in Verse 146 of *Surah Ali 'Imran*: "Allah loves the patient ones."

"Among the signs of patience is our readiness to comply with the regulations, unlike in other countries where people fight against the regulations."

His Majesty commended Bruneians for complying with the rules and regulations, and in this way, *InsyaaAllah*, the nation and the country will remain safe and secure. His Majesty and his family also extended their heartfelt wishes for Selamat Hari Raya Aidilfitri to everyone and wished all be blessed with good health and prosperity under the protection of Allah the Almighty.

Her Royal Highness gives birth to a Prince



BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 22 - By the command of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the Office of His Majesty announced that Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Hafizah Sururul Bolkiah, wife of Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Anak Haji Muhammad Ruzaini bin Pengiran Dr. Haji Mohd. Yakub, by the grace of Allah the Almighty, has safely given birth to a Prince on Friday, 28th of Ramadan, 1441 Hijrah corresponding to May 22, 2020 at 10.44 a.m.

To mark the birth, a 17-gun salute was fired from the compound of Istana Nurul Iman.

340 i-Ready apprenticeship programmes listed despite on-going pandemic

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 14 - The Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam put three pillars as a core response to COVID-19, namely the welfare of the public; assistance for employers and employees; and business support.

Through the Manpower Planning and Employment Council (MPEC) and Darussalam Enterprise (DARE), the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam encourage private sector companies to grab the opportunity to provide programmes through online courses and practice, including in the field of information technology; food and beverages; as well as innovation and design to increase the skills and retrain the local workforce.

Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs in his speech at the Special Meeting of ASEAN Labour Ministers on Impact Response Against Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to Labour and Employment through the Video Conference application at the Ministry of Home Affairs, in the capital.

According to the minister, JobCentre Brunei (JCB) utilise online platforms for interviews, preparation of talent pool information for use by enterprises, and SMS information notifications for job seekers.

Continue on page 4

340 i-Ready apprenticeship programmes listed despite on-going pandemic



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs in his speech at the Special Meeting of ASEAN Labour Ministers on Impact Response Against Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to Labour and Employment through video conference at the Ministry of Home Affairs, in the capital.

From page 3

“Jobcentre Brunei web portal has also been enhanced to facilitate job matching to provide real-time job statuses,” the Minister explained.

Despite the on-going pandemic, jobs continue to be available - where 272 jobs and 340 i-Ready apprenticeships have been listed and 150 vacancies have been filled. “I am also pleased to share that Brunei Darussalam’s 2019 labour force survey showed an overall unemployment rate of 6.8 per cent - a decrease from 8.7 per cent the year prior,” said the Minister.

For migrant workers, free COVID random swab testing continues to be provided and it has been emphasised regularly by the

Ministry of Home Affairs and the Department of Labour that employers are required to ensure the medical well-being as well as acceptable living conditions of their workers.

Accordingly, the tenure required for an employee to qualify for paid sick leave has been reduced from six months to one month.

“This initiative is aimed at safeguarding the welfare of new employees who may be required to undergo medical treatment during the COVID-19 outbreak,” said the Minister.

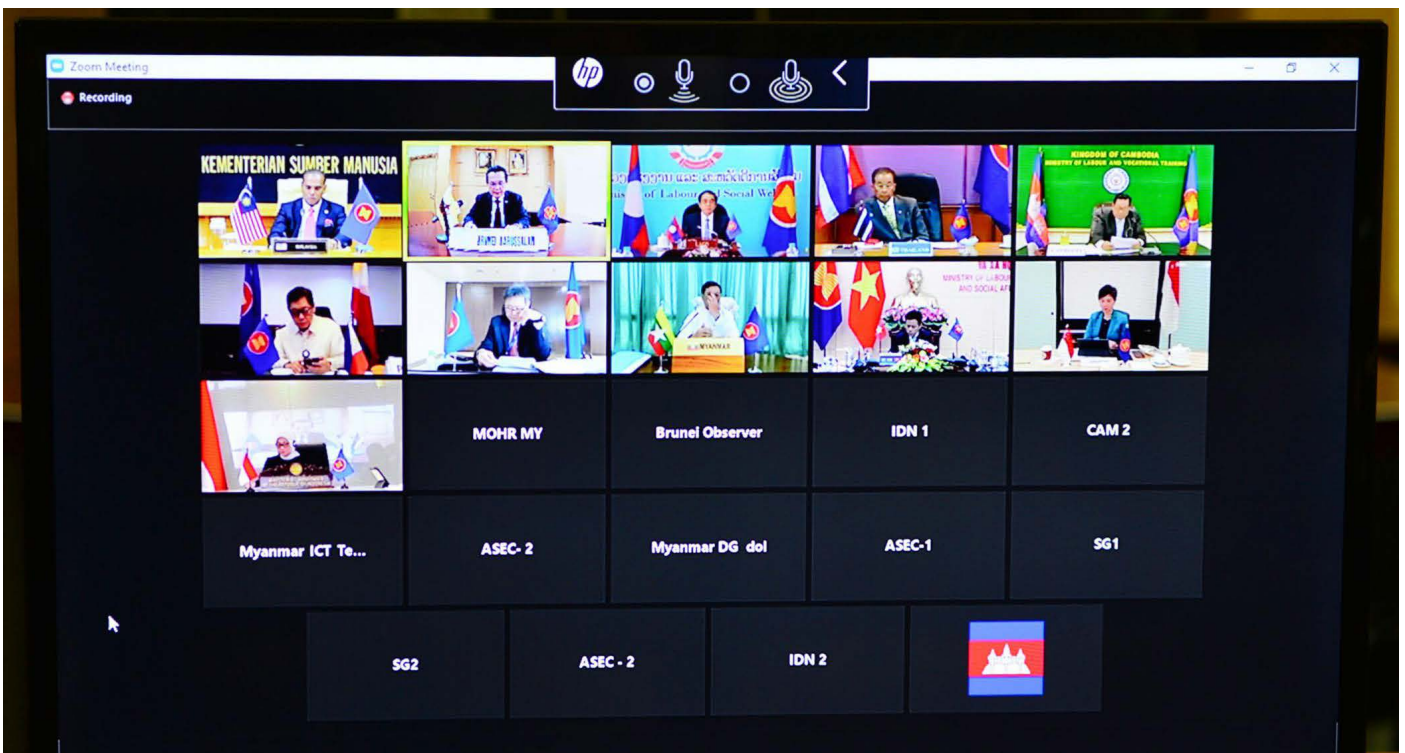
In order to support innovation and leveraging public-private partnerships for the growing e-commerce trend, says the Minister, various online directories for business owners market their products was launched.

“As of today, about 300 businesses are listed on the platform. The Government of Brunei Darussalam also introduces ‘Buy Local Produce’ campaign, which aims to ensure the sustainability and continuity of the local farmers’ incomes in the agricultural sector,” said the Minister.

The Minister added that under the new norm, there is much to be done as ASEAN reaches the post-COVID-19 level of recovery to ensure the stability of the region.

In addition, ASEAN should promote active labour market policies, continue to maintain occupational, safety and health standards and recognise the important role of social security systems in retaining employment and reducing the vulnerabilities of at-risk workers.

ASEAN is truly a resilient and perceptive association of nations that grows stronger not only because of our proximity as neighbours but due to our openness to communicate and cooperate in challenging times - and I am confident that, with time and patient restraint, we will overcome this obstacle,” said the Minister .



The Special Meeting of ASEAN Labour Ministers on Impact Response Against Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to Labour and Employment through video conference.

ASEAN Labour Ministers discuss the impact of COVID-19 in the labour market



Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs in his speech at the Special Meeting of ASEAN Labour Ministers on Impact Response Against Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to Labour and Employment through video conference at the Ministry of Home Affairs, in the capital.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 14 - The ASEAN Labour Ministers on Response to the Impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on Labour and Employment was held through video conference.

Present at the meeting was Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia (Dr.) Haji Awang Abu Bakar bin Haji Apong, Minister of Home Affairs at the Ministry of Home Affairs Building, in the capital.

Also present, Minister of Labour from ASEAN countries; Director General, International Labour Organization (ILO), Guy Ryder and Dato Lim Jock Hoi, Secretariat-General of ASEAN.

The special meeting was officiated and chaired by Datuk Seri M. Saravanan, Minister of Human Resources Malaysia.

In the Joint Statement of the meeting, the ministers acknowledged the high level of exchanges that took place between the Ministers of Health and the ASEAN Economic Ministers also approved the Declaration of the Special ASEAN Summit on COVID-19 on April 14, endorsed by the ASEAN Heads of State.

The Joint Statement also encouraged actions taken by ASEAN countries to secure the livelihoods and well-being of workers, encouraging for appropriate medical assistance for ASEAN citizens

and strengthen effectiveness labour market policies to improve the quality of life.

The meeting also held an open session with the Director General of the ILO, where ASEAN Labor Ministers exchanged views on information related to the impact of COVID-19 on the labour market in the world of work.

Earlier, the Preparatory Meeting of the Senior Labour Officers for the Special Meeting also took place on Tuesday through the Video Conference app.

Senior Labour Officials from all ASEAN countries ratified the meeting agenda and finalised the article for the ASEAN Labour Ministers' Statement.

Md. Amir Hairil bin Haji Mahmud, Permanent Secretary (Security, Welfare and Legal), Ministry of Home Affairs led the Brunei Darussalam delegation at the Preparation Meeting.

The delegates from Brunei Darussalam include Muhd. Saufi bin Haji Ibrahim, Labour Commissioner; and Rozan Justin Teo bin Haji Azlan, Assistant Labour Commissioner.

The meeting was chaired by Datuk Amir bin Omar, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Human Resources Malaysia.

Conference agrees to increase cooperation against COVID-19



Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Md. Isham bin Haji Jaafar, Minister of Health during the Special Video Conference of Health Ministers of ASEAN and the United States.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 1 - The Special Video Conference of Health Ministers of ASEAN and the United States Meeting on Thursday, April 30, 2020 and to represent Brunei Darussalam at the Special Video Conference was Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Md. Isham bin Haji Jaafar, Minister of Health.

The Special Video Conference of Health Ministers of ASEAN and the United States was officiated by His Excellency Retired Lieutenant-General Terawan Agus Putranto, MD, Ph.D, Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia; and His Excellency Alex Azar, Secretary of Health and Human Services, USA, as Co-Chair of the Special Video Conference of Health Ministers of ASEAN and the United States, which focuses on the topic of Increasing Cooperation in Action Against COVID-19.

The conference is an essential platform for the discussion of best practices on mitigation strategies and measures or mitigating the risks and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, exploring areas of cooperation between ASEAN and the United States to support the mechanism for the prevention and control of new and emerging infectious diseases in the ASEAN region.

The Minister of Health in his speech shared Brunei Darussalam's action since the first case of COVID-19 was reported by implementing various measures to limit the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak in the country, which amongst others, include contact tracing for confirmed cases of COVID-19, quarantine, isolation and self-monitoring arrangements, as well as prohibiting mass gatherings, suspending schools and certain activities, restricting travel to and from the country.

The Minister added, although the situation in Brunei has been brought under control, Ministry of Health is still facing other challenges such as asymptomatic cases and those who remain asymptomatic throughout contracting the disease. Case investigation also reveals that asymptomatic transmission does occur, and as have been observed in the household and school settings.

In this case, the Minister emphasised the importance of contact detection; implementation of COVID-19 tests; and treatment and further research at the National Isolation Center to address these challenges.

The Minister then shared the situation in which individuals

recovering from COVID-19 were subsequently found positive after being allowed to return home. As a result, the Ministry of Health is considering to review its seven-day isolation policy after individuals recover from COVID-19 by extending it to 14 days.

According to the Minister, further research and collaboration is urgently needed to help all of us to manage these cases better, and optimise the use of resources.

Although the health care system in Brunei Darussalam is well managed, however, Brunei is still facing delays and other logistical disruptions in attaining essential medicines, medical supplies and medical equipment. Since the pandemic began, many countries are facing increased demands for medications related to the supportive treatment of COVID-19, and other medical consumables.

"Also challenging are the lockdown issues in some countries, limited flights, and the increase price of medical supplies from suppliers," the Minister added.

The Minister also voiced a number of proposals to improve health and strengthen cooperation between ASEAN-United States (ASEAN-US Health Cooperation) by examining the existing ASEAN health sector mechanism and consider to establish an appropriate reporting structure which would enable ASEAN and US to cooperate systematically and to ensure that the free exchange of knowledge, ideas, and best practices continue between the US and ASEAN.

Regional initiatives in data sharing and clinical and public health research collaboration should be enhanced, and the outcomes must be shared in order to support and learn from each other. We need to work together in sourcing as well as to obtain medical supplies and equipment for COVID-19, according to the needs or requirement of each country, where possible. We must help each other to ensure the production of medical supplies, including vaccines, and medical equipment is unhindered, and supply chains remain open and connected, as well as to keep prices stable.

Special Video Conference of Health Ministers of ASEAN and the United States ended with a declaration of Joint Statement with Health Ministers of ASEAN and United States in Enhancing Cooperation on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response.

Coordination and cooperation in addressing the global COVID-19 pandemic



Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Md. Isham bin Haji Jaafar, the Minister of Health, representing Brunei Darussalam during the 73rd World Health Assembly Virtual Session 2020.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 18 - The 73rd World Health Assembly Virtual Session 2020 was held on Monday, May 18, 2020 and representing Brunei Darussalam in the virtual session was Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Md. Isham bin Haji Jaafar, Minister of Health.

The assembly was also attended by Ministers of Health and representatives from 194 member states of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The aim of the World Health Assembly was to focus on global preparation and response towards COVID-19 and ensure the continuity of global health administration under WHO, namely the appointment of new executive board members.

This year's assembly was chaired by Her Excellency Keva Bain from Bahamas as President of the Health Assembly.

Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General also gave a speech focusing on the responses and strategies that need to be taken in addressing the outbreak of COVID-19 epidemic as well as to remind the Member States to ignore other health issues in dealing with COVID-19 and to further enhance the actions towards achieving global health coverage.

The 73rd World Health Assembly Virtual Session 2020 enabled WHO member countries to share information and experience on the coordination, cooperation and same direction in addressing the global COVID-19 pandemic by following the WHO Constitution.

It will also give collective opportunity to express the themes of security, solidarity and resiliency, among others, through commemorating and recognising the significant donations, which are given by all parties around the world who are involved in the response to the COVID-19, especially the global health workforce.

In the keynote address of the Minister of Health, Brunei Darussalam supports the global preparation and response towards the COVID-19 pandemic.

The two main approaches, namely 'the importance of enhanced surveillance and testing' and 'establishing an effective community engagement strategy' has enabled Brunei Darussalam to control the spread of COVID-19 without a major scale lockdown.

Yang Berhormat noted that Brunei Darussalam is an early adopter in conducting COVID-19 test without the appearance of symptoms and performed random sample intake in health centers at community level and among foreigners.

The Minister of Health further added that the test per capita ratio of Brunei Darussalam is among the highest in the world. Additionally, the Minister believes that the effort to contain COVID-19 from spreading is crucial for the society.

The Minister also shared a number of engagement strategies such as conducting media conferences every day; 24-hour Hotline for public inquiries about COVID-19 and the setting up of a self-analysis mobile application that is integrated with the Artificial Intelligence and Analytic Data.

The Minister further highlighted that civic engagement played a significant role and is one of the significant movements at the grassroots level that triggered the volunteering and support of the community in equally addressing the outbreak of COVID-19.

The Minister of Health further formulated that the two main approaches above have allowed Brunei Darussalam to contain the outbreak of COVID-19 without the need to implement and impose large-scale lockdown.

The implementation of physical distancing, the services and public businesses remain open and there is no restriction of movement in the country. The Ministry of Health's keynote address was concluded with a statement that the combination of the above-based approach can be used as way forward for the coming months and implement a de-escalation approach by phases; leveraging technology for contact tracing purposes and continuous cooperation with WHO and the global health community are an effective strategies in defending the country's response in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Also present at the 73rd World Health Assembly Virtual Session from the Ministry of Health, Brunei Darussalam was Dr. Haji Zulaidi bin Haji Abdul Latif, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Professional); Pg. Dr. Haji Md. Khalifah bin Pg. Haji Ismail, Acting Director General of Medical and Health Services; Dr. Hajah Anie Haryani binti Haji Abdul Rahman, Director of Environmental Health Services; and Dr. Justin Wong, Associate Specialist (Public Health).

Brunei anticipates freedom from COVID-19

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 31 - Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Md. Isham bin Haji Jaafar, Minister of Health, announced one new confirmed COVID-19 case in Brunei on May 6, 2020, that was detected from nationwide surveillance on citizens and residents of Brunei Darussalam, including foreign workers. The new case is a male aged 40 years. This brings the national tally to 139.

In regards to the cases that have recovered but found to be positive again during follow-up examination, the total number of such cases as of today sums up to 24 individuals.

On May 7, there was two new cases of COVID-19 infection in the country. Therefore, the total number of COVID-19 cases in Brunei Darussalam increased to 141 cases.

Case 140 is a male aged 46 years old, whereas Case 141 is a male aged 31 years old. Both cases are friends of Case 139 that was reported on May 6. Preliminary investigations have shown that all three of the cases, that is Case 139, 140 and 141 were most likely to be infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus in March 2020 and have stayed together in the same place. At this time, all three has not shown any symptoms of the infection.

In relation to the COVID-19 survey conducted on May 4, 2020 and ended on May 6, 2020, which aimed to provide an overview of the estimated rates of infection among the community in the country, the Ministry of Health informed that 527 people out of five selected health facilities nationwide were invited to participate in the survey. Preliminary analysis revealed that six participants in the study had



Appointed personnel conducting body temperature screening at Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkhiah mosque.

antibodies for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, however, further investigation via swab testing for the virus have tested negative. This gives the impression that they may have been infected with the virus but they do not have an active infection. The result of this kind of research can help the ministry estimate the population's immunity for a certain infection. The Ministry of Health is planning to conduct a follow-up investigation in the coming months.

With the consent of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Health informed the public on the reduction of

the social distancing measures that has been implemented since the outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020 by phases starting May 16, 2020. The first phase includes reduction of social distancing measures for driving school, gymnasium and fitness centres, sport facilities (indoor and outdoor), golf course, restaurants, cafes and food courts, stalls and markets.

In addition, Brunei Darussalam announced that primary and secondary schools, sixth-form centres, vocational schools and the Institute of Brunei Technical Education (IBTE) under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Religious Affairs, together with private schools, will reopen for classroom learning by phases on June 2, 2020.

The reopening of international schools is subject to the dates set by respective institutions. During each of the phases, curriculum and co-curricular activities will be suspended to ensure the safety and social security of the students and teachers.

Teaching and learning sessions will be set following the new norm. Although the situation is under control, schools are required to comply with standard operating procedures (SOPs) including social distancing, hygiene practices and temperature checks, and to ascertain the health of every student.



Mosques congregants performing Friday prayer.

Continue on page 9

SOCIAL DISTANCING

The practice of reducing close contact between people to slow the spread of infections or diseases. Social distancing measures include limiting large group of people coming together, closing buildings and cancelling events for example.

AVOID PLACES



USE WITH CAUTION



SAFE TO DO



Group Gatherings Social Outings	Visit Local Restaurant Visit Grocery Stores	Take a Walk or Go For a Hike Garden Work Play in The Yard
Athletic Events Crowded Retail Stores	Visit To Market (Pasar) Get Take Out	Read a Book Listen to Music Go For a Drive
Malls Cinemas	Visit Essential Services (banks, post office, utility services, etc)	Watch Movies at Home Family Game Night at Home
Visitors to Your House	Use Delivery Services/Runners To Pick Up Medication Public Transport (buses)	Group Video Chats Check on a Friend Check on Elderly Neighbor

Health Advice Line (HAL) 148 | www.moh.gov.bn

From page 8

The Minister sadly announced Brunei's second death from COVID-19. The deceased, a 56-year-old local man passed away at 7.30 a.m on May 27, 2020 at the National Isolation Centre (NIC) in Tutong.

The minister said the deceased was tested positive on March 24, after developing symptoms on March 22. He was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) on March 25.

Continue on page 10

Protect Yourself & Others Around You From Getting Sick

WASH YOUR HANDS:

- ✓ After you cough or sneeze
- ✓ When caring for the sick and those with influenza-like symptoms
- ✓ Before, during and after you prepare food
- ✓ Before, and after eating
- ✓ After every toilet use
- ✓ When hands are unclean and dirty
- ✓ After handling sick animals or animal waste

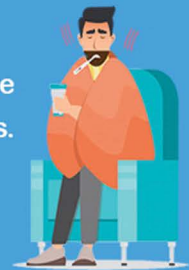
123 | www.moh.gov.bn

REDUCE YOUR RISK OF of COVID-19 virus infection:



Clean hands regularly with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms.



Cover your nose & mouth when you cough or sneeze with tissue. Throw the tissue away in a covered bin immediately after use.

Cook meat and eggs thoroughly.



Avoid unprotected contact with live wild or farm animals.



f | i | t | 123 | www.moh.gov.bn

From page 9

As announced at previous press conferences, *InsyaaAllah* all mosques will be opened for the public to perform their Friday prayers starting May 29, 2020. Citizens have to register and book their Friday prayer slot through the Bruhealth mobile application.

On May 28, 2020, about 35,980 individuals have registered and booked for their Friday Prayer slot. Those who will be attending the mosque, who have already registered and are given a green code are advised to wear face masks while performing their prayer and to bring their own prayer mat (large size) . As a precautionary measure, individuals are advised not to shake hands and return home immediately after completing the Friday prayers.

The Bruhealth App shall be used for entry and exit to premises that have been given flexibility such as restaurants, café, food stalls, golf courses, sports facilities; as well as for other premises that will be announced in the future such as mosques and others. Those who have not registered are encouraged to download and register to the Bruhealth App.

In addition to that, a total of 4,524 businesses and premises have registered the application. For business premises such as supermarkets, grocery stores, restaurants, cafes, stalls and food courts that have not registered yet are required to obtain a QR code for their premises and ensure that visitors scan and has a color code before being allowed into the premises. This is in addition to providing hand sanitiser as well as body temperature checks.

On May 28, 2020, smart helmets that can screen body temperatures will be deployed at 12 selected mosques during Friday prayers after a 10-week closure due to COVID-19. The use of the Smart Helmet aims to expedite entry into the mosque.

According to Haji Maswadi bin Haji Mohsin, Deputy Permanent Secretary for Policy and Management at the Ministry of Health,

the smart helmets will be used by appointed personnel including mosque *takmir* committee, safety officers and volunteers. He added that the smart helmet has no scanning limit as it is capable of scanning temperature of individuals or the mass at the same time.

“At present, we need to see the effectiveness of the helmet. Besides using it at mosques for the Friday prayers, the smart helmet can also be used in public areas such as shopping malls,” said Minister of Health.

To ensure that the BruHealth app can be used by all Brunei Darussalam citizens, another app called PremiseScan is launched to scan the user’s personal QR code. Yang Berhormat said the latest app enables business premises such as restaurants, gyms, shops and others to scan the user’s private QR code while entering and exiting the premise. The PremiScan app is a complimentary enhancement to the BruHealth app. According to Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, the Minister at the Prime Minister’s Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II, this will enable users who cannot access the BruHealth to use alternative method while entering or exiting business premises.

Users can first obtain their personal BruHealth QR code by visiting the website at ‘healthinfo.gov.bn’. Users must then bring the QR code to be scanned by premise owners using the PremiScan app. The minister reminded all users and business owners that QR code must be scanned before entering and leaving the premise. Apart from business premises, several government and private premises also utilise the BruHealth app. Through the extensive usage of the BruHealth app, this will ease contact tracing efforts.

On May 31, 2020, Brunei Darussalam did not record any new COVID-19 case with the tally in the country remaining at 141. Only one active COVID-19 patient remain at the National Isolation Centre, whereas the total number of cases that have recovered is 138 individuals.

Continue on page 11

2019-nCoV Virus Infection

what you need to know

"i just came back from an affected area and i am feeling unwell! What should i do?"

- seek medical care immediately
- cover your mouth and nose when you cough/sneeze
- stay at home
- wash hands with soap frequently

common symptoms:




severe cases may cause:



WARNING

2019-nCoV virus is potentially life-threatening and currently there is no vaccine against it. Consult your healthcare provider if you are concerned about your symptoms.

www.moh.gov.bn |
 



 123

From page 10

A total of 256 samples has been tested for the SARS-CoV2 virus, that brings the total number of laboratory tests conducted since January 2020 to 19,386 tests.

The minister reiterated on the importance for the public to

continue to be vigilant and cautious by adopting and cultivating preventive measures. "It is especially recommended to continue physical distancing, not to go around in large crowds at any one place and only to leave the house when necessary. This is in addition to practising personal hygiene such as regular hand washing and proper coughing and sneezing etiquette," he said.

New achievement in downstream industry



Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II and Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Ir. Awang Haji Suhaimi bin Haji Gafar, Minister of Development held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officiate the first supply of transportation fuels (Gasoline, Diesel and Jet A1 fuel) from Hengyi to Brunei Shell Marketing Company Sendirian Berhad (BSM).

From page 1

This is part of Hengyi's commercial agreement with BSM signed on September 18, 2019 to supply the refined fuel products to BSM for domestic market distribution. It signifies a new milestone for the country's downstream industry with the extension of the domestic oil and gas value chain.

The Pulau Muara Besar Refinery and Petrochemical Plant is a world-class oil refinery and aromatics complex with the capacity to refine eight million tonnes of crude oil per year. The petrochemical plant is capable of producing 13 different types of petroleum products.

Hengyi will be supplying a total of 427,509 barrels of refined fuel products to BSM, consisting of 190,778 barrels of gasoline, 159,924 barrels of diesel, and 76,807 barrels of jet fuel to meet monthly domestic demand of petroleum products.

Hengyi will be supplying Euro V fuels in time to domestic demand providing the highest quality and cleaner fuel. Euro V fuels are both environmentally friendly and provide better performance to motor vehicles.

The Pulau Muara Besar Refinery and Petrochemical Plant operations and the domestic supply of petroleum products are carefully overseen by the Ministry of Energy to ensure that quality products continue to be available to the public.

The Pulau Muara Besar Refinery and Petrochemical Plant also open up employment and business opportunities

to local workers and businesses. Since the start of its operation, Hengyi has directly employed 447 locals, and this number is expected to increase further in alignment with the Ministry of Energy's Bruneianisation Directive. Several more indirect employment opportunities have been generated through various contractors and local service providers to support the operation.



Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr. Awang Haji Mohd. Amin Liew bin Abdullah and Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Ir. Awang Haji Suhaimi bin Haji Gafar being briefed by one of the officer from Hengyi.

Ensure a balanced education while COVID-19



Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sulaiman, Minister of Education as the President of Brunei Darussalam National Commission for ICESCO, attending the Virtual Conference of Ministers of Education and members of ICESCO with the theme 'Education System in Addressing Crises and Emergencies during COVID 19'.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 14 - Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Hamzah bin Haji Sulaiman, Minister of Education as the President of Brunei Darussalam National Commission for ICESCO, attended the Virtual Conference of Ministers of Education along with members of ICESCO with the theme 'Education System in Addressing Crises and Emergencies during COVID 19'.

The Virtual Conference organised by ICESCO at Rabat, Morocco and attended by Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Senior Officers of more than 54 members, Representatives of International Organisations and Observers.

One of the objectives of this conference is to provide appropriate strategies in dealing with pandemics.

At the same time, it also supports the principles of maintaining equilibrium in education, while protecting teachers and students.

During the session, ICESCO members, including the Minister of Education, had the opportunity to share their experiences and success of Brunei Darussalam in ensuring that education is always secure for faculty and students during the pandemic crisis; preparation of ICESCO members to ensure the safety of teaching and re-learning during the pandemic crisis;

share the role of technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education; introduced and supported the ICESCO initiatives, the Comprehensive Humanitarian Coalition and concluded with a dialogue session.

The Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) were formerly known as the Islamic Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), established in May 1979 by the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

The name change took place during the 40th Session of the ISESCO Executive Council on January 29 to 30, 2020.

As one of the largest international Islamic organisations, it specialises in education, science, culture, information and communication.

Currently, there are 54 ICESCO member countries and three observer countries.

Among those present during the session were Dr. Haji Azman bin Ahmad, the Permanent Secretary (Higher Education), Ministry of Education and Walter Chong Meng Siong, Head of International Affairs Unit, Ministry of Education.

UTB - BSP seal research contract

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 1 - Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) signed a three-year research contract for the Provision of Numerical Sand Screen Modelling and Facilities with Brunei Shell Petroleum Company Sendirian Berhad (BSP).

The contract is to investigate sand control techniques and production from oil and gas wells by developing new laboratory tests and advanced numerical simulation.

Professor Dr. Dayang Hajah Zohrah binti Haji Sulaiman, Vice-Chancellor of UTB and Dr. Ceri M. Powell, Managing Director of BSP signed the agreement which recognises UTB's rapidly increasing capability in Engineering research.

"This is a very significant moment for a young and dynamic university, where BSP has, in awarding this contract to UTB, expressed confidence in our ability to deliver world-class research to solve one of Brunei Darussalam's most costly technical challenges," said Professor Dr. Dayang Hajah Zohrah.

Controlling sand during production has been one of the biggest challenges facing BSP due to the nature of the regional geology in Borneo. It is a significant problem shared by many energy companies all over the world.

During the production of hydrocarbons, sand is held back from entering wells by wire screens. However, the selection of the best screen is highly technical, needing to be optimised, considering many factors - upfront numerical modelling and computer simulation are increasingly the key to success.



Dr. Ceri M. Powell, Managing Director of Brunei Shell Petroleum Company Sendirian Berhad (BSP) signed the agreement which recognises Universiti Teknologi Brunei's (UTB) rapidly increasing capability in Engineering research.

This is a truly international research activity, centred on UTB. UTB is collaborating with the Imperial College, London, United Kingdom to provide mathematical analysis and 3D computer simulation, and the University of New South Wales, Australia to develop the testing laboratory.

One of the aims of the project is to create a commercial sand screen testing facility at UTB, providing new and more efficient tests to identify how to reduce sand production by selecting proper downhole sand screens.

"BSP is proud to continue our collaboration with UTB. It places the university at the forefront of critical, innovative and digital research, enabling new skillsets for Bruneians while maximising value with new local capabilities. No longer do we need to have screen retention testing done thousands of miles away. It can be done here in Brunei Darussalam, by Bruneians contributing to the Industrial Revolution 4.0," said Dr. Ceri M. Powell.

The project will offer more than 12 postgraduate scholarships to local students at both Master's and PhD levels and involve many petroleum engineering undergraduate students of UTB. UTB will also need to recruit local researchers and technicians.

"Our aim is to encourage some of the fantastic talent we have in Brunei Darussalam. There are some very tough technical problems in the petroleum industry here and we expect our students to study these because they will need to solve them when they graduate. BSP has been very problems. We are working very closely with their technical staff to teach our students the skills they need to solve Brunei's engineering challenges," explained Professor Stephen Tyson, Chair Professor in Petroleum Engineering, UTB.



Professor Dr. Dayang Hajah Zohrah binti Haji Sulaiman, Vice-Chancellor of UTB in signing a three-year research contract for the Provision of Numerical Sand Screen Modelling and Facilities with BSP.

Politeknik Brunei launched CELL



Denis Ho Mun Tai, Director of Politeknik Brunei as a guest of honour during the launching ceremony of The Centre of Excellence for Lifelong Learning (CELL) at One Stop Centre, Level 2, Politeknik Brunei, Jalan Ong Sum Ping.

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 8 - Politeknik Brunei held a launching ceremony of The Centre of Excellence for Lifelong Learning (CELL) at One Stop Centre, Level 2, Politeknik Brunei, Jalan Ong Sum Ping.

The CELL is a centre created to promote lifelong learning and continuous education for all. Its mission is to provide lifelong learning opportunities, continuing education, and professional development through quality and innovative skills courses and programmes.

It aims to provide support for learners looking for specific skill training to develop their career opportunities as well as those pursuing education looking to improve their skills.

The event began with the recitation of *Surah Al-Fatihah* and *Doa Selamat*.

The exhibition was attended by Denis Ho Mun Tai, Director of

Politeknik Brunei as a guest of honour, followed by welcoming remarks by Haji Ehwan bin Haji Juned, the Acting Head of CELL.

The CELL, through Politeknik Brunei's highly qualified lecturers and instructors, endeavours to provide learners with quality skills courses and programs for personal and professional development and provide opportunities for lifelong learning through creative and innovative courses and programmes.

An initial 20 short skill courses for the public will commence in July this year, including courses in language, ICT, business and soft skills.

The courses will be run entirely online with a few courses offering blended learning.

These courses are run with the assistance and cooperation of the Centre for Lifelong Learning, Ministry of Education and the Manpower Planning and Economic Council, Prime Minister's Office.

CPI rose 1.6 % in March 2020

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, May 12 - CPI for March 2020 increased by 1.6 per cent year-on-year, compared with March 2019. Food and Beverages price increased by 1.1 per cent.

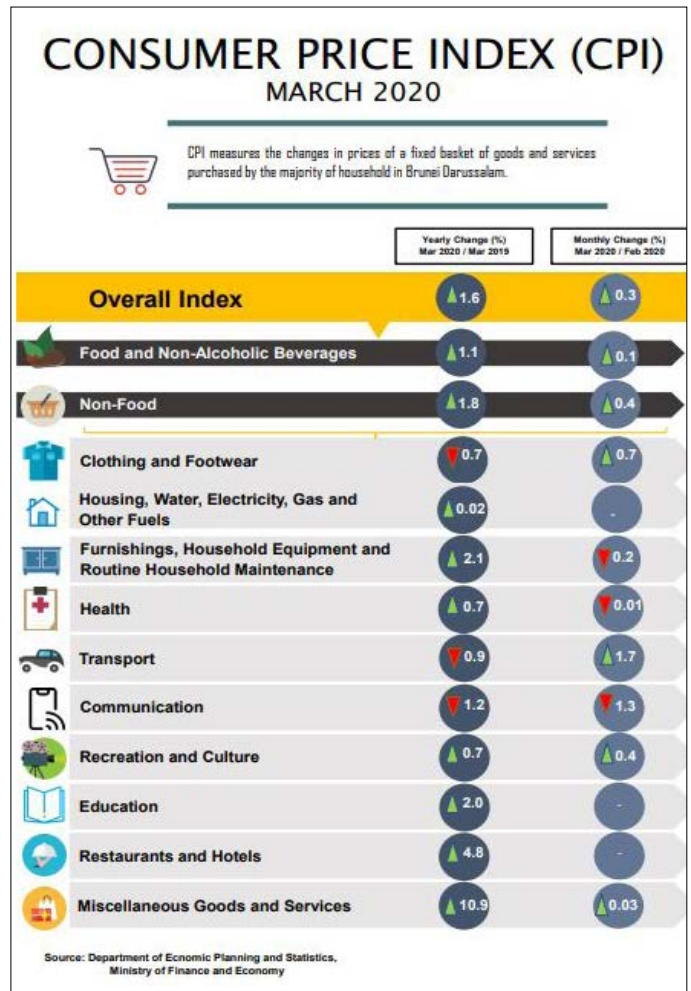
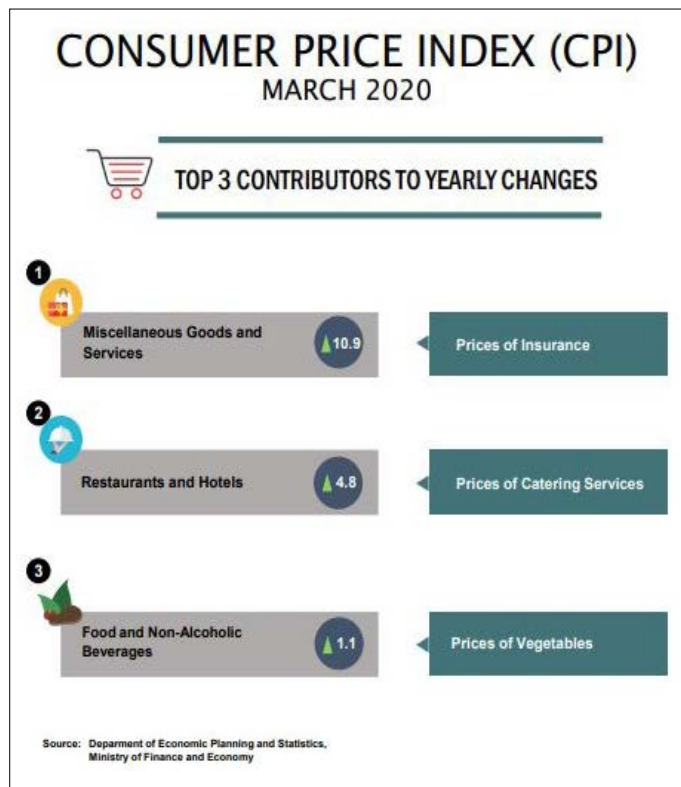
Meanwhile, Non-Food prices increased by 1.8 per cent.

The increase in the CPI was driven by rising prices as well as the cost of Miscellaneous Goods and Services (10.9 per cent); Restaurants and Hotels (4.8 per cent); as well as Light Food and Drinks (1.1 per cent).

However, the increase in the CPI was offset by a decline in prices and the cost of Transportation (0.9 per cent); Communication (1.2 per cent); as well as Clothing and Footwear (0.7 per cent).

The price increases for Goods and Services is due to rising insurance prices.

Meanwhile, the rise in prices of restaurants and hotels is due to the rising price of external catering services.



The price for vegetables has also increased in the month of March.

For the month-on-month change, the CPI for March 2020 increased by 0.3 per cent compared to February 2020.

The Food and Beverages Index and the Non-Food Index respectively increased by 0.1 per cent and 0.4 per cent.

The CPI measures changes in the prices of goods and services paid for by consumers within a set period of time and collected monthly.

List of goods and services in the CPI is based on the average expenditure per family obtained through the Household Expenditure Survey.

اقليكاسي موده اليه جابتن قنرغن

The Department of Information's Mobile Application

- Facilitates in Accessing the **Latest News**
- Increases the **Sharing of Information**
- Easy** and **Fast** Accessibility
- Supports the **Paperless** and **Green IT**

Use Our Application Today!

Easy download and access

Available on the **App Store**

GET IT ON **Google Play**

'Nurturing an Informed Society'