

MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

About Brunei...

Brunei Darussalam is on the north western shore of Borneo and shares a common border with the Malaysian state of Sarawak. Set like a crown slightly askew, 75 per cent of its 5,765 square kilometres land area is covered by equatorial rainforest. Its economy is dominated by the oil and gas industry.

Brunei is divided administratively into four districts: Brunei-Muara, Belait, Temburong, and Tutong. A district comprises several mukim and a mukim comprises several villages. Headman of a mukim is called Penghulu and headman of a village is called Ketua Kampung.

Brunei's official language is Malay but English is widely spoken. Its official religion follows the Sunni strand of Islam. His Majesty The Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam is the head of the Islamic faith. Other religions are also practised in Brunei including Christianity and Buddhism.

Short historical background

The Brunei civilisation has existed for more than 1,500 years pre-dating Islam. In the course of time the civilisation transformed into an empire. At its height the Brunei Empire covered vast areas of Borneo, the Sulu archipelago and parts of Mindanao.

Ancient Chinese texts contained some information on Brunei's imperial history: Brunei's old name was Puni and it traded with the Chinese Empire in AD 518, 523, 616, 669, 977 and from 1369 to 1643. Muslim influence was established in Brunei since AD 977 and Arabic characters were used before 1370. The ancient Chinese texts also said that the Brunei ruler, Awang Alak Betatar, embraced the Islamic faith in 1371 to coincide with his marriage to a princess from a neighbouring kingdom.

Brunei signed a series of treaties with Great Britain since the 1800s, the one signed in 1888 marked the beginning of its next stage of development as a British protectorate that lasted for 96 years. Whilst a British protectorate, Brunei was modernised where governing power was centralised, the monarchy was regenerated, the administration system was based on the public service model and state presence covered all areas within its territory. Brunei resumes its status as an independent and sovereign nation-state on January 1, 1984.

News snippets from January to December 2018

Brunei amends the Act and Regulations for Pension and Allowance for People with Different Abilities

The Act and Regulations for Pension and Allowance for People with Different Abilities have been amended and effective January 1, 2018, the Borneo Bulletin reported January 1, 2018.

Brunei issues more sharia-compliant bond (sukuk)

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) has issued a BND100 million sukuk (sharia-compliant bond) on January 11, 2018 at a rental rate of 0.8750 per cent with maturity date on April 12, 2018 (based on a 91-day tenor).

This is the 153rd sukuk issuance.

With this issuance, the government has issued BND11.56 billion worth of short-term Sukuk Al-Ijarah securities since its maiden offering on April 6, 2006.

Total holdings of Brunei government sukuk outstanding as of January 11, 2018 stands at BND432.4 million.

Brunei and Korea sign MOU on mutual artistic alliance

The Brunei Art Forum and the Korea Fine Arts Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on January 15, 2018.

The MOU enables both signatories to cooperate on the creation, research, collection, education, exchange and exhibition of the arts.

Postal Services Department launches mobile app

The Postal Services Department launched a mobile app on January 25, 2018 that enables the public to keep track of their international parcels and shipments.

The mobile app, BRUTRACK V1.0, is downloadable through the Google Play Store and the Apple App Store.

UTB begins offering degree courses in architecture and product design

The Borneo Bulletin reported January 27, 2018 that the Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) will offer undergraduate degree programmes in architecture and product design starting August 2018 under its newly-established faculty, the School of Design (SDe).

Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah Institute of Health Sciences receives accreditation

The Pengiran Anak Puteri Rashidah Sa'adatul Bolkiah Institute of Health Sciences (PAPRSB IHS) of the Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) received accreditation from the American Heart Association (AHA) as one of its training centres, the Borneo Bulletin reported January 30, 2018.

By being the AHA International Training Centre, PAPRSB IHS is now licensed to provide the AHA-certified Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) and Paediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) courses as well as conduct first-aid and heart-saver training.

The BLS, ACLS and PALS courses are exclusively for healthcare professionals, whilst the first-aid and heart-saver training are open to all, which will be conducted throughout the year with the target of training at least 500 participants annually.

Brunei reshuffles cabinet

Brunei reshuffled the cabinet on January 30, 2018, valid for five years.

Differently-abled children receive BND150 monthly allowance

The Borneo Bulletin reported February 2, 2018 that children aged 15 and below with different abilities will receive an allowance of BND150 per month effective January 1, 2018.

The allowance is distributed after the government amended the Old Age and Disability Pension Act for children aged 15 and below with different abilities.

Introduced in 1954, the Old Age and Disability Pension Act was enforced in 1955.

UTB signs MOU with satellite partners

The Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with four local education institutions – its four satellite partners, the Borneo Bulletin reported February 8, 2018.

The four satellite partners comprise the Kolej International Graduate Studies (KIGS), Kemuda Institute (KI), Micronet International College (MIC) and Cosmopolitan College of Commerce and Technology (CCCT).

The MOU provides general framework for the establishment of cooperation between UTB and satellite partners through the delivery of foundation programmes in business, computing and sciences.

‘Smart Q’ for Visitor and Diplomatic Visa Division

The pilot ‘Smart Q’ project for the Smart Identity Card and Travel Document Division has been expanded to other sections of the Immigration and National Registration Department headquarters, the Borneo Bulletin reported February 9, 2018.

Starting February 1, 2018, the ‘Smart Q’ is now available at the Visitor and Diplomatic Visa Division as well as the Foreign Workers Division.

At the Visa Section, Visitor and Diplomatic Visa Division, services available are visit pass extension, student pass, visa authorisation intake and re-entry visa.

The Foreign Workers Division provides the extension or cancellation of work pass/dependent pass/student pass and so on.

The project, which uses the ‘QueUp’ application, is to avoid queuing for numbers after booking is made for services.

Bookings through the 'Smart Q' can be done a day before making an application. The applicant must show up at the division at least 15 minutes before the appointed time.

Brunei ranks 35th in global IP index

The Borneo Bulletin reported February 10, 2018 that Brunei Darussalam is ranked 35th in the latest annual International IP Index released on February 8, 2018 by the US Chamber of Commerce Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC).

The report ranked economies based on 40 unique indicators that benchmarked activities critical to innovative developments involving patents, trademarks, copyrights and trade secret protections.

Brunei issues more sharia-compliant bond (sukuk)

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) has issued a BND100 million sukuk (sharia-compliant bond) on February 8, 2018 at a rental rate of 0.8750 per cent with maturity date on May 10, 2018 (based on a 91-day tenor).

This is the 154th sukuk issuance.

With this issuance, the government has issued BND11.66 billion worth of short-term Sukuk Al-Ijarah securities since its maiden offering on April 6, 2006.

Total holdings of Brunei government sukuk outstanding as of February 8, 2018 stands at BND432.4 million.

Brunei launches the BSP Credit Facility Program

Brunei Shell Petroleum Company Sendirian Berhad (BSP), Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam (BIBD) and Baiduri Bank launched the BSP Credit Facility Programme on February 12, 2018.

The BSP Credit Facility Program allows existing and future local contractors of BSP who meet the programme's criteria to get fast track service in the reviewing and decision process of their respective credit applications.

Home Affairs Ministry introduces online application for Public Entertainment Licence

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) introduced the online application for the Public Entertainment Licence (Periodic) under the Public Entertainment Act (Chapter 181) using the OneBiz system starting February 15, 2018, the Borneo Bulletin reported February 14, 2018.

The online application replaces the existing Public Entertainment Licence (Periodic) acceptance application, and all Public Entertainment Licence (Periodic) applications must be made online through the OneBiz website at <https://onebiz.business.gov.bn>.

All counter applications for the Public Entertainment Licence (Periodic) will be nullified as the system is intended to accelerate the process of applications.

The licence application will use an E-Darussalam account and each applicant is required to register or have an active E-Darussalam account before applying for the licence.

If the applicant does not have an E-Darussalam account, he can register with E-Darussalam and activate the account by bringing his identity card to any of the verification centres in all of the four districts in order to complete the registration process.

Payment and collection of the Public Entertainment Licence (Periodic) can be made at Level 1, Design and Technology (D&T) Building, Simpang 32-3, Anggerek Desa Technology Park.

Brunei 70th freest economy

The Borneo Bulletin reported February 19, 2018 that Brunei is the 70th freest economy globally among 180 economies, according to the 2018 Index of Economic Freedom. The index is prepared by the Washington-based think-tank, Heritage Foundation.

Brunei local company signs agreement with international firm

Northstar Development Sendirian Berhad, a Brunei company, signed an agreement with Arya Shipping Lines, a company from the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Borneo Bulletin reported February 23, 2018.

Arya Shipping Lines, one of the oldest and largest private shipping companies in Iran, is looking to expand its presence in Southeast Asia whilst at the same time strengthen its shipping network.

Its collaboration with Northstar Development Sendirian Berhad will look at the purchase or lease of additional vessels to expand its current fleet of bulk carriers and cargo vessels.

The collaboration is also to establish Brunei as a trading hub as the two companies span their shipping network regionally and internationally.

In addition to the signing of the agreement, the event also saw the exchanges of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Iran TTL and Imariz Co from Brunei as well as PT Aditya Radia Utama from Indonesia.

The MOUS with Iran TTL, a trading arm of Arya Shipping Lines, looks to establish new trading opportunities of goods and commodities between Iran and the region, capitalising on the shipping network brought about through Arya Shipping Lines.

UNISSA signs MOU with Indonesian university

The Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi (UNPAD), Medan, Indonesia, the Borneo Bulletin reported March 7, 2018.

The MOU functions as a platform for cooperation between the two universities in order to further strengthen the academic field.

UNISSA and UNPAD agree to establish collaboration through seminars associated with Halal studies and Islamic Finance Conference in addition to conducting joint research and exchanges of academic staff and students.

Brunei lays the foundation for AMBD new headquarters

The foundation was placed on the site of new headquarters building of the Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) on March 17, 2018.

The AMBD new headquarters sits on a 16-acre state property and features 22,000 square metres of floor space. It is set to be completed by early 2020.

Associated news snippet...

Brunei establishes central bank

The supervision of Brunei-based financial institutions and the issuing of monetary policy are now reinforced after the government establishes the Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (translated loosely as the Brunei Darussalam Monetary Authority and known locally by its initials, AMBD) on January 1, 2011. Those remits were carried out previously by several departments of the Ministry of Finance.

Brunei National Road Safety Council restructured

The Borneo Bulletin reported March 23, 2018 that the government has restructured Brunei National Road Safety Council (BNRSC).

Previously, the BNRSC chairmanship was on par with permanent secretary level at the Ministry of Communications. Today, its chairmanship is upgraded to ministerial level in which the Minister of Communications holds chairmanship.

Brunei and ASEAN sign Intellectual Property agreement with Republic of Korea

Brunei and the ASEAN member states signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) with the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) of the Republic of Korea on March 27, 2018.

The MOC is for the establishment of an institutional framework for structured cooperation towards promoting the development of IP systems of the signatories as well as strengthening bilateral exchange and cooperation in intellectual property.

The MOC was the result of discussions between the KIPO and the ASEAN Working Group on Intellectual Property Cooperation (AWGIPC) on ASEAN IP Rights Action Plan 2016-2025.

It is designed to meet the goals of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by transforming ASEAN into an innovative and competitive region through the use of intellectual property and ensuring that the region remains an active player in the international IP community.

Brunei companies sign agreements to enable Brunei becomes Halal hub

Several Bruneian companies signed the Strategic Alliance Agreements (SAA) with Malaysian organisations on March 28, 2018.

IHTHS Brunei signed the SAA with the Dewan Perniagaan Usahawan Sabah (DPUS).

Koperasi Pusat Pembangunan Belia (KOPPB) and Bru Trade International (BTI) Sendirian Berhad signed the SAA with Yusa Food Production Sendirian Berhad of Malaysia.

Zulaikha Mega Enterprise Brunei signed the SAA with AFCL Bio-Science Sendirian Berhad Sabah.

AMBD signs agreement with Bank Usahawan

The Borneo Bulletin reported April 6, 2018 that the Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) signed a Participant Service Agreement on the collaboration of credit information exchange with Bank Usahawan.

Bank Usahawan is a company incorporated in Brunei Darussalam that aims to support the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMES) in Brunei by offering financing facilities in compliance with the sharia concept and to facilitate the MSMES access to financial services.

The agreement allows Bank Usahawan to submit credit information on MSMES that have obtained financing from for it to the Credit Bureau of AMBD.

In turn, the agreement also enables Bank Usahawan to obtain credit reports provided by the Credit Bureau, which will be used to assist Bank Usahawan in assessing the creditworthiness of MSMES applications.

The objective of this collaboration is to provide Bank Usahawan with a better assessment tool in determining the suitability or appropriateness of the type of financing that will be extended to the MSMES, and to consider their capability and capacity to commit to the financing.

Brunei issues more sharia-compliant bond (sukuk)

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) has issued a BND100 million sukuk (sharia-compliant bond) on April 12, 2018 at a rental rate of 0.9375 per cent with maturity date on July 12, 2018 (based on a 91-day tenor).

This is the 156th sukuk issuance.

With this issuance, the government has issued BND11.81 billion worth of short-term Sukuk Al-Ijarah securities since its maiden offering on April 6, 2006.

Total holdings of Brunei government sukuk outstanding as of April 12, 2018 stands at BND332.4 million.

Brunei signs MOU with Japan

Brunei Darussalam signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on healthcare with Japan on April 14, 2018.

The MOU covers the development of human resource by providing training in healthcare services, exchange and sharing of information and experience on the basis and healthcare system and so on.

Brunei companies signs strategic alliance agreement with international counterpart

International Halal Trade Hub and Services Brunei and Bru Trade International Sendirian Berhad signed a strategic alliance agreement (SAA) with Halal Korea Co. Ltd., the Borneo Bulletin reported April 15, 2018.

The SAA promotes investment in the Halal market, which comprises Halal food, Halal clothing and fashion and Halal tourism.

Local seafood company launches processing plant

Yamako Pacific (Brunei) Sendirian Berhad, a local seafood company that specialises in processing yellow fin and skipjack tuna into high quality products, launched its processing plant and fishing vessel on April 18, 2018.

Brunei introduces new funding scheme through LiveWIRE Brunei

The Business Awards Start-up Funding Scheme has been launched on April 18, 2018 for participants of the LiveWIRE Brunei Business Awards.

Brunei Shell Petroleum Company Sendirian Berhad (BSP) via LiveWIRE Brunei in collaboration with Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam (BIBD) launched the new initiative to support local small and medium enterprises (SMES).

The Business Awards Start-up Funding Scheme is opened to Bruneians participating in the LiveWIRE Brunei Business Awards in the following areas:

Category A (Business Plan) – LiveWIRE Programme Participants and Category B (Enterprise) – LiveWIRE Business Start-up (six months to three years in business).

The scheme features an interest free grant that range from BND5,000 to BND50,000, payable within 36 months with flexible terms of repayment.

Brunei builds hydrogen plant

Brunei held a ground breaking ceremony on April 21, 2018 for the construction of the world's first global hydrogen supply chain demonstration plant.

The plant that houses the Advanced Hydrogen Energy Chain Association for Technology Development (AHEAD) was created by four companies: Chiyoda Corporation, Mitsubishi Corporation, Mitsui and Co. Ltd. and Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha, and funded by the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organisation (NEDO).

The plant is a collaboration project between Brunei Darussalam and Japan.

Politeknik Brunei signs MOU with UiTM of Malaysia

Politeknik Brunei signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) of Malaysia on April 26, 2018.

The MOU enables both signatories to carry out efforts for mutual benefits through student engagement and research-based activities. The MOU also features staff exchange programmes, student exchange, workshops, training and courses, seminars and conferences.

Brunei automates cross-border entry/exit for vehicles

The online Vehicle Exit/Entry System (VES) has been implemented on April 28, 2018 by the Department of Royal Customs and Excise. VES facilitates and quickens the application approval process for driving vehicles across borders through control posts by applying online at www.bdnsw.gov.bn.

VES replaces the existing manual system of filling in forms. The Department of Royal Customs and Excise will also introduce a QR code system to scan VER passes, which reduces waiting time and the time taken to enter data into the system.

Vehicle owners must use this online system and obtain a VES pass before driving cross-border. VES pass is valid for three months.

Brunei-Korea and Korea-Brunei associations sign MOU

The Korea-Brunei Friendship Association (KBFA) and the Brunei-Korea Association of Friendship (BKAF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on April 29, 2018.

The MOU promotes Cooperation and exchanges among people, culture and economy of both countries.

Brunei curbs money laundering

Currency and Bearer Negotiable Instruments (CBNI) entering or leaving Brunei must now be disclosed after Brunei enforced the provisions of the Criminal Asset Recovery Order 2012, effective May 1, 2018.

Any person sending or receiving CBNI worth BND5,000 or more or equivalent amount in foreign currency by cargo, courier or postal service is required to submit a report to the Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD).

Associated news snippet...

Brunei requires currency declaration

Visitors entering or leaving Brunei with cash or bearer negotiable instruments worth more than BND15,000 or equivalent in other currencies are now required to declare at border checkpoints. Bearer negotiable instruments refer to cheques, bonds, bills of exchange and so on.

The government has announced the regulation on July 26, 2011, which becomes effective on August 1, 2011.

This regulation is one of the provisions of the Anti-Money Laundering Order 2000, which is geared towards preventing money laundering and terrorism financing.

Currency declaration is not a restriction to the flow of currencies and bearer negotiable instruments entering and leaving Brunei.

Immigration Department launches drop box services

Applying for new work visa is now more convenient after the Immigration and National Registration Department introduced the drop box service effective May 1, 2018.

All registered employment agencies can forward applications for work visas by completing a set of documents and application forms, place them in a transparent zip folder and deposit the transparent zip folder into the Counter 3 drop box at the Department of Labour headquarters.

The authorised work visas can be collected at Counter 4 during office hours.

UBD renews partnership with international counterpart

The Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Shanghai Normal University on May 5, 2018.

The MOU renews a five-year partnership between the two signatories: it was first signed on June 14, 2012.

UBD licenses protective coating technology to its spin-off company

The Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) signed a licensing agreement for an 'Anti-Bacterial and Anti-Fungal Photocatalytic Smart Coating' with Smart Coating Technologies (B) Sendirian Berhad on May 8, 2018.

The licence signing is the first such agreement for one of UBD's patented technologies.

Among the applications of the technology include usage in specialised coatings to protect building surfaces from bacteria and mould – a common problem in Brunei Darussalam.

The licensing agreement allows Smart Coating Technologies (B) Sendirian Berhad to manufacture, market and export high-quality, made-in-Brunei protective coating products such as the 'Anti-Bacterial and Anti-Fungal Photocatalytic Coating' product.

Brunei issues more sharia-compliant bond (sukuk)

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) has issued a BND100 million sukuk (sharia-compliant bond) on May 10, 2018 at a rental rate of one per cent with maturity date on August 9, 2018 (based on a 91-day tenor).

This is the 157th sukuk issuance.

With this issuance, the government has issued BND11.91 billion worth of short-term Sukuk Al-Ijarah securities since its maiden offering on April 6, 2006.

Total holdings of Brunei government sukuk outstanding as of May 10, 2018 stands at BND332.4 million.

Brunei signs aquaculture MOU with Singapore company

The Department of Fisheries of the Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Barramundi Asia Pte Ltd of Singapore on May 12, 2018.

The MOU formalises Barramundi Asia's intention to invest BND300 million and develop an area of 6,613 hectares at Nankivell Offshore Aquaculture Site, establish a hatchery and a fish nursery capable of supplying high-quality sea bass juveniles to offshore fish cages, as well as establish a fish processing plant. For the land-based

operation, the company would be allocated an area of 21 hectares at Sungai Mangsalut in Kampung Tanah Jambu.

Brunei and Singapore sign agreement to enhance cooperation in financial innovation

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) and the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) signed the FinTech Cooperation Agreement (CA) on May 12, 2018 to foster innovation in financial services between the two nation-states.

The CA facilitates the sharing of information on emerging FinTech trends and development, and promote joint innovation projects between Brunei Darussalam and Singapore.

It also establishes framework for both monetary authorities to provide support for financial technology companies to better understand the regulatory regime and opportunities in each jurisdiction.

Beyond the FinTech CA, AMBD and MAS will also work together to enhance the retail payment ecosystem between Brunei Darussalam and Singapore. Both authorities will be guided by a cooperation framework that will provide mutual benefits to businesses and consumers in the two nation-states.

Brunei and Singapore enhance the sharing of financial intelligence

The Financial Intelligence Unit, Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (FIU, AMBD) and the Suspicious Transaction Reporting Office, Commercial Affairs Department, Singapore Police Force (STRO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on May 12, 2018.

The MOU enables both organisations to cooperate in the exchange of financial intelligence that may assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons suspected of money laundering and terrorism financing.

The MOU with STRO is the sixth that the FIU, AMBD signed to date. The existing MOUS include those signed with the financial intelligence units of Malaysia, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Bangladesh and Cambodia.

The signing of MOUS with other financial intelligence units is in line with the Principles of Information Exchange of the Egmont Group, the global organisation of international financial intelligence units.

FIU, AMBD became a member of the Egmont Group in June 2014 and STRO received membership in December 2000.

The FIU, AMBD and STRO are the central agencies in Brunei Darussalam and Singapore respectively for receiving, requesting, analysing and disseminating disclosures of suspicious transaction reports and other information associated with money laundering and terrorism financing.

UBD signs agreement with Zhejiang University

The Faculty of Integrated Technologies (FIT) of the Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) signed a Joint Cooperation Agreement with the College of Chemical and Biological Engineering of Zhejiang University (ZJU) on May 12, 2018.

The signing is a renewal of the Joint Cooperation Agreement between the two institutions for a joint undergraduate programme in Chemical and Process Engineering, which was initially signed in 2013. Under the agreement, the four-year programme involves UBD students spending the initial two semesters in UBD, followed by a one-year study at ZJU and six months of industrial training in one of the Hengyi affiliated plants. The students come under the scholarship of Hengyi Industries Sendirian Berhad.

The industrial training includes placement in a petrochemical plant in China where the students will practise and develop their engineering skills in an operational refinery environment. Throughout this programme, Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) is an important component of training for the students and it is embedded in their curriculum structure. Upon completion of the programme, the students are employed by Hengyi Industries, stationed at Pulau Muara Besar where the Hengyi Petroleum Refinery is being constructed.

To date, five students have been awarded the scholarship for the Chemical and Process Engineering programme. UBD has produced 26 Chemical and Process Engineers who are now working for Hengyi Industries and are currently undergoing their training in Shanghai as part of their career advancement training.

Brunei dissolves the MTLA

The Ministry of Communications announced June 3, 2018 that the Motor Transport Licensing Authority (MTLA) will be dissolved effective July 1, 2018.

Its role and function will be transferred to the Land Transport Department (JPD) and carried out by the Commercial Vehicle and Public Transportation Licensing Division.

UBD and UTB in QS ranking

The Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) is placed at 323 in the annual Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) ranking and the Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) made its first appearance in QS at 442, the Borneo Bulletin reported on June 7, 2018.

Brunei and Singapore sign MOU on media cooperation

The Ministry of Communications of Brunei Darussalam and the Ministry of Communications and Information of Singapore signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Cooperation in the Field of Info-Communications Media (ICM) on June 6, 2018.

The MOU reaffirms the close collaboration between both ministries whereby cooperation includes the sharing of experience and knowledge on ICM such as

telecommunication and media regulations, postal services, data regulation, innovation, industry development and human capital development.

Brunei and Singapore signed MOU on postal service cooperation

The Department of Postal Services of Brunei Darussalam and the Singapore Post Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on June 6, 2018.

The MOU aims to create business opportunities and value-added services. Under this MOU, the two postal service providers will collaborate further to improve skills and capacity through knowledge transfer and developing new business ventures.

Ministry of Development launches five-year policy framework and strategic plan booklets

The Ministry of Development launched its Policy Framework 2018-2023 and Strategic Plan 2018-2023 booklets on June 7, 2018.

Brunei issues more sharia-compliant bond (sukuk)

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) has issued a BND50 million sukuk (sharia-compliant bond) on June 7, 2018 at a rental rate of 1.25 per cent with maturity date on June 6, 2018 (based on a 364-day tenor).

This is the 158th sukuk issuance.

With this issuance, the government has issued BND11.96 billion worth of short-term Sukuk Al-Ijarah securities since its maiden offering on April 6, 2006.

Total holdings of Brunei government sukuk outstanding as of June 7, 2018 stands at BND332.4 million.

PDS Abattoir signs MOU with Ghanim International

PDS Abattoir Sendirian Berhad signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Ghanim International Corporation Sendirian Berhad on July 3, 2018 to explore collaborative avenues for potential exports of meat and meat-based products from Brunei Darussalam.

The signing of the MOU provides opportunity for PDS Abattoir to examine the potentials for strengthening and improving standards of food supply chain strategy in Brunei, especially in ensuring food safety standards for meat.

The MOU aims to create a platform for a collaborative partnership between the two companies with the intent of integrating their competitive advantage for both local and international business development.

Brunei enforces Housing Developers Order starting 2019

The Board of Housing Developers of the Ministry of Development will enforce the Housing Developers Order, 2012 starting 2019, the Borneo Bulletin reported July 4, 2018.

Under this law, housing developers undertaking the development of more than four units of houses must register and obtain approval from the Board of Housing Developers and comply with international regulations and standards.

Brunei and India sign MOU on space research cooperation

Brunei Darussalam and India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the Cooperation in the Operation of Telemetry Tracking and Telecommand Station for Satellite and Launch Vehicles as well as Cooperation in the Field of Space Research, Science and Applications.

The MOU was signed on the sidelines of the 10th Delhi Dialogue, which was held from July 19-20, 2018.

Background information...

Brunei Darussalam and India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Cooperation in the operation of telemetry tracking and telecommand station for satellite and launch vehicles, and for Cooperation in the field of space research, science and applications.

Under the MOU, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has set up a Telemetry Tracking and Command Station in Brunei Darussalam – known as the Indian Space Research Organisation Telemetry, Tracking and Command Station (ISRO TTC Station) – within the compound of the Telekom Brunei Berhad (TelBru) premises at the Tungku Submarine Cable Landing Station.

This arrangement has been in place since 1997 as forged in the previous agreement and MOU between both governments on its establishment. The signing of the MOU on July 19, 2018 has extended this arrangement for another five years.

The Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AITI) acts as the authority to license the operation of ISRO TTC Station in Brunei Darussalam for the purpose of telemetry tracking functions.

Under the MOU, through ISRO, India will share experiences and expertise in training and exchange programmes on space technologies applications at various facilities under the Department of Space, India as follows:

1. Short-term training courses of about one to two weeks duration for decision makers of Brunei Darussalam to highlight the importance of space technology inputs in various developmental activities including natural resources, including natural resources management, environment monitoring, governance and disaster management support.

2. Medium-term training courses, of about four weeks duration, for officials/students of Brunei Darussalam on specific themes of space technology applications, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries, the environment and so on.
3. Long term courses, of about nine months duration, for the students and researchers from Brunei Darussalam on space technology applications including Earth observation, satellite communication and satellite navigation.

As a way forward for this arrangement, working committees will be established to identify and detail the activities to implement the programme of cooperation as stated in the MOU.

In this regard, the Ministry of Communications and AITI will act as the focal point for Brunei Darussalam to co-ordinate the requirements of relevant agencies, including institutions of higher learning, to ensure benefits from this arrangement are fully gained and optimised.

LiveWIRE launches new funding scheme for start-ups

Brunei Shell Petroleum Company Sendirian Berhad (BSP) via LiveWIRE Brunei in collaboration with the Bank Islam Brunei Darussalam (BIBD) introduced the Business Awards Start-Up Funding Scheme (BASfs) on July 24, 2018.

BASfs is specifically for Bruneians participating in the LiveWIRE Brunei Business Awards in the following categories:

1. Category 'A' (Business Plan) – LiveWIRE Programme Participants.
2. Category 'B' (Enterprise) – LiveWIRE Business Start-Up (six months to three years in business).

The nominees will be awarded for the feasibility and future potential of the business for Category 'A' and sustainability, good governance and growth potential for Category 'B'

The Business Award Council comprising a panel of judges from BSP, BIBD, Brunei Shell Marketing Company Sendirian Berhad (BSM) and LiveWIRE Brunei officials had been set up to establish the authority body for effective selection of finalists/winners of BASfs.

BASfs was first announced in April 18, 2018.

Brunei issues more sharia-compliant bond (sukuk)

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) has issued a BND100 million sukuk (sharia-compliant bond) on July 12, 2018 at a rental rate of 1.00 per cent with maturity date on October 11, 2018 (based on a 91-day tenor).

This is the 159th sukuk issuance.

With this issuance, the government has issued BND12.06 billion worth of short-term Sukuk Al-Ijarah securities since its maiden offering on April 6, 2006.

Total holdings of Brunei government sukuk outstanding as of July 12, 2018 stands at BND332.4 million.

New LPA application process starts in August 2018

The Department of Labour said that new changes to the Foreign Workers Licence (LPA) application process come into effect on August 1, 2018.

The existing LPA applications feature the use of five separate and different types of application forms.

By August 1, 2018, a single new form will be used to replace the existing five application forms.

The new LPA application form will include sections for New Worker/New Licence, Additional Worker/Additional Licence, Confirmation of Cancellation and Replacement of Worker.

A single form will also be used for LPA renewals, which includes the following sections: Renewal for Existing Worker/Renewal Licence, Transfer of Work Contract, Changes of Job Position, Changes of Salary, Changes of Company Name, Validation of Original Copy of Licence (CTC) and Cancellation of LPA Licence/Quota.

Amendments have also been made to the terms and conditions of the LPA applications as well as usage of the Address Confirmation Form.

Under this new process, for both new LPA applications (including applications for additional LPA), workers to be recruited must not have entered Brunei Darussalam, whilst for LPA renewals, the workers must have already arrived in Brunei Darussalam.

The Address Confirmation form will now also be used to validate the addresses stated in the LPA licence, for example the address of the workers' company premises – including offices or branches – as well as the address of the workers' residence or living quarters.

Employers are required to attach the tenancy agreements for their rented premises whenever they do an update of address. This applies to additional business premises, offices, new branches and new worker living quarters.

The latest LPA forms are downloadable from the Department of Labour website: www.labour.gov.bn.

Brunei and Laos sign anti money laundering agreement

Brunei Darussalam and Laos signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to eradicate money laundering on July 25, 2018.

The Financial Intelligence Unit, Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (FIU, AMBD) and the Anti-Money Laundering Intelligence Office, National Co-ordination Committee for Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Financing of Terrorism of Laos (AMLIO) signed the MOU.

Under the MOU, both signatories agree to cooperate in the exchange of financial intelligence that may assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons suspected of money laundering and terrorism financing.

Brunei Darussalam has signed similar MOU with Malaysia, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Singapore.

Brunei upgrades energy department to become ministry

The Department of Energy and Industry has been upgraded to become ministry.

After the upgrade, the Ministry of Energy and Industry is no longer a part of the Prime Minister's Office, effective April 8, 2018.

Brunei renames energy ministry

The Ministry of Energy and Industry has been renamed Ministry of Energy (Energy and Manpower) and Industry, effective July 31, 2018.

JPMC introduces the latest CT scanner

The Jerudong Park Medical Centre (JPMC) introduced the latest Computed Tomography (CT) scanner on August 5, 2018.

Ministry of Health to establish national helpline to prevent suicides

The Ministry of Health (MOH) announced August 4, 2018 that it is developing a national helpline to help those thinking of suicide or those in need of advice to help a person with suicidal thoughts.

The ministry will provide an update to the public once this national helpline is available.

UTB signs MOU with Osaka University

The Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Osaka University on August 6, 2018.

The MOU followed the signing of the Letter of Intent between UTB and Osaka University on February 22, 2018.

Brunei issues more sharia-compliant bond (sukuk)

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) has issued a BND100 million sukuk (sharia-compliant bond) on August 9, 2018 at a rental rate of 1.3125 per cent with maturity date on October 11, 2018 (based on a 91-day tenor).

This is the 160th sukuk issuance.

With this issuance, the government has issued BND12.16 billion worth of short-term Sukuk Al-Ijarah securities since its maiden offering on April 6, 2006.

Total holdings of Brunei government sukuk outstanding as of August 9, 2018 stands at BND332.4 million.

TelBru signs MOU with Telin

Telekom Brunei Berhad (TelBru) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with PT Telekomunikasi Indonesia International (Telin) on August 28, 2018.

The MOU increase collaboration between the two signatories in order to facilitate the exchange of ideas, services, knowledge and products to enhance the experience of TelBru customers.

JPMC launched new digital dental imaging system

The Jerudong Park Medical Centre (JPMC) launched the new digital dental imaging system, 'VATECH Green16', the Borneo Bulletin reported September 8, 2018.

The VATECH Green16 has an advanced digital dental imaging system with a complex reconstruction algorithm, which provides better quality in dental imaging.

The dental imaging for the dental system provides beneficial tool for periodontists to use in diagnosis, treatment planning and surgical management, especially in patients with complex cases. The three-dimensional nature of the Cone Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT) offers enhanced diagnostic information and increased accuracy compared with the two-dimensional imaging.

The CBCT lets doctors diagnose with precision. It is effective for the extraction of wisdom teeth, which often gets tricky due to their proximity of the inferior alveolar nerve and dental implants.

Brunei renames the Frequent Traveller Facility (FTF)

Brunei has renamed the Frequent Traveller Facility (FTF) as the Brunei-Malaysia Frequent Travellers Programme (BMFTP) effective September 12, 2018.

A new website, www.bmftp.gov.bn replaces the existing www.ftf.gov.bn too.

The BMFTP is a joint project between the governments of Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia to reduce the usage of passport pages for immigration endorsement at the Brunei-Malaysia land control posts.

Brunei citizens who are holders of the Official Passport, Diplomatic Passport, Ordinary Passport or General Certificate of Identity can apply for the BMFTP. Those who travel frequently to Sarawak or the Federal Territory of Labuan can apply for the BMFTP online.

Brunei start-ups receive support overseas

Darussalam Enterprise (DARe) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on September 12, 2018 with the Britain Brunei Business Forum (BBBF).

The MOU enables DARe-supported Bruneian start-up companies to receive informal mentoring by the BBBF.

UNISSA signs MOUS with international counterparts

The Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUS) with seven international institutions of higher learning on September 17, 2018.

1. Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)
2. Islamic University of Kushtia, Bangladesh
3. Shendi University, Sudan
4. Dili University, Timor-Leste
5. Universitas Islam Negeri Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Indonesia
6. Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Hasan Jufri Bawean, Indonesia
7. Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Darunnajah, Indonesia

Brunei renames two ministries

Brunei Darussalam renamed the following ministries, effective September 20, 2018.

1. Ministry of Finance becomes Ministry of Finance and Economy
2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade becomes Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Brunei enhances the Companies Act with amendments

The Borneo Bulletin reported September 22, 2018 that the Companies Act (Amendment) Order, 2018 and Companies (Striking Off) Rules, 2018 strengthen the provisions under the Companies Act (Chapter 39), effective September 13, 2018.

Brunei strengthens insolvency legal framework

The Borneo Bulletin reported September 24, 2018 that the Insolvency (Winding Up) Rules, 2018 and the Insolvency (Insolvency Practitioners) Rules, 2018 have been introduced, effective September 19, 2018.

The Insolvency (Insolvency Practitioners) Rule, 2018 activates the provisions of Part VIII – Insolvency Practitioners and their qualifications in the Insolvency Order, 2016.

It also provides for the administration and supervision of insolvency practitioners who are in charge of expediting the recovery rate of a company.

Under the Insolvency (Insolvency Practitioners) Rules, 2018, companies may nominate a liquidator who is registered with the authorising body to act and manage the insolvent company.

UNISSA signs MOU with Russian Muftis Council

The Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Russian Muftis Council (RMC) on July 5, 2017, the Borneo Bulletin reported September 28, 2018.

KUPU SB signs MOU with Indonesian university

The Kolej Universiti Perguruan Ugama Seri Begawan (KUPU SB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) on October 3, 2018.

Brunei signs MOUS with Jordan

Brunei Darussalam signed three Memoranda of Understanding (MOUS) and one agreement with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on October 4, 2018.

1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Defence Cooperation;
2. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Tourism Cooperation;
3. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Bilateral Partnership and Built Environment; and
4. Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters.

Ministry of Health's Department of Scientific Services receives accreditation

The Department of Scientific Services of the Ministry of Health received the ISO/IEC 17025 certification from the Singapore Accreditation Council-Singapore Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (SAC-SINGLAS) for its two laboratories in Madaras and Serasa.

The accreditation was presented to the Department of Scientific Services on October 6, 2018.

Brunei enlists cooperation on agriculture with Myanmar

Brunei Darussalam and Myanmar have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Borneo Bulletin reported on October 14, 2018.

The MOU enables Brunei Darussalam and Myanmar to strengthen cooperation in rice production by the importation of high-yield rice seeds to Brunei.

It also paves the way for joint collaboration on the development of other crops and horticulture, livestock development, food processing and packaging and trade promotion.

Brunei passes HSE law

Brunei has passed the Safety, Health and Environment National Authority Order 2018, effective April 1, 2017.

The law establishes the Safety, Health and Environment National Authority (SHENA), which regulates and enforces the Workplace Safety and Health Order, 2009 and its supporting Regulations and the Environmental Protection and Management Order (EPMO), 2016.

JPMC establishes partnership with international counterpart

The Jerudong Park Medical Centre (JPMC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Yashoda Healthcare Services Private Limited Hospitals to provide liver and kidney transplant services. The MOU was signed on October 19, 2018.

UNISSA signs MOU with Indonesian education institutions

The Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on October 22, 2018 with the Higher Education Research and Development Council (DIKTILITBANG) of the Muhammadiyah Centre, Indonesia and the 30 higher education institutions under its supervision.

Brunei and Turkey sign air services agreement

Brunei and Turkey signed an Air Services Agreement on October 28, 2018.

Previously, Brunei and Turkey signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2015.

Brunei launches the high-yield hybrid Sembada 188 rice

Brunei launched the Sembada 188 at the Wasan Agricultural Development Area (KKP Wasan) on October 29, 2018. The plant is a consequence of collaboration between the Department of Agriculture and Agrifood and PT Biogene Plantation of Indonesia.

Studies have found that the Sembada 188 has an average yield of five to six tonnes per hectare per season.

RIPAS Hospital moves several services to PJSC

The Raja Isteri Pengiran Anak Saleha (RIPAS) Hospital relocated its Neurology, Neurosurgery and Rehabilitation Services to the Pantai Jerudong Specialist Centre (PJSC), effective November 5, 2018.

KUPU SB signs MOU with seven international counterparts

The Kolej Universiti Perguruan Ugama Seri Begawan (KUPU SB) signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUS) with seven international institutions of higher learning on November 5, 2018.

KUPU SB signed an MOU with each of the following institutions of higher learning.

1. Universiti Tun Hussein Onn, Malaysia
2. Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
3. Kolej Dar al-Hikmah, Malaysia
4. Universitas Widya Gama Mahakam, Indonesia
5. Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia
6. Institut Agama Islam Al-Falah Asunniyyah (Inaifas), Indonesia
7. Kolej Pengajian Islam Johor (MARSAH)

Development Ministry issues guidelines for disabled person-friendly building

The Ministry of Development (MOD) launched the ‘Different Abilities Design Guidelines’ booklet on November 7, 2018 that contains information on how to design premises that are accessible for people with different abilities.

RBRC re-brands

The Royal Brunei Recreational Club (RBRC) has re-branded and re-named Peak Performance Sendirian Berhad (PPSB) after PPSB acquired RBRC in June 2018.

PPSB was incorporated on January 22, 2018 as a wholly owned subsidiary of Darussalam Assets Sendirian Berhad.

Brunei women association signs MOU with Korean counterpart

The Brunei Women’s Business Council (WBC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Korean Venture Business Women’s Association Daegu Gyeongbuk (KOVWADG) on November 14, 2018.

Brunei and three regional states establish committee to enhance appreciation of the Quran

The Informal Meeting of the Religious Affairs Ministers of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (known locally by its acronym, MABIMS) agreed to establish a steering committee on the implementation of the Tafsir Ilmi (interpretation of the Quran based on empirical science of the MABIMS member states) through the two levels of membership: administrators and experts and the publication of joint-writing.

This was announced at the end of the 18th Informal Annual Meeting of MABIMS on November 15, 2018.

MABIMS was established on August 7, 1989 and held its first meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan.

Brunei and Bahrain sign Air Services Agreement

Brunei Darussalam and the Kingdom of Bahrain have signed a revised and updated Air Services Agreement on November 14, 2018. The agreement supersedes the earlier agreement signed in June 1990.

The new agreement improves traffic rights between the signatories and opens more avenues of cooperation between the designated airlines and destination points of both nation-states.

Brunei Navy strengthens cooperation with Russian counterpart

The Royal Brunei Navy (RBN) held the first Navy Staff Talks (NST) with the Russian Navy from November 13-17, 2018 in order to explore opportunities for defence cooperation.

UTB signs MOU with Korean institute

The Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Media Network Lab (MNLab) of the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) on November 17, 2018.

The MOU enables UTB and MNLab to work together on undergraduate and post-graduate student and academics exchange; joint research, conferences and seminars; student supervisions; and sharing tactical expertise.

MNLab is part of the School of Electrical Engineering at KAIST. Its research interest is on network performance and network organisation, standard framework for Internet of Things (IOT), trust in communication technology infrastructure and services, and smart grid environment of future network. UTB has also previously signed agreement with the Brain Science Research Centre at KAIST in 2015.

Brunei and China sign MOUS

Brunei Darussalam and the People's Republic of China signed several Memoranda of Understanding (MOUS) on November 19, 2018.

One of the MOUS enables both nation-states to promote jointly the cooperation within the framework of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st century maritime Silk Road Initiative.

UTB signs MOU with Korean counterpart

The Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Sungkyunkwan University (SKKU) of the Republic of Korea, the Borneo Bulletin reported November 24, 2018.

IBTE attains ISO

The Institute of Brunei Technical Education (IBTE) received the ISO 9001:2015 certification on November 24, 2018.

The ISO 9001:2015 is a recognition of IBTE's quality management system.

Brunei and Singapore renew medical training agreement

Brunei Darussalam and Singapore signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on November 27, 2018.

The MOU renews cooperation between the Ministry of Health, Brunei Darussalam and the Academy of Medicine, Singapore.

Brunei and Singapore signed the previous MOU in 2014 that enabled the training of specialist doctors in the dental field, with the training being conducted by the Academy of Medicine, Singapore. Doctors who complete the training will be awarded the Fellowship of the Academy of Medicine, Singapore (FAMS).

Under this newly signed MOU, specialist training is open to local doctors who have completed their Basic Specialty Training for a specific specialist field in Brunei.

Brunei issues more sharia-compliant bond (sukuk)

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) has issued a BND32.5 million sukuk (sharia-compliant bond) on December 6, 2018 at a rental rate of 1.75 per cent with maturity date on October 5, 2019 (based on a 364-day tenor).

This is the 164th sukuk issuance.

With this issuance, the government has issued BND12.40 billion worth of short-term Sukuk Al-Ijarah securities since its maiden offering on April 6, 2006.

Total holdings of Brunei government sukuk outstanding as of December 6, 2018 stands at BND347.5 million.

Brunei exports seafood to China

Brunei's Ghanim International Corporation Sendirian Berhad signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Pure Fresh International Holdings Limited on December 13, 2018.

The MOU enables the establishment of a larger-scale processing centre for blue shrimps and other seafood, a hatchery for blue shrimp breeding, aquaculture farms and a laboratory for testing the physical, chemical and microbiological properties.

More than BND400 million will be allocated for the projects, which will be implemented in phases over a period of five years.

Pure Fresh International Holdings Limited has already set up its first Southeast Asian processing centre near Muara Port, in collaboration with Ghanim International Corporation Sendirian Berhad. The BND10 million processing centre has been operational since April 2018, which processes blue shrimps for export to China.

Brunei renames ministry

The Ministry of Communications has been renamed the Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications, effective December 15, 2018.

Brunei publishes planning guidelines for buildings

Brunei launched two planning guidelines on December 15, 2018: the Supplementary Guideline for the Building Planning Standard and Planning Guideline and the Standard for Residential Development.

The objective of the planning guidelines is to streamline planning parameters and the processes of application for planning permission in accordance with current developments.

Brunei and Indonesia companies sign agreement

Bruneian company, International Halal Trade Hub and Services Sendirian Berhad (IHTHS) signed an agreement with the PT Winmas Logistics from Indonesia on December 15, 2018.

AMBD announces digital payment roadmap

The Autoriti Monetari Brunei Darussalam (AMBD) announced the “Digital Payment Roadmap for Brunei Darussalam 2019-2025” on December 21, 2018.

The roadmap is in line with the strategies presented in the Financial Sector Blueprint 2016-2025 (FSBP) and Vision 2035 aspiration towards a dynamic and diversified economy.

The digital transformation strategies contained in the roadmap will focus on three strategic areas: balancing regulation and innovation, adoption of open digital payment and public awareness and education.

Brunei launches App to promote Quran reading

The Ministry of Religious Affairs launched the “Mushaf Brunei Darussalam and its Translation” app on December 29, 2018.

The app’s primary aim is to facilitate the reading of the Quran and easier understanding of its contents by the public.

The app was built as a project carried out by the Pusat Da’wah Islamiah in collaboration with the Information Technology Division of the Institut Tahfiz Al-Quran Sultan Haji Hassanah Bolkiah and the Religious Ministers of Brunei Darussalam,

Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (MABIMS) Al-Quran studies and Dissemination Centre.

The Pusat Da'wah Islamiah is the proselytising arm of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Compiled and subedited by
Musa Mohidin
Special Publications Unit
Publications and Graphic Design Division
Department of Information
Prime Minister's Office