

SPEECH FOR BORNEO BULLETIN YEARBOOK NETWORKING SESSION

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Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh,

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim,

A very good afternoon to the distinguished guests here today

1. First and foremost, I would like to thank Brunei Press Sdn Bhd for inviting me to speak here today. This opportunity is a real privilege, as is the opportunity to write the foreword for this year's Silver Jubilee publication of the Borneo Bulletin Yearbook.
2. Allow me to congratulate Brunei Press on this momentous occasion and for the many years that the Borneo Bulletin Yearbook has been an authoritative guide and comprehensive reference point to Brunei Darussalam.
3. As Mr Reggie See mentioned earlier, the Yearbook has proven to be an indispensable guide to Brunei for visitors, local authorities, and of course, for businesses.
4. In fact, many of the businesses and organisations referenced in this year's Yearbook are amply represented here, which is an opportune

platform to bring together the business community, government representatives, as well as the general public.

5. The wide reach of the Borneo Bulletin Yearbook since its inception is no small feat and I would like to applaud the progress Brunei Press has made over the last decade in ensuring that its production is 100% locally managed, from sales and marketing to editorial to design and print.
6. Events like this networking session are one such opportunity for various stakeholders to come together and engage with each other as we work towards building a conducive, pro-business, and pro-investment ecosystem in Brunei. Simply put, this is putting into practice a **whole-of-nation approach** in cultivating and growing the business ecosystem – it requires a healthy and cooperative collaboration between both the Government and the private sector.
7. While we recognise the improvements that Brunei has recorded in the World Bank's Doing Business Report over the past three years, we need to do more together and ensure that these improvements are reflected and felt on the ground, particularly by our Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs).
8. In this vein, I urge businesses to work together with Darussalam Enterprise (more commonly referred to as DARE) and the Ease of Doing Business Unit under the Energy and Industry Department.

9. There are various avenues through which they can provide support and engage in dialogue. For instance, businesses can seek help to resolve business-related issues at the one-stop centre that is the Business Support Centre under DARE. Enterprises looking for resources to grow their businesses are also very much encouraged to tap into DARE's various existing capacity-building programmes, which offer advisory support, financial support schemes, and human resources training.
10. DARE and the Ease of Doing Business Unit are also at the forefront of socialising business-related initiatives, be it through the **OneBiz platform** that offers a one-stop portal for government reforms and resources linked to business processes, or through the **BizBrunei media platform** that highlights the narratives and growth of our local MSMEs.
11. Additionally, there are a number of focused dialogue sessions, organized by DARE, open for businesses to participate. This year alone, these dialogue sessions have socialised the Competition Order 2015 and the Builder's Licence Registration. I encourage the business community to partake in these sessions as they are opportunities to directly voice feedback, issues, and concerns to the relevant government representatives. Needless to mention, we must endeavour to ensure these two-way dialogues are held regularly and in a constructive manner.

12. These socialisation efforts have also been supplemented by publications such as the Borneo Bulletin Yearbook, which has played an immense role in highlighting government initiatives and the investment and business environment. I am also appreciative of the fact that the Borneo Bulletin Yearbook has chosen to highlight some of the success stories in the oil and gas industry in this year's edition. We are pushing strongly for further development in oil and gas as we must continue to build on our strengths in this industry to drive economic development in Brunei Darussalam. We are working closely with the oil and gas companies to promote and develop our local talents via our Bruneisation drive and ensure opportunities for local companies, including startups.
13. May our collective efforts come together in promoting the opportunities that Brunei has to offer in line with our Vision 2035.
14. I would like to end my speech by offering my heartfelt appreciation to the other editorial contributors of the 25th edition of the Borneo Bulletin Yearbook and the hard work and effort by the Brunei Press team in putting together the publication.

Thank you.

Walaikumsalam warahmatullahi wabarakatuh