



Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism
Brunei Darussalam

**OPENING REMARKS FROM CHAIRMAN OF BTB
YANG BERHORMAT
DATO SERI SETIA AWANG HAJI ALI BIN APONG, MINISTER OF PRIMARY
RESOURCES AND TOURISM**

FOURTH MEETING OF BRUNEI TOURISM BOARD (BTB) (4/2017)

**Setia Pahlawan Hall, Ground Floor, Ministry of Primary Resources and
Tourism Building**

Thursday, 13th July 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الحمد لله رب العالمين، وبه نستعين على أمور الدنيا والدين، والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء
 والمرسلين، سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

Yang Berhormat Awang Haji Sabli bin Haji Arshad as the President of
Association of Travel Agents in Brunei;

Yang Mulia all the Permanent Secretaries;

Yang Mulia Deputy Permanent Secretary;

Yang Di-Pertua President of Brunei Association Hotels;

Chief Executive Officer of Royal Brunei Airlines;

Representative of Restaurant Operators;

Representatives of Board Members;

Special guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

Salam Sejahtera & A very Good morning

1. Firstly, I would like to say 'Selamat Hari Raya' to all fellow Muslims members and welcome all members to our fourth Brunei Tourism Board meeting.
2. In this Hari Raya spirit, I hope the spirit to increase the number of tourist arrivals to Brunei continue to grow stronger. One example of an excellent tourism product is the opportunity for tourists to visit the Istana Nurul Iman. When the Istana was opened for 3 days, the number of visitors has achieved over 100,000 people. We should be targeting this kind of figure for inbound visitors to Brunei or about 40,000 visitors monthly on average in order to achieve our target of 450,000 tourists arrival by 2020.
3. Let me share on the tourism performances for the 1st quarter of 2017 as reported in our local media last week. This country received 67,956 tourists, which is a 20.4% increase of tourist air arrivals year-on-year. The average hotel occupancy rate was 34.6% for the first quarter. This is a very encouraging figure. However, we must continue to work harder so that this figure will continue to rise in the next 3 quarters. In relation to gathering data, I want to emphasis the importance of fellow BTB members to provide us with frequent updated statistic especially data on both international and domestic travellers that bought packages from respective agents and hotels because this will help us to be more strategic in planning for future promotions and campaigns to develop targeted markets and look at ways to improve the travel experience.

4. We must focus on strengthening the attractiveness and diversity of tourism products and improve the quality of tourism services as stated clearly in the Tourism Strategic Plan. This Board is a platform open to each members of BTB to table out proposals where the Board members proactively take the initiative to develop and improve tourism-related products, market the products, enhance the facility and improve service quality. We must be looking at a 'whole-of-nation' approach in developing the tourism sectors for the growth of our economy.
5. Our other related objectives are to increase the length of stay amongst tourists and to see more growth of repeat visitors coming to Brunei. We need to work harder and be innovative to develop more and more quality, attractive, appealing, safe, unique, exclusive and price competitive tourism products. Active involvement and participation from all tourism stakeholders is very crucial to the success of our continuing endeavour to improve and enhance our overall tourism product experience. We will be promoting the Brunei Diving Package on the 12th of July. I am urging all travel agents and relevant agencies to work together in promoting this package through your foreign travel agent partners to ensure that we all contribute in attracting more international tourists' divers to Brunei and will further spur the growth in the diving sector. We will also be doing promotion for Tutong Destination Package in the next few weeks, once the preparation of the event are finalised. Hopefully, this will boost more visitors to buy the Tutong package for leisure and improve the economic well-being in Tutong.
6. One of the sub-sector of tourism sector that we want to also put on board is the MICE business, cultural and sporting events. We want to position Brunei as a preferred destination for this sector in the

Asian region. I notice one Agenda item in the BTB meeting is the proposal to have a Brunei Festivals in the whole month of December. We will be partnering with event management companies to develop these events and collaborate with travel agents and hoteliers to ensure these events are one of the 'must sell' packages to tourists. We will also work together with foreign embassy and consulates in Brunei to showcase food and cultural events preferably in collaboration with hotels and restaurants in conjunction with the ASEAN 50th celebration. We will highlight the Brunei Salebration with attractive prices to increase both foreign and local visitors' spending in Brunei. We hope to host more events because this is big business for the services industry. Foreign participants to the events hopefully will join the events annually and this will bring in more visitors to use our airline, stay in our hotels and Brunei will gain popularity in hosting the events. The exposure by the foreign participants could increase tourist flow into Brunei. Details on this Brunei Festivals will be presented later.

7. We would also expect the quality of services and facilities at the airport and borders such as signages, tourist maps at arrival hall and taxi services to be improved and enhanced in preparation to facilitate the foreign participants and travellers for the forthcoming Golden Jubilee Celebration and continue to the Brunei Festivals. In relation to spending in Brunei during the festivities, we appreciate the assistance of the Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports for providing us a space for our Tourist Information Centre and outlet for local entrepreneurs to sell 'One Kampong One Product' including souvenirs items at the Galleri Seni of the Old Royal Customs Wharf Building. We need to add more products varieties so that the outlets usage is maximised and attracts foreign visitors to buy our local merchandise. This is the opportunity for local entrepreneurs to be

more creative in selling the different products, designing and packaging which is convenience for tourists to bring back home.

Distinguished Guests Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. Another initiative that is being pursued by TDD is the audit of toilets of tourists related sites or places of interests around the country. This is done with collaboration with other agencies like Jabatan Bandaran, Jabatan Kerja Raya, and Jabatan Perkhidmatan Kesihatan. In Phase One, out of the 63 locations that were inspected, 11 toilets have achieved Grade A. We are hoping that toilet premises will continue to keep up with the cleanliness and safety of the toilets. This is for the benefit of toilet users inclusive of the tourists. The toilets inspection report will be presented shortly as one of the agenda in this meeting.

9. Lastly, I am looking forward to your active participation and contributions in this meeting.

**Wabillahi Taufik Wal Hidayah,
Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.**