

Brunei gains much from Telecomm forum



The 11th Asia-Pacific Telecommunications and ICT Development Forum delegates in a group photo

The Sultanate is hosting the 11th Asia-Pacific Telecommunication and ICT Development Forum from September 8 to 10

| AZLAN OTHMAN |

BRUNEI Darussalam views its involvement in regional and international organisations such as the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and International Telecommunications Unions (ITU) with great significance.

This was highlighted by the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications, Awang Abdul Mutalib bin Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Setia Dato Paduka Haji Mohd Yusof at the Asia-Pacific Telecommunications and ICT Development Forum held at The Empire Hotel & Country Club yesterday.

He said, "It is through such avenues that we learn the best practices, which is to be emulated and adopted to our national perspective. We are also able to tap into the available professional and technical expertise to assist in our policy formulation and implementation."

An example highlighted by the permanent secretary is the Brunei Darussalam National Broadband Policy, which was formulated by the Ministry of Communications and the Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AITI) in collaboration with the ITU.

He added that since becoming a member of the APT in 1986, Brunei Darussalam has gained substantially in various areas of ICT development. Opportunities in human capacity building, training and expert advice, among others, have helped us to shape our national policies and regulations in ICT.

"Another good example is that Brunei Darussalam is one of the committing parties in aligning with the APT 700MHz band plan. In this regard, the APT has given Brunei the opportunity to gain better understanding in addressing current issues pertaining to this band plan. In short, we have always been supportive and participative

in the initiatives organised by the APT," permanent secretary said.

Awang Abdul Mutalib added, "I am also pleased to note that there would also be a session programmes for ICT pilot projects in rural areas. This is one topic that is very close to our heart the Brunei Darussalam National Broadband Policy aims to, among others, address accessibility and affordability of ICT services in rural areas.

"With this in mind, I am confident that despite the differences in culture, economies and levels of development, we all share the same vision towards a smart digital economy through ICT.

Brunei Darussalam is currently hosting the 11th Asia-Pacific Telecommunications and ICT Development Forum (ADF-11) from September 8 to 10. Representatives from 37 countries are attending the meeting to discuss key issues to prepare for the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting on 'Building Smart Digital Economy through ICT', which is slated for September 11.

The ADF-11 will deliberate the outcome of the Correspondence Group and report on the Development Programme for Supporting Pilot Projects in Rural Areas and will deliberate projects to be presented to the APT Ministerial Meeting.

The ADF-11 session on the Report on the Development Programme for Supporting Pilot Projects in Rural Areas was chaired by Toshiyuki Yamada, Secretary-General of APT, while the preparation for the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Meeting was chaired by Hj Yahkup Hj Menudin, Chief Executive of AITI.

The delegates attending ADF-11 were hosted to a welcoming dinner by the Minister of Communications, Pehin Orang Kaya Ham Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awg Hj Abdullah Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Hj Bakar, last night.



Asia-Pacific ICT-related ministers in a group photo at the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting held at The Empire Hotel & Country Club

Brunei hosts Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting

| AZARAIMY HH |

THE Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting hosted by Brunei Darussalam commenced yesterday at the Indera Samudra Grand Hall of The Empire Hotel & Country Club. Information and Communications ministers from 39 Asia-Pacific countries are attending the meeting.

The opening ceremony began with a welcome address by Toshiyuki Yamada, Secretary General of Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT), followed by an address by Houlin Zhao, Deputy Secretary General of International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and a welcome address by Minister of Communications Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdullah bin Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Haji Bakar.

The minister said Brunei is proud to be the host of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting.

The meeting, with the theme 'Building a Smart Digital Economy Through ICT,' discussed various topics including Smart Policy for Sustainable Growth of ICT and Economy; Safe and Secure Society through ICT; Enabling a Sustainable ICT Ecosystem for an Innovative Economy and Business; and Capacity Building and Institutional Development.



Secretary General of Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) Toshiyuki Yamada; Deputy Secretary General of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Houlin Zhao; and Minister of Communications Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdullah bin Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Haji Bakar at the meeting

Through these key areas, the Minister of Communications said, the focus is given on the importance of broadband development and creation of a conducive environment for growth which includes facilitation of businesses and promotion of ICT entrepreneurship.

The meeting has set four objectives such as to commemorate the 35th anniversary of APT and recognise the valuable role of APT in ensuring regional cooperation on telecommunication/ICT and renewing the high-level commitment for continued support to further strengthen the community; to provide policy guidelines for the region for the next five years on the development of telecommunication/ICT and its critical role in enabling a creative economy and realising socio-economic development; to evaluate and follow-up on the developments in telecommunication/ICT, especially broadband development in the member countries towards achieving the objectives of the Bali Statement and Plan of Action; and to provide a platform for the ministers to

have a free and open discussion on the pressing issues of the industry, among themselves and with experts and key leaders in the industry.

The Minister of Communications highlighted the efforts to align Brunei's policy and strategies with the identified key priority areas. He reminded that Brunei Vision 2035 aims to strive towards a more dynamic and sustainable economy.

As the meeting is held every five years, the Ministerial Statement will chart the direction and strategic plan of APT for the next five years, the minister said, adding that healthy exchange of information between ministers and delegates will take place in the next two days.

The minister expressed hope that various sessions during the meeting will provide valuable knowledge to strengthen the participant countries' communication networks.

Additionally, the delegates of the meeting last night attended the Brunei ICT Awards 2014 Gala Dinner at the International Convention Centre

Broadband key to Asia-Pacific smart, digital economy

Izzan Kassim
BRUNEI-MUARA

BROADBAND development has paved the way for countries in the Asia-Pacific region to move towards building a smart digital economy.

Both the Minister of Communications and the Secretary General of Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) mentioned this in their speeches during the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting yesterday at the Indera Samudera Grand Hall of Em-

pire Hotel and Country Club.

Carrying the theme "Building a Smart Digital Economy through ICT", the secretary general, Toshiyuki Yamada, said that the smart digital economy will be founded on the groundwork of broadband network and infrastructure that has been developed to meet the Bali Statement made five years ago at the previous Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting.

Yamada said that the use of the word "smart", for example in smart grid, smart car, smart home

and smart appliances, has helped turned dreams into reality with the use of new technologies.

The secretary general said that these technologies play a crucial role in the new ICT ecosystem, helping to utilise the resources more efficiently and smartly, and offers "new sources of revenue for the ICT industry".

Yang Berhormat Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Hj Abdullah Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Hj Bakar agreed with the secretary general and said that



Secretary General of APT Toshiyuki Yamada giving his opening speech at the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting yesterday. Picture: BT/Izzan Kassim



Minister of Communications YB Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Hj Abdullah Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Hj Bakar giving his opening speech at the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting yesterday. Picture: BT/Izzan Kassim

development of broadband is one of the enabling factors for moving towards a smart digital economy.

Additionally, the minister said that wider adoption of ICT and human capacity building are some of the enabling factors along with a conducive environment for growth.

The ministry through its Strategic Plan 2008-2017 has a vision towards the creation of a "Smart Society" said YB Pehin Dato Hj Abdullah.

YB Pehin Dato Hj Abdullah said that having a Smart Society means that any task can be done anytime and anywhere. "One of the features of Smart Society is the ability of having every day endeavours, social and economic activities accomplished with the optimum resources."

The minister stated again that broadband development along with a conducive policy and regulatory environment are the enabling factors that will help the ministry reach its vision.

Human capacity building was also stressed by the minister in his speech yesterday. He said that in ensuring a safe and sustainable ICT ecosystem, capacity building

cannot be undermined and that the ministry will be focusing on local young talents to drive the ICT industry.

YB Pehin Dato Hj Abdullah said, "Brunei Darussalam was now at the initial but critical stage of developing our National ICT Manpower Masterplan".

"The National ICT Manpower Masterplan aims to harness ICT skills towards productivity and innovation across many sectors of the economy."

It was reported earlier this year that the masterplan will help to systematically map out the demand and supply projections and strategies for ICT manpower for the next five years.

After the opening speech, the minister proceeded to chair the first session of the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting.

The first session discussed the achievements of the Bali Plan of Action over the past five years, where two reports were presented by Yamada, the secretary general, and Nigel Pugh, Consulting Director of APAC. **The Brunei Times**



Ministers listening to a speech at the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting yesterday at the Indera Samudera Grand Hall of Empire Hotel and Country Club. Picture: BT/Izzan Kassim

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35th ASIA-PACIFIC ICT MINISTERIAL MEETING

"Building a Smart Digital Economy Through ICT"

14 - 15 Zulkaidah 1435 / 10 - 11 September 2014
Mandor Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik in a group photo with the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministers

Crown Prince graces BICTA Awards



ABOVE & BELOW: His Royal Highness the Crown Prince being greeted upon arrival at the BICTA Awards



'BICTA is intended as a platform to encourage innovation and creativity among the local ICT players in a conducive and competitive environment'

| DANIAL NORJIDI |

HIS Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office, presented the Brunei ICT Awards (BICTA) during the BICTA Gala Night yesterday.

His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, who was accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik, was greeted upon arrival by the Minister of Communications, Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdullah bin Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Haji Bakar; Zhao Houlin, Deputy Secretary-General of International Telecommunication Union (ITU); Toshiyuki Yamada, Secretary-General of the Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT); and other senior officials of the Ministry of Communications.

The proceedings began with a speech by the Minister of Communications, in which he said, "The Ministry of Communications in collaboration with the Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AITI) and the Infocom Federation Brunei is delighted to organise the Brunei ICT Awards (BICTA) again this year."

"BICTA is intended as a platform to encourage innovation and creativity among the local ICT players in a conducive and competitive environment," he continued.

"It is very gratifying to see that such encouraging outcomes have led to an increasing number of participants of BICTA. With the theme of 'Empowering the Digital Nation', BICTA 2014 has received a total of 29 entries, the highest since 2009, competing in three main categories."

The three categories for the awards were School Project, Tertiary School Project and ICT Industry. BICTA also featured three special

awards. In addition, BICTA 2014 saw the presentation of the Royal Patron Trophy Award, which is presented to the "best of the best" of all participants.

The minister expressed gratitude to His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, also the Royal Patron of BICTA, for presenting the special awards.

"It is indeed a very meaningful gesture for us, showing Your Royal Highness' support and encouragement for the development of our ICT industry," he said.

The event also saw a report from the Deputy Chief Judge, Dr Yong Chee, in which he summarised the judges' observations for the three categories. On the School Project category, he said, "All the participants were able to address relevant issues related to tourism, continuing education choices or global warming."

Touching on the Tertiary School Project category, he highlighted that the overall product stability and uniqueness are "remarkably impressive", with most of entries being products that are "ready to be launched".

"This year we got to see some products that are developed by using multiple technologies, with professional-looking graphical user interfaces. The students have clearly displayed their ICT skills and creativity."

Finally, for the ICT Industry category, he described the nine entries as having a "similarly broad range of domains, and varying levels of product maturity".

"Overall, BICTA 2014 has successfully attracted the participation of the many talented people involved in ICT innovation in the country," he added.

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His Royal Highness the Crown Prince presenting a certificate to one of the judges



His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdul Malik at the ceremony

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His Royal Highness then presented tokens of appreciation to the competition's judges, before going on to present prizes to the winners of the three categories and special awards.

The winner of both the Royal Patron Award as well as the ICT Industry category's first prize of \$10,000 was Teleconsult Sdn Bhd for its product, 'SkyEye'. SkyEye develops aerial video capture and processing technologies, allowing for videography of mobile cell towers and rooftop sites.

The ICT Industry category's second prize (\$5,000) winner was PHMD Publishing Company's 'Salam Halal' solution, while the third place (\$2,500) went to MeSixty Sdn Bhd's 'Best of Halal' food guide.

In Tertiary School Project category IGS College's 'Virtual Watch Fitting' product bagged the first prize of \$7,000. The product allows users to fit virtual watches by printing out and strapping designated markers to their wrists. Using an application on an Android smartphone, users point the phone's camera at the marker, above which a 3-D watch can then be seen on the phone screen.

The second place went to Institut Teknologi Brunei's (ITB) 'The Sulu Princess' and Nakhoda Ragam Vocational School's 'SVNR Staff Network' projects, both winning \$3,500.

ITB also won third prize with its '6ScienceZAP' product, taking home \$1,750.

In the School Project category, no teams won first prize. Chung Hwa Middle School BSB's 'Heritage of South East Asia' Android application won the second prize of \$2,000.

Chung Hwa Middle School BSB also won the third prize of \$1,000 for its Android application called 'Green Wave'.

Chung Hua Middle School Kuala Belait also got third prize for its educational guidance system called 'HeDGes'.

The Islamic ICT Award was won by two institutions - ITB for their 'Land of Zikir' Android mobile application, which contains a collection of Selawat, Zikir and Doa Harian; and Sultan Saiful Rijal Technical College with its 'Halal Haram Food Guide', which helps Muslim users find out whether or not the ingredients of a product can be consumed.

Another special prize, the Community Services Award, was won by Itsybytes Company's 'E-learning Health Game and Informative Application', which focuses on creating awareness among users, particularly children, on having a healthy lifestyle as well as the effects and contents of harmful substances.

In addition, the Young Developers Award went to Seri Mulia Sarjana International School's 'Save the Ozone' application, which helps



The high-level attendees at the BICTA Awards

create awareness on the status of the Ozone Layer and its effects on mankind.

First organised in 2004, BICTA is an annual event which is aimed at stimulating ICT industry innovation and creativity amongst individuals, students and entrepreneurs. Recipients of the award are given an opportunity to participate in the Asia-Pacific ICT Alliance (APICTA) Awards.

BICTA is a component of the APICTA Awards, for which the vision is to widen the influence of the ICT industry in the Asia region. Winners

of BICTA have represented Brunei to compete with other participants from Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Korea, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam in the annual APICTA competition.

As a statement from the organiser reads, "It is hoped that BICTA will continue to provide the platform for ICT professionals to constantly innovate, resulting in more locally-inspired business solutions, benefitting the community in Brunei Darussalam."

PHOTOS BY DEAN KASSIM

BELOW LEFT & BELOW: Lively performances during last night's event



Sultan receives Asia-Pacific ICT delegates



Photos show His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, and His Royal Highness Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, the Crown Prince and Senior Minister at the Prime Minister's Office, with the Asia-Pacific ICT delegates

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Among those present were Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdullah bin Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Haji Bakar, Minister of Communications; Abdul Mutalib bin Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Setia Dato Paduka Haji

Mohd Yusof, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Communications; as well as the Secretary General of the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) and the Deputy Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

The ceremony took place at Istana Nurul Iman.



PHOTOS: DEAN KASSIM

Region moves to build a Smart Digital Economy

(From Page One)

The meeting involved over 200 delegates including 21 ministers, four vice ministers, two deputy ministers, two permanent secretaries, high-level representatives of APT members, as well as associate members and affiliate members of International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

Speaking at a press conference yesterday, Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdullah bin Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Haji Bakar, the Minister of Communications, highlighted that over the past five years, APT members have shown impressive progress in their telecom and ICT in accordance to the five key objectives of the Bali Plan of Action.

The APT has played a key role in fostering regional cooperation and arranging projects, forums and training courses to support APT members' achievement.

The Brunei Darussalam Statement draws six key priority areas that are crucial for a smart digital economy in the region - (1) Conducive Policies for Sustainable Growth of ICT and Smart Digital Economy; (2) Safe and Secure Society through ICT; (3) Trust and Confidence in ICT; (4) Sustainable ICT Ecosystem for Innovation; (5) Capacity Building and Institutional Development; and (6) Fostering Regional Cooperation for ICT Development.

The minister said APT members are encouraged to implement initiatives in the key priority areas and to collectively work

towards building a smart digital economy through ICT to achieve sustainable development of the Asia-Pacific region and further improve the quality of life of the people.

In the statement, the 21 ministers responsible for ICT from the Asia-Pacific region also praised the initiatives, contributions and the substantial achievements that have been made by the APT and its members to achieve the objectives of the Bali Statement of the Asia-Pacific Ministers on Strengthening Regional Collaboration towards a Broadband Economy in the Asia-Pacific.

The ministers also acknowledged the commitments made by the leaders at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005, to harness the power of information and communication technologies to "create, access, utilise and share information and knowledge" in order to achieve sustainable development and improve the quality of life of people globally in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The ministers also noted that the Asia-Pacific region has progressed well in broadband infrastructure and services development.

The statement said: "We also take note of the APT's support for its members in bridging the digital divide that has resulted in sustainable ICT growth.

"However, there is still a vast gap



AZARAWY HH

Pehin Orang Kaya Hamzah Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Abdullah bin Begawan Mudim Dato Paduka Haji Bakar (3rd from R), Minister of Communications, during the press conference

in broadband penetration and ICT development among the various countries of the region.

"This digital divide needs to be bridged because lack of adequate broadband connectivity and ICT accessibility poses great difficulties in harnessing the full benefits of the digital economy. The least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states, continue to need further support in this regard."

The ministers believe that in harnessing the power of information and communication technologies to create, access, utilise and share information and knowledge, the cultural and social values should be respected.

In the statement, the ministers recognised that the convergence of communications, computing, and content enabled by the availability of broadband infrastructure, mobile communications,

the Internet, and its myriad of applications has a great impact on the lives of the people and the socio-economic development of the region.

"This new digital economy can be stimulated with smart utilisation of ICT supported by capacity building programmes, enabling policies and the regulatory environment.

"The digital economy needs to be safe and secure to improve the quality of peoples' lives and meet the needs of society," it added.

The ministers also expressed their determination to strengthen their cooperation and collaboration to realise a policy and regulatory environment that will be the basis of a creative and innovative economy.

"Innovation is the key to enhance our region's competitiveness and needs to be encouraged at all levels through a conducive ICT environment," they said.

PRINCE MOHAMED MEETS PREMIER OF NIUE



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, yesterday met Toke Talagi, Premier and Minister for External Affairs and International Relations and Aid Coordination of Niue, at the Balai Penghadapan, Bukit Kayangan. The Premier of Niue is in the country on a two-day visit to attend the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting

PRINCE RECEIVES COOK ISLANDS FINANCE MINISTER



His Royal Highness Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, yesterday received Mark Brown, the Minister of Finance of the Cook Islands, at the Balai Penghadapan, Bukit Kayangan. Mark Brown is in the country on a two-day visit to attend the Asia-Pacific ICT Ministerial Meeting - Text and photo by Dean Kassim

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