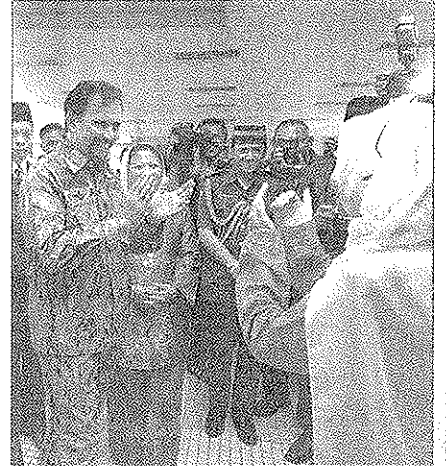




His Majesty mingles with house recipient Awang Daraman anak Igol and other family members, relatives and neighbours at Kg Panaga National Housing Scheme



His Majesty applauds SMSA student, Suzzana Jariad, who recited a poem entitled "Wajah Daulat"

Royal seal of approval

• *Sultan describes new houses as 'very good'*

By Dantai Norjidi

HIS Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam voiced out his approval to the Bulletin with regards to the new houses built under the Kampong Panaga 2,000-unit National Housing Scheme yesterday.

When asked for the ruler's thoughts on the new houses, His Majesty stopped to listen to the question posed and smiled as he described them as "Very good".

When asked whether the benevolent

• *Presents house keys to 650 recipients*

monarch was happy with them, His Majesty replied, "I am," with a firm nod.

His Majesty shared these thoughts with the Bulletin while visiting the house of Dayang Hartina binti Tamin, at No 29, Simpang 23, Jalan Puragam, which is one of the 2,000 that have been built under the Panaga scheme in Kuala Belait, after His Majesty consented to present the keys for the semi-detached and terrace houses to 650 recipients at the Convention Centre building in Jalan McKerron, Kuala Belait.

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Two guarantors rule not fully exercised

By Liza Mohamad

THE Minister of Development Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awg Hj Suyoi bin Hj Osman was pleased with the outcome of the presentation of keys to 650 recipients under the Kg Panaga housing project by His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, as it was by far the largest. In the past, the Housing Development Department had awarded houses to a maximum of 100-200 recipients.

Addressing issues brought up by

recipients, particularly on the stringent requirements of producing two guarantors in order to own a house, the minister said that they would look into it.

Some of the house recipients yesterday pointed out that the rule was not fully exercised, particularly on retirees and senior citizens.

Some recipients expressed difficulties in producing two guarantors working in the government sector or BSP. But it appears that the consideration was given to several applicants on case-to-case basis.

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SEE ALSO PAGES 8, 9, 10, 16 & 17

650 recipients under National Housing Scheme receive keys

Amir Noor and Sally Piri
BELAIT

His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam yesterday awarded key plaques to 650 recipients of houses under the Panaga National Housing Scheme. His Majesty was greeted upon arrival at the Convention Centre Building Hall of Jalan McKerron, Kuala Belait by Minister of Development Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Hj Suyoi Hj Osman, Minister of Home Affairs Pehin Udana Khatib Dato Paduka Seri Setia Ustaz Hj Badaruddin Pengarah Dato Paduka Hj Othman and Belait District Officer Matussin Orang Kaya Sura Hj Tuba.

In his welcoming address, the Belait district officer expressed his appreciation for His Majesty's presence as well as personally handing over the house keys to the recipients for the two national housing schemes.

Out of the 650 recipients who received the keys from His Majesty yesterday, 315 were for semi-detached houses and Semi-Detached homes while the rest were for the terrace homes, all had registered under the Panaga National Housing Scheme.

Following the handing over of the keys, His Majesty proceeded to visit the Sayyidina Ali Secondary School and some of the homes of the recipients of both the semi-detached and terrace houses.

According to a press release from the ministry, the recipients of the houses were applicants from 1994 to 2003 and 1984 to 1994 under the National Housing Scheme and the Landless Indigenous Citizens Housing Scheme (SYKRI), respectively.

To date, an estimated 13,000 houses or lots have been allocated

nationwide with about 9,000 units for the National Housing Scheme and 4,000 units for SYKRI. However, only 2,200 units and 650 units are for the Belait District under respective schemes.

In regards to the Panaga National Housing Scheme for Belait District, the Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB) has been entrusted by the His Majesty's government to develop 2,000 housing units, where they appointed Syarikat Bina Puri Sdn Bhd in implementing the construction of the project which began in April 2009 and completed in April 2011.

From the 2,000 housing units being built, 800 units were semi-detached while the rest were terrace houses.

Each of the semi-detached unit is measured at about 131.1 square metres, while the terrace has an area of 127.5 square meters and include a vacuum sewerage system and optic fiber for the houses.

The price offered to the applicant's was \$62,000 for the semi-detached, the corner terrace units was at \$45,000 while the centre unit costs \$43,000.

For 2014, a total of 17,500 units/lots is expected to be built nationwide, inclusive of those which have already been developed by BEDB and the SYKRI project by the Department of Housing and Public Works Department.

From the total, 3,970 are allocated in Belait District. A total 334 units are in Kg Lorong Tengah, 1,494 units in Kg Lumut/Sg Liang, 142 units in Kg Mumong and 2,000 units in Kg Panaga.

Out of the 17,500 units, a total of 2,911 units/lots have already been completed and another 1,561 units/lots have already been assigned to the applicants.

The Brunei Times



(Above) His Majesty (L) the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, handing over the key plaque to one of the recipients of Panaga National Housing Scheme held at the Convention Centre Building Hall in Kuala Belait yesterday. (Right) His Majesty (R), signing the key plaques of recipients during the monarch's visit to the new houses at the Panaga National Housing Scheme. Some 650 residents of Belait District became the official owners of the houses under the housing scheme when they were presented with the key plaques by His Majesty. The recipients have been waiting for this moment for more than a decade.

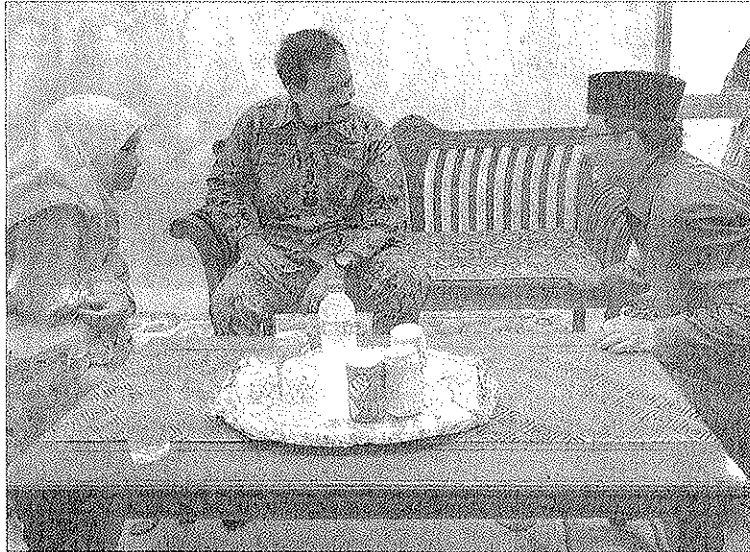
Pictures: B1/Saifulizam



(Above) His Majesty (C) the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, meeting with residents at the Panaga National Housing Scheme, Belait District. (Right) His Majesty (R), presenting the plaque keys to recipients of the Panaga Housing Scheme. Pictures: B1/Saifulizam



Concerns raised by housing recipients will be looked into



His Majesty is briefed by the Minister of Development at the residence of Pengiran Hajah Noraini binti Pengiran Haji Omarali (L)

By Danial Norjidi & Syafiq Affendy

EVEN though some of the 650 recipients under Kg Panaga 2,000 Houses Project yesterday had some concerns over the state of their new accommodations, they were still grateful for what they had been blessed with and deeply moved that they were fortunate enough to receive the keys to their new homes from His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

After presenting keys to the 650 recipients under Kg Panaga 2,000 Houses Project yesterday morning, His Majesty consented to visit the houses of some of the recipients in Kg Panaga, where the caring monarch listened to the concerns of his subjects.

One of them Pengiran Hajah Noraini binti Pengiran Haji Omarali, who pointed out that some of the amenities of the newly-constructed homes were "not completely satisfactory" ie having a lack of tiles on stairs, as well as concerns over electricity and drainage issues.

His Majesty later addressed these concerns to Minister of Development Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awg Hj Suyoi bin Hj Osman.

Another housing recipient, Dayang Norhayati binti Haji Md Shah, told the Bulletin that the relevant authorities were quick to reassure her

PHOTOS BY KHAIRIL HASSAN, DEAN KASSIM & AZARAIMY HH

that they would assist in rectifying matters that were raised by her earlier, including a burst pipe and some doors did not open with keys provided.

Zaiton binti Hj Drahman, who has been waiting to hear to good news about her housing application since she first applied in 1985, felt blessed to receive the keys to her new home from His Majesty.

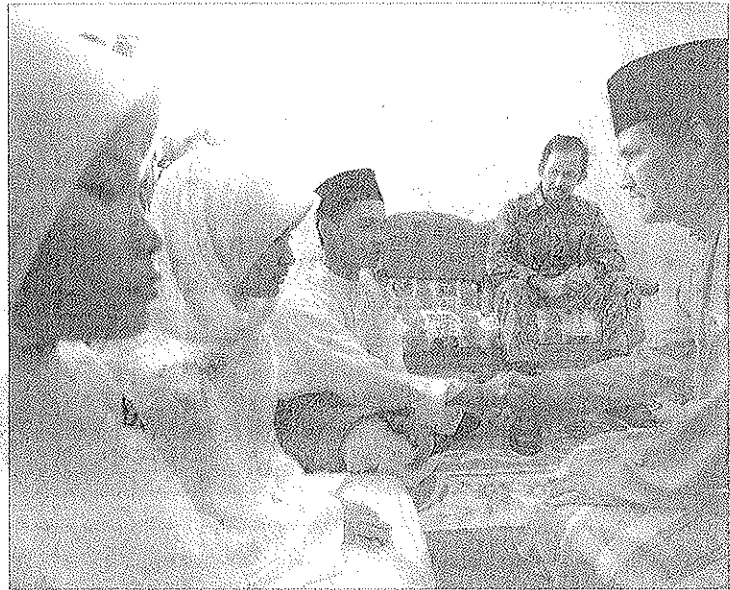
"(Even though) I have waited for more than 26 years, I feel happy that I am receiving the house ... even more happy than receiving gold!" exclaimed Zaiton, who freelances as a decorator for Malay weddings. "As all my children are already working, they will help me pay for it (the housing)."

"We are among those who were affected by the 'two guarantors' regulation but we are fine with it," she said, adding that her nephew and step-sibling willingly stepped up to be guarantors.

She encouraged other housing recipients not to take the kindness of their guarantors for granted.

"Don't delay payment of bills as they can accumulate and become troublesome for you," Zaiton said, adding that she has advised her children to always pay the bills on time.

Sultan witnesses conversion ceremony



Photos Above & Below: During the conversion ceremony

By Syafiq Affendy
Photos: Dean Kassim

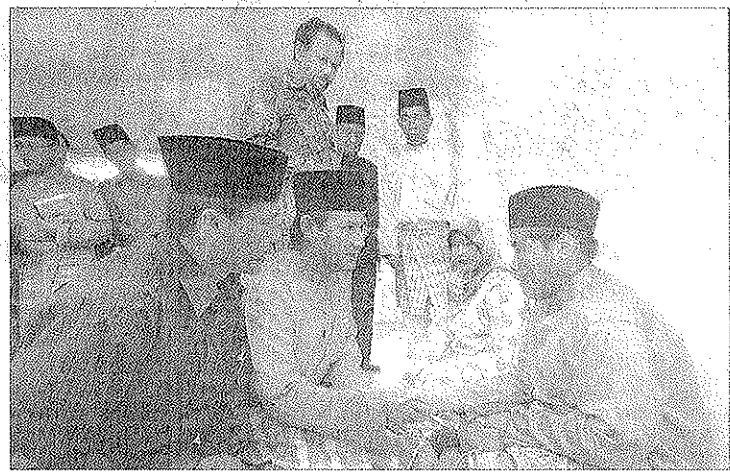
Daraman, 16; Nor Anni binti Abdullah Daraman, 14; and, Nur Asyikin binti Abdullah Daraman, 12.

IT WAS a very special day for five people who embraced Islam yesterday, as His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to witness their conversion ceremony after presenting keys to 650 housing recipients under Kg Panaga 2,000 Houses Project.

Among those who opened their hearts to the Islamic faith were the three children of Daraman anak Igol - Md Afzanizam Azman bin Abdullah

"Even though my parents have not embraced Islam, they fully supported my sisters and I to open our hearts to the Islamic faith," said Md Afzanizam Azman.

The other two who converted to Islam were relatives of Sabari Hj Ahmed, one of the successful housing recipients under Kg Panaga 2,000 Houses Project - Nurul Amalina binti Abdullah Serai and Khairul Anwar bin Abdullah.



His Majesty at the residence of Dayang Norhayati binti Haji Md Shah (C)



Zaiton binti Hj Drahman (L) with other housing recipients

Sultan brings cheer to Belait residents



His Majesty at Kg Panaga 2,000 Houses Project site

PHOTOS BY AZROL AZMI, KHAIRIL HASSAN & DEAN KASSIM



His Majesty being greeted by a child and an elderly woman



Group photo with His Majesty

By Liza Mohamad

SIX hundred and fifty housing recipients under Kg Panaga 2,000 Houses Project - a pilot project of the Brunei Economic Development Board (BEDB) - received the keys to their new homes from His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam yesterday morning.

The handing-over ceremony was a testament to the monarch's long-term aspiration to provide affordable housing for his subjects, where the Brunei Government provides subsidies of between B\$80,000 and B\$100,000 for the construction of each house.

It also marked a significant milestone for the Housing Development Department, as the waiting period for housing applicants had been cut short by as much as 10 years with the successful completion of Kg Panaga 2,000 Houses Project, where the 2,000 houses were built within a record time of two years.

Under the Kg Panaga 2,000 Houses Project, recipients of the three-bedroom terraced houses (127.5 square metres) will only need to pay \$45,000 (for a corner unit) and \$43,000 (for those located in the middle). Recipients of the three-bedroom semi-detached houses (131.1 square metres) will meanwhile have to pay \$62,000.

It is understood that the total cost for this mega project to build 2,000 houses was around \$291 million.

Upon arrival at the newly-completed Belait Convention Centre, His Majesty



ABOVE & BELOW: His Majesty with some of the housing recipients



His Majesty sharing a light moment with one of the housing recipients

was greeted by Minister of Development Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Awg Hj Suyoi bin Hj Osman and Belait District Officer Awang Matusin bin OKS Hj Tuba.

The Belait District Officer emphasised that yesterday's handing over ceremony was not only a big 'kurnia' for the housing recipients but also timely as the nation will be celebrating His Majesty's 65th birthday celebration in a few days' time.

"The presentation of housing keys to

recipients of semi-detached and terraced units under the National Housing Scheme also reflects His Majesty's concern over the welfare and interest of the citizens and residents, particularly those living in Belait District," said Awang Matusin.

Following the presentation of keys to the 650 recipients, His Majesty proceeded to visit the residence of Kg Pandan C Village Head, Awang Haji Affandy bin Awang Damit in Kuala Belait. He was appointed in early 2009 to lead Kg Pandan C, which has a population of about 7,500.

After taking a closer look at the facilities of Sekolah Menengah Sayyidina Ali (SMSA) in Kg Pandan, the only Sixth Form centre in the district, His Majesty viewed the Kg Panaga model home, which was built to mark the commencement of the housing project that was contracted to Malaysian company Bina Puri Holdings in April 2009.

At the 140-hectare housing site, the monarch also visited the homes of four recipients of the semi-detached units and another four who got the terraced units. His Majesty also received a number of 'Anjung Ziarah' from other housing recipients.

Recipients under the Kg Panaga National Housing Scheme comprised those who applied for the scheme between 1994 and 2003.

It was learnt that a total of 3,970 homes be built in the district until 2014 - 334 units in Kg Loroong Tengah Seria, 1,494 units in Kg Lantau/Sungai Liang, 142 units in Kg Mumong and 2,000 units in Kg Panaga.

One thousand two hundred homes under the Kg Panaga Housing Project have been distributed to local recipients. A ceremony to present the keys to another 550 housing recipients is expected to take place next week.



Proud moment for housing recipients



Belait District Officer delivering his speech