



OPENING REMARKS

**YANG BERTHORMAT
DATO SERI SETIA AWANG HAJI ALI BIN APONG
MINISTER OF PRIMARY RESOURCES AND TOURISM**

APPRECIATION NIGHT FOR BRUNEI DECEMBER FESTIVAL 2017

EMPIRE HOTEL AND COUNTRY CLUB AMPHITHEATRE FOYER,
JERUDONG

31st December 2017

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

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners;

Acting Permanent Secretary;

Brunei Tourism Board Members;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen.

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

Salam Sejahtera & a Very Good Evening

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. I am happy to be here to meet those who were involved and made the first Brunei December Festival a success.
2. With the year almost coming to another end, I am pleased to say that 2017 has been an amazing year for Brunei in particular the tourism sector. Our data indicates that by the end of 2017, the number of tourist's arrival into Brunei is expected to increase by 10%, compared to 0.3% increase in 2016.
3. This year the Brunei Tourism Board have launched Bandar Seri Begawan and Kampung Ayer Heritage Trails, we have also promoted the Tutong Destination Packages, the Belait Destination Packages and launched the Brunei Diving Packages. I am proud that we have successfully organized a calendar full of exciting events of every genre which include the Brunei Gastronomy Week, the Art Affair and this month, we have initiated the Brunei December Festival, which offers various events from an International Food Festival, Arts and Performing arts, Islamic and Culture and various fun-filled activities.

4. This evening we are gathered here to allow us to show our appreciation to those who were involved and have significantly contributed to the successful organizing of the Brunei December Festival. Although we are coming to the end of December, there are some events which are still on going until the middle of January 2018 such as Pameran Cinta dan Kenali Rasulullah at the International Convention Centre, which is organized by Avertu Management Services, the Brunei Water Festival organized by Heroes Event Management, Photography Competition organized by Polytechnic Brunei and the Brunei Salebration organized by the Department of Economic Planning and Development (JPKE).
5. And tonight, at 8:00pm we will be viewing just next door at the Empire Cinema, Brunei's first Short Film Making competition known as Brunei Film Blitz organized by Origin Artistic.
6. Just to share some highlights of the Brunei December Festival in the past 4 weeks include the **2nd Green Jewel Night Run** organized by CARE organization which had more than 500 participants with runners coming all the way from Norway, Columbia and Morocco. About 50 international participants joined the **Brunei Off Road Challenge** organized by Persatuan Kereta Tahan Lasak Brunei and 43 international participants for **Mountain Trail Bike Temburong Edition**. An **indigenous cultural performing artist** Mr Matthew Doyle was brought in by the Australian High Commission from Australia and performed with our ethnic community. **A renowned chef William Wongso** was brought in by the Indonesian Embassy and Rizqun Hotel during the **Magnificent Culinary of Indonesia**. There were some participants from ASEAN for the **Motorcross**

Challenge organized by Gerakan Pakatan Pemuda Sukarela Tutong as well as the **Tutong Boat Race** at Pesta Santai organized by MPK Kampong Penabai, Kuala Tutong. There were several events that have gained popularity and attracted huge crowds at the **Bangarku Ceria, Tutongku Ceria, KBku Ceria and Bandarku Ceria** such as **Archery** organized by Ar-Rafi Archery; **Paintball Shooting** organized by Royal Brunei Technical Services; and the **Nyirik Culinary Challenge** organized by Eco Kampong and Eco Ponies; where some cooking enthusiasts competed to show their cooking talent. Congratulations and well done to all event organizers.

7. For 2018, I encourage Event Organizers to organize more signature and international events to be held that would attract more visitors into the country. Stay imaginative and creative for Brunei's tourism industry.

8. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my sincerest appreciation and heartfelt thanks to the members of Brunei Tourism Board, JPKE under the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Health, Municipal Boards and the District Offices of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Foreign Missions in Brunei, Hotel and Restaurants which have organized a cultural event and international food fairs. Strategic partners, Event managers, Local communities, NGOs, our dedicated team of volunteers, media partners especially RTB. Also special thanks to the Royal Brunei Police Force, the Fire and Rescue Department and the Paramedics team for your continuous support and cooperation. Last but not

least, I would like to thank the Deputy Permanent Secretary of Primary Resources and Tourism, Awang Wardi bin Haji Mohammad Ali who has been the lead driver for the Brunei December Festival and the Secretariat, Dayang Kartini binti Haji Kabri as well as all Officers and Staff of Tourism Development Department, without which none of this would have been possible.

9. On that note, once again, I wish to thank everyone for making this year's Brunei December Festival a great success and my hope for an even more exciting festival next year and a successful year for tourism in 2018.
10. I would like to end this by wishing everyone an enjoyable evening and have a great 2018!