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Meteorological Service in Brunei Darussalam

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IN RECOGNITION of the socio-economic value of meteorological services and in support of our country's Vision 2035, the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has consented the establishment of an independent national meteorological agency, formally known as the Brunei Darussalam Meteorological Department, under the aegis of the Ministry of Communications on February 1.

This establishment marked another milestone in the development of the provision of weather and climate services in the Sultanate.



A photo of Meteorological Observation at the Old Airport site in 1966

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A weather forecaster performing manual analysis to assess the prevailing weather situation in 1990s

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A meteorologist at the current Brunei Weather Centre utilising state-of-the-art facilities to assess the local weather situation. – PHOTOS: BDMD

The Meteorological Service Section (BMS), as it was formally known as then, commenced routine surface observations in 1966 at the Brunei Airport site in Berakas. When the airport moved to the current Brunei International Airport (BIA) site in the early 1970s, the BMS also relocated. In 1979 its activities were expanded to include operational upper-air observations from a site at the airport. Aviation-related forecasts were provided by Singapore until the BMS established a local forecasting office in 1981.

Following its full independence in 1984, Brunei Darussalam through the Meteorological Section joined the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) on November 26 the same year. The membership opened up opportunity to highlight national interests and concerns relating to meteorology in the international arena.

By the 1990's, with the improvements of its data communication systems and the introduction of PC-based systems as well as weather monitoring such as the Satellite Weather Reception System and the Doppler Weather Radar, the Meteorological Section had established itself as the national authority and sole provider of meteorological information. The users included government and non-government agencies such as Radio Television Brunei (RTB), His Majesty's Sultan Flight, the Royal Brunei Air Force and Brunei Shell Petroleum Sdn Bhd.

The Meteorological Section established a site on the World Wide Web in the lead-up to World Meteorological Day in 1996. The site included basic information on the Brunei Darussalam Meteorological Service, World Meteorological Organization programmes and selected climate statistics.

When internet established itself as a credible mean of delivery, the Brunei Meteorological Service embraced e-services and leveraging on technology to value-add and develop more user friendly services.

In recent years, they had introduced services such as the upgraded weather website with up-to-date information,



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and the launching of the "Brunei Weather Apps" for users of mobile devices in November 2012.

No doubt that the creation of the Meteorological Department is timely, if not overdue, in face of the national and global challenges. The establishment of this dedicated agency by government, in line with the Civil Service 21th Century Vision of focusing on organisation restructuring in order to upgrade efficiency, indeed is expected to benefit the people of Brunei Darussalam.

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