

INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the FIRST EDITION of our quarterly newsletter. In this edition, we report on the news and events throughout the first semester of the academic year 2016-2017. We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter!

Brunei Darussalam: Participation in ASEAN and ASEAN Plus Three

A new book entitled *Regional Community Building in East Asia: Countries in Focus* has recently been published by Routledge London. The book, edited by Lee Lai To and Zarina Othman, contains a chapter on Brunei Darussalam's participation in ASEAN and ASEAN Plus Three, which is authored by Dr. Azaharaini Bin Haji Jamil from the Institute of Policy Studies. Brunei's participation in the ASEAN region is discussed not only from a political-security perspective, but also from an economic and socio-cultural viewpoint. The BIMP-EAGA cooperation for instance, aims to increase trade, tourism and investments among member countries, and Brunei's participation in the various collaborative activities within ASEAN has enabled the country to enhance its membership and sense of solidarity and unity with other member states. Dr. Azaharaini contends that "treating member nations like a 'family' rather than merely a 'political or economic' entity is seen by Bruneians as contributing indirectly to peace and stability in the region". He further argued that two elements, trust and respect, are fundamental to the maintenance of Brunei's multilateral relationships with other nations.



"Surely Islam cannot be an ideology"

On Saturday, 29th October 2016, IPS held its first Research Seminar Series session with a presentation by current MPPM student, Ms. Suhaila Matzan. Her paper, titled "Surely Islam cannot be an ideology", argues that many political analysts' and media perceptions of Muslim conflicts need to be explained in terms of theology rather than as an ideology. She further discussed the consequences of politicising Islam, and attempted to elaborate on why there is a need to understand Islam as a complete system of life. Her paper attempted to interrogate the notion of Islam as an ideology, particularly within the context of many quarters who have come to use the religion as a vehicle for political action. To read her paper, please visit: ips.ubd.edu.bn/seminar.series.html



Issues and Challenges: Youth Participation and Public Engagement



This semester, IPS hosted two Executive Seminar Series sessions. In the first session held on the 8th October 2016, the guest speaker, Yang Mulia Dato Paduka Haji Jemat Bin Haji Ampal, presented his paper titled "Engaging youth: A joint investment". The talk focused on youth and their positive contributions towards Brunei's economic development. In his presentation, Dato highlighted the issues that are common among Brunei's youth in relation to employment, and he raised the pertinent question of who will take the central role in absorbing the risks brought by youth in the formation of economic enterprises.



The second session of the Executive Seminar Series was held on the 5th November 2016, with invited guest speaker, Yang Mulia Dato Paduka Haji Abdul Rahman Bin Haji Mohiddin, who presented his topic on "Public policy: Issues and challenges". In his talk, Dato argued that although there are many policies that have been initiated by the Government through its various ministries and departments, the reception towards these policies are inconsistent; at times they are well received, and sometimes they continue to be the subjects of on-going discussions. He highlighted the point that translating policies into real actions in order to produce the desired outcomes can be daunting especially when challenges related to implementation arise, and these challenges themselves can be unanticipated in the first place. One way in which this could be addressed is through increased transparency and active public engagement.

For more details, please visit: ips.ubd.edu.bn/seminar.series.html

Congratulatory Message

The IPS staff would like to congratulate students who have recently graduated at the 28th Convocation Ceremony, especially our 2nd Cohort Master of Public Policy and Management graduates!

Upcoming Events

- IPS hosts Employers' Engagement Session on 11th January 2017
- Professor Adrian Kay joins IPS as full time staff
- 3rd Symposium on Islamic Governance to be held in April 2017

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