

BRUNEI VISIT 'TO BOOST BILATERAL TIES'

Muhyiddin, Sultan Hassanal also expected to discuss creation of Reciprocal Green Lane



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TAN Sri Muhyiddin Yassin arrived here yesterday for his two-day official visit to Brunei in conjunction with the 23rd Malaysia-Brunei Darussalam Annual Leaders' Consultation.

The prime minister, accompanied by his wife Puan Sri Norainee Abdul Rahman, arrived at the Brunei International Airport at 3.55pm.

He was greeted by Crown Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, who is also senior minister at the Prime Minister's Office, three ministers from the Brunei cabinet, namely Home Affairs Minister Pehin Orang Kaya Seri Kerna Dato Seri Setia Dr Haji Awang Abu Bakar Haji Apong, and senior government officials.

Also present were Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein, Foreign Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri M. Shahrul Ikram Yaakob and officials from the Malaysian High Commission in Brunei.

Muhyiddin was accorded an official welcoming ceremony at the airport. He inspected the guard of

honour mounted by the Royal Brunei Armed Forces after the national anthems of both countries were played.

The prime minister was then introduced to several Brunei cabinet ministers.

Muhyiddin is expected have an audience with the Sultan of Brunei, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah today.

This would mark their first meeting since Muhyiddin assumed the prime minister's post more than a year ago.

The 23rd Malaysia-Brunei Darussalam Annual Leaders' Consultation is expected to touch on a number of issues of mutual interest such as regional matters, bilateral issues, economy and the relationship between the two countries during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hishammuddin, at a press conference with the Malaysian media, said the meeting between the countries' two leaders was timely in order to strengthen bilateral relations.

Brunei, he said, was also an important country in the context of



Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin inspecting a guard of honour mounted by the Royal Brunei Armed Forces in Bandar Seri Begawan yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

international cooperation among Asean member states.

He said among the key issues expected to be discussed were proposals to create a Reciprocal Green Lane between Malaysia and Brunei.

"Discussions on mutual certification of Covid-19 vaccines will also help ease travel between both countries," he said after attending a meeting with Brunei's Foreign Affairs Minister II Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof on Saturday night.

He said that at the moment, no

one party could claim to have the best solution to problems related to the pandemic, hence the importance of direct discussions between the leaders.

He said proposals on Covid-19 vaccine diplomacy would also steer towards strengthening economic cooperation.

Hishammuddin said the discussions were also expected to touch on human rights issues in Myanmar in line with Brunei's status as the Asean chair.

He said the discussion would, at the very least, be able to de-

termine the basics of what could be done with regard to the Myanmar issue.

Hishammuddin said in conjunction with the official visit, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah and Muhyiddin were expected to witness the signing of a memorandum of understanding on disaster management between the two countries as well as the unification agreement between Petronas (Petroleum Nasional Bhd) and the Brunei National Unification Secretariat in the oil and gas sector.