



VETERANS ASSOCIATION ROYAL BRUNEI ARMED FORCES

VECONAC 33RD EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING & 20TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020/2021

COUNTRY REPORT – PRESIDENT'S DELIBERATION WEDNESDAY, 15TH OF DECEMBER 2021

Bismillah Hirrahman Nirrahim.

Your Excellency Senior Lieutenant General (Ret) NGUYEN VAN DUOC, President of Veterans Confederation of ASEAN Countries (VECONAC) cum President of Veterans Association of Vietnam (VAVN).

Your Excellencies Vice Presidents of VECONAC and Delegates of Member Countries,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen.

Assalamualaikum and a very Good Day,

First and foremost, the Veterans Association Royal Brunei Armed Forces (VARBAF) would like to take the opportunity to sincerely congratulate the Veterans Association of Vietnam (VAVN) for the great effort and resilience to execute the VECONAC 33rd EBM & 20th GA for the period TY2020 to TY2021 amid the pandemic. VAVN is considered as the first Hosting Country running the Meeting and General Assembly virtually and this sets as a platform to refer to in the future should virtual meetings/conferences are deemed necessary. In other words, we still can communicate with each other.

In our Country Report this time, we would like to share three main subjects based on our experiences in Brunei Darussalam for nearly two years since our meeting in The Kingdom of Cambodia in 2019:

- Brief Background of Pandemic in Brunei Darussalam.
- Veterans' Involvement in COVID-19 Operations, and
- Continuity of Welfare Activities of the Veterans.

BRIEF BACKGROUND OF PANDEMIC IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Brunei Darussalam was hit by the first wave of COVID-19, a worldwide pandemic, in March 2020 and following the early stage of the calamity, our government declared that Brunei Darussalam was not exceptional. Thus we joined other nations to combat this pandemic and The Ministry of Health was appointed as the focal ministry to coordinate and initiate any actions to be implemented including publishing SOPs accordingly.

VARBAF itself produced a special memo dated 25th of April 2020 to all its members (including families) to take seriously all directives and advice of the relevant authorities with regards to the pandemic.

PERSATUAN VETERAN ABDB (PERWIRA) - MEMO

Dari: YM SUA PERWIRA.

Kepada: YM Ahli-Ahli PERWIRA.

Tarikh: 01hb Ramadhan 1441
25hb April 2020

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 السَّلامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ
Salam Sejahtera

Rujukan:

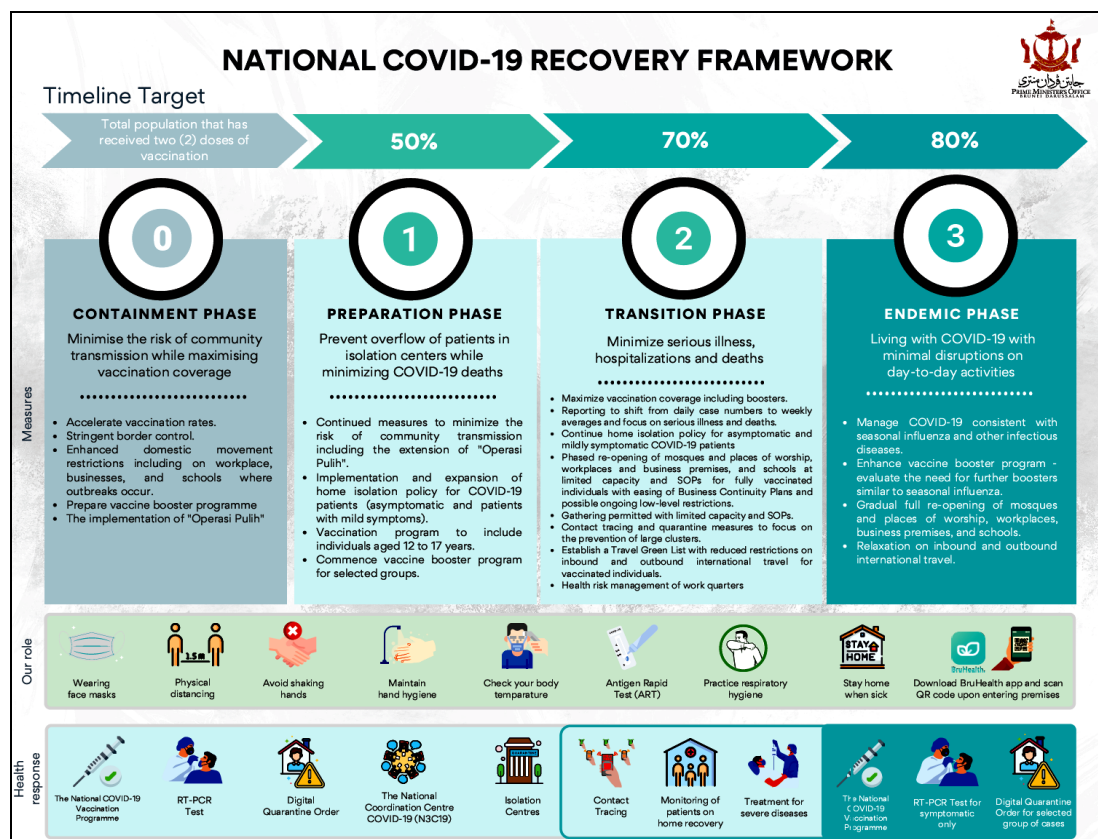
A. Titah Perutusan KDYMM Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Dan Yang Di-Pertuan Negara Brunei Darussalam sempena Menyambut Bulan Ramadhan 1441H/2020M btkh 24hb April 2020.

B. Nota Perjumpaan Mesyuarat AJKKT PERWIRA Siri 01/2020 btkh 22hb Januari 2020.

1. Dengan hormatnya seperti sedia maklum, NEGARA BRUNEI DARUSSALAM (NBD) masih lagi menghadapi musibah wabak KOVID-19 namun Alhamdulillah dgn izin Allah SWT jua ianya dapat dikawal dgn berkesan. Walau bagaimanapun kita akan terus tetap mematuhi arahan agensi-agensi kerajaan seperti Kementerian Kesihatan, Kementerian Hal Ehwal Dalam Negeri, Kementerian Hal Ehwal Ugama dll dlm sama-sama menangani musibah ini.

2. Seperti sedia maklum juga, hari ini 25hb April 2020 adalah HUT PERWIRA Ke-28. Merujuk Rujukan 'B', maka sebagai tanda menghormati arahan pihak Kerajaan KDYMM Paduka Seri Baginda Sultan Dan Yang Di-Pertuan Negara Brunei Darussalam dan menanal moto "Terus Berbakti", maka beberapa kegiatan PERWIRA di peringkat persatuan wajar kita batalkan/tiadakan. Namun beberapa kegiatan masih lagi dapat kita laksanakan berdasarkan panduan-panduan yg telah dikeluarkan/diterbitkan oleh pihak Kerajaan.

VARBAF has to reschedule the majority of its planned activities either to be adjourned or canceled. Its members were also gently reminded to support our government's effort to "flatten the curb". After a few challenging months, Zero Positive Cases was recorded ever since for many months BUT in early August this year, 2nd Wave hit our country and this time it is Variant Delta which is more contagious towards "community spread". Brunei Darussalam suddenly experienced an extreme rise of Variant Delta positive cases and COVID-19 related deaths. Therefore additional Isolation Centres have to be established in all districts to supplement the current National Isolation Centres (NICs).



In its effort to flatten the curve again, “Ops Pulih” was enforced with effect from 04th October for two weeks but was then extended further to 18th November 2021. This **Recovering Phase of the National COVID-19 Recovery Framework** was a Partial Lockdown or Curfew as a control measure to restrict movement and limit the public from leaving their homes between the hours of 2000 to 0400 (8.00 pm to 4.00 am) the next day, with the exception of Essential Workers (including Front Liners).

Subjected to controlled capacity, standard operating procedures, only allowing entry from those fully vaccinated and once 70 percent of the country’s population complete double doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, Brunei Darussalam was moving into the **Transition Phase of the National COVID-19 Recovery Framework**, allowing the gradual re-opening of the economy, mosques, and other premises. A new movement restriction directive from 2200hrs to 0400hrs (10.00 pm to 4.00 am) the next day called ‘Ops Peralihan’ was enforced until the 14th of December 2021.

Following the success of the implementation of the Transition Phase, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar ‘Ali Saifuddien Sa’adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam announced that Brunei Darussalam will move into the **Endemic Phase under the National COVID-19 Recovery Framework on December the 15th**.



BRUNEI TO ENTER ENDEMIC PHASE ON DEC 15

December 12, 2021

Azlan Othman

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar ‘Ali Saifuddien Sa’adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam announced that Brunei Darussalam will move into the Endemic Phase under the National COVID-19 Recovery Framework on December 15.



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu’izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar ‘Ali Saifuddien Sa’adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam delivers the titah. PHOTO: INFOFOTO

This means today and it coincides with the VACONAC 33rd Executive Board Meeting and 20th General Assembly. Thus it is a blessed day for Brunei Darussalam and of course Members of the Veterans Association Royal Brunei Armed Forces (VARBAF). We are aware that it is not the end of the pandemic but we proceed to adapt to living in a new norm.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen.

VETERANS' INVOLVEMENT IN COVID-19 OPERATIONS

Considering the ages and health condition of its members, yet our Veterans Association still permits able-bodied, fit, and healthy members to join the **National Volunteers coordinated by the Department of Youth and Sport under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport**. Our COVID-19 Volunteers have executed numerous tasks and most are combined tasking with other volunteers such as the Medical Personnel, Scouts, 4x4/Off-Road Association Members, the Mukim and Village Consultative Councilors, Neighborhood Watch Volunteers, Officers and Staff of other ministries, public agencies, and private sectors.

We share some of these experiences in the pictures below:



Cleaning Campaigns @ Kampung Labi



Combined Campaigns @ Kampung Merangking



Joined Campaign @ Kampung Bukit Sawat



Installing Solar Lights @ Kg Merangking



Combined Campaign @ Masjid Omar 'Ali Saifuddin



Day of Action (International Volunteers Day) @ Masjid Omar 'Ali Saifuddin



Joined Working Committee (Protocol and Invitation) for Royal Brunei Armed Forces' Diamond Jubilee Celebration



Protocol Duty during the Royal Brunei Armed Forces' Diamond Jubilee Celebration Luncheon @ Tarindak D'Seni



Participating in the 36th National Day 2020



Participating in the 37th National Day 2021



Assisting Head Villages on Payment of Old Age Pensions and Monthly Welfare Allowances (Drive Through)



The Initial Front Liners Team that set up Ration Distribution Centres for Home Quarantined Individuals (HQI) in Belait and Tutong Districts



As Front Liners @ HQI Centre in Belait District



As Front Liners @ Isolation Centres in Brunei Muara and Belait Districts



As Front Liner @ International Conference Centre

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen.

CONTINUITY OF WELFARE ACTIVITIES OF THE VETERANS

Despite the ongoing pandemic, the welfare of the members of VARBAF is still a top priority, and whenever the situation allows (safe), social activities proceed and we would like to share these experiences in the pictures below:



Celebrating VARBAF's 29th Anniversary @ Bolkiah Garrison

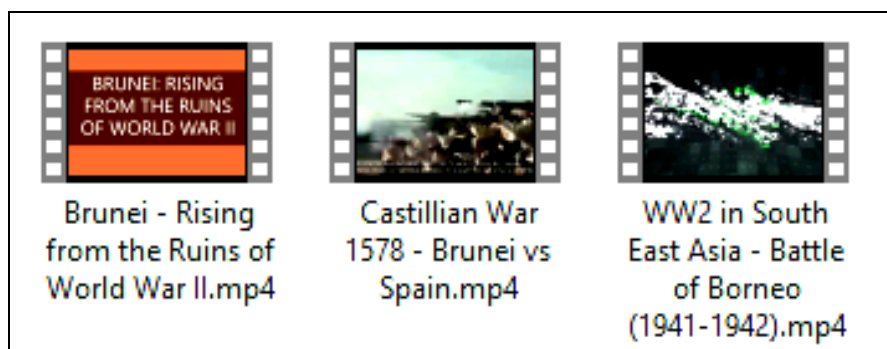


Welfare Visits to Members of VARBAF (In Need)

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies, and Gentlemen.

“SAFEGUARDING AND PRESERVATION OF MILITARY HISTORICAL EVENTS”

Last but not least, recalling the Resolution 17-3 of the 17th GA on “SAFEGUARDING AND PRESERVATION OF MILITARY HISTORICAL EVENTS” which was raised again recently during the 32nd EBM Working Committee Meeting on 03rd – 06th of July 2019 @ Siem Reap, Kingdom Of Cambodia, and as stated in Draft Resolution 19-1 which was brought up virtually during the WCM (Pre-33rd EBM) on 21st of October 2020, VARBAF has submitted three video clips titled The Castilian War 1578 (Brunei vs Spain), WW2 in South East Asia - Battle of Borneo (1941-1942), and Brunei - Rising from the Ruins of World War II. These can be viewed in the VECONAC Website.



Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Before I end our country report, our sincere salute and once again congratulation to the Vietnam Veterans Association of Vietnam (VAVN) and its VECONAC Secretariat for the challenge to prepare this 33rd EBM and 20th GA, well done!

Taking this opportunity too to wish you all good health and wealth so that we all could meet again in the next 34th EBM and 21st GA in Thailand. Congratulations too to the new President of VECONAC/President and Members of War Veterans of Thailand (WVOT).

Kitani berjumpa lagi, in shaa Allah.

“VECONAC FOREVER, FOREVER VECONAC”

Yours Respectfully,

**HIS EXCELLENCY PEHIN DATU PADUKARAJA MAJOR GENERAL (RETD)
DATO PADUKA SERI HAJI SHARI BIN AHMAD
PRESIDENT OF VETERANS ASSOCIATION ROYAL BRUNEI ARMED FORCES**
