REPORT

WORKING VISIT OF MALAYSIAN YOUNG PARLIAMENTARIANS IN CONJUCTION WITH THE ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (YPA-AIPA) TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM AND PHILIPPINES 13-16 AUGUST, 2025

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Malaysian delegation's courtesy visits to Brunei Darussalam and engagement with WHO Western Pacific underscored the importance of youth leadership in addressing shared regional challenges. In Brunei, discussions with Speaker Pehin Abdul Rahman Taib highlighted ASEAN's strategic position amidst geopolitical tensions, the need for safe yet constructive youth expression, and Brunei's focus on Wawasan 2035 through early education, STEM/TVET integration, and diversified career pathways. Key concerns raised included skills mismatch, brain drain, statelessness, slow economic diversification, and rising public health threats such as vaping, cross-border diseases, and youth mental health. Malaysia's delegation shared experiences on economic diversification, education reforms, and initiatives like National Training Week, offering avenues for cooperation. At the WHO Western Pacific office, deliberations centred on strengthening health financing, climate-resilient systems, vaccination equity, and digital health infrastructure, with calls for ASEAN-wide frameworks and youth-driven health advocacy. Collectively, the visits reinforced the pivotal role of young parliamentarians in shaping future-ready policies on education, economy, public health, and regional integration.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

i. Strengthening the implementation of the functions of AIPA Young Parliamentarians (YPA) as outlined in its Rules of Procedure through various activities and strategic collaborations throughout Malaysia's AIPA Chairmanship period to ensure that the functions of this institution are translated into effective and long-term actions in empowering the youth voice at the regional level.

ii. Facilitating open peer dialogue between young parliamentarians and young leaders from various ASEAN countries on issues related to the ASEAN regional agenda, particularly in the field of inclusive and sustainable development, with the aim of building mutual understanding, generating progressive policy ideas, and strengthening the spirit of ASEAN youth solidarity.

iii. Strengthening youth leadership in AIPA by providing broader engagement opportunities and creating cross-border cooperation spaces that are strategic and high-impact, so that young people can play a more active role in shaping the future direction of the region.

iv. Obtaining views, inputs, and suggestions from young parliamentarians and young leaders to support the drafting process of youth-related resolutions to be presented at the 46th AIPA General Assembly, so that the resolutions truly reflect the aspirations, needs, and realities of the youth in ASEAN.

v. Contributing to the long-term vision of institutionalising a permanent, structured, and periodic platform for youth engagement in AIPA's official mechanisms, which will serve as a solid foundation to ensure the involvement of the younger generation in policy formulation and regional development processes.

3.0 DATE

This oversea working visit took place on August 13-14, 2025 in Brunei Darussalam and from August 14-16, 2025 in Manila, Philippine.

4.0 PROGRAMME TENTATIVE

The tentative schedule for this working visit is as in **Appendix B.**

5.0 PROGRAMME DETAILS

5.1 Meeting with Young Parliamentarians of Brunei Darussalam & Courtesy visit to Hon. Dato Seri Setia Abdul Rahman Taib, President of the Legislative Council of Brunei Darussalam.

Objective: To show institutional respect to the host country's Parliament and to introduce the YPA-AIPA delegation. In addition, strengthening the relationship between the Malaysian Young Parliament delegation and the Speaker of the host Parliament.

5.1.1 Key Discussion

i. Geopolitics and ASEAN's Strategic Position

- Speaker noted that ASEAN remains in a better position compared to other regions, but the current world environment is dangerous and requires careful choices.
- Tariff wars and geopolitical tensions highlighted as ongoing risks to regional stability.
- Historical perspective: Speaker's father's experience during World War II was shared as a reminder that today's challenges are different and require readiness.

ii. Youth Empowerment and Leadership

- Young leaders need safe channels to express their views. However, freedom of speech must have limits to ensure constructive discourse.
- Strengthening communication is critical so that youth voices are heard and understood.
- The dissemination of information must be strategic to avoid misinformation.

iii. Brunei's National Vision & Education

- Brunei is progressing towards **Wawasan 2035**; the Speaker stressed the importance of ensuring it does not remain only a vision.

- Education is considered a national obsession; without it, progress is impossible.
- Concern over curriculum relevance, skills taught must match real-world demands.
- Encouragement to introduce **STEM** and **TVET** education as early as age 4 to prepare future-ready citizens.

iv. Skills Development & Economic Opportunities

- **National Training Week** in Malaysia cited as an example of upskilling/reskilling initiatives, suggested that Brunei youth should benefit from such cooperation.
- Multiple career pathways should be available, success can come from diverse skills, including coding.
- Encouragement for cross-border partnerships between young entrepreneurs.
- Addressing skills mismatch: healthy career diversions, for example lawyer becoming a farmer should be valued.

v. Public Health and Social Concerns

- Cross-border diseases remain a significant concern for ASEAN cooperation.
- Harmful cross-border habits such as vaping, some with drugs added are rising which caused tobacco consumption in Malaysia has tripled.
- School children are starting vaping at a younger age; ASEAN cooperation needed to curb the trend.

vi. Mental Health Challenges

- Post-COVID-19, mental health issues have increased, especially among youth; suicide rates have risen.
- Malaysia's Parliament proposal to restrict social media for under-18s had mixed reactions.
- Mental health affects productivity and is linked to infrastructure gaps, shortage of experts, and denial from families.

5.1.2 Outcomes

i. Speaker reaffirmed the crucial role of Young Parliamentarians in shaping ASEAN's future.

ii. Emphasised early childhood development as key to building positive attitudes.

iii. Both sides agreed on the need for stronger ASEAN collaboration in education, youth empowerment, public health, and economic opportunity creation.

5.2 Courtesy Visit with H.E. Datuk Mohd Aini Atan, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Brunei Darussalam.

Objective: YB Shahar shared the objectives of the ASEAN Young Parliamentarians' visit to Brunei as part of his role as Chairperson of Young Parliamentarians of AIPA.

5.2.1 Key Discussion

i. Brunei Demographic and Socioeconomic Challenges

- **Population size:** Small population of 280,000, facing brain drain issues and population stagnation**.**
- **Citizenship:** Even if born in Brunei, citizenship is not guaranteed.
- **Statelessness:** Significant number of stateless persons, new enforcement requiring Permanent Residents to purchase insurance has caused public uproar.

ii. Economic Diversification Issue

- Due to small population size, diversifying the economy is challenging.
- Technological adoption remains slow as Brunei is still struggling in tech readiness.
- Presence of conflict of interest and government monopolies limits economic openness.

iii. Skills and Education Cooperation

- Highlighted Malaysia's National Training Week (NTW), offering free upskilling/reskilling courses for ASEAN under Malaysia's leadership.
- Discussed Brunei's TVET challenges and potential to learn from Malaysia's integration of STEM and TVET from early education (pre-school at age 5, Year 1 at age 6.

5.2.2 Outcomes

- Noted the importance of strengthening connectivity with **IKN (Ibu Kota Nusantara)** in Indonesia to benefit Brunei and Malaysia economically.

- Request made for the Ambassador to prepare an insight brief on Brunei's development and potential role in IKN connectivity.
- Suggestion for Brunei to identify a unique niche market rather than competing directly in manufacturing.
- Potential to rebrand Brunei as a regional financial hub or alternative high-value sector.

5.3 Engagement Session between YPA Delegates with World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Office representatives.

Objectives: Discussion on health as a cross-cutting issue linked to climate change, youth empowerment, digital transformation, and regional resilience.

5.3.1 Key Discussion

i. National Health Budgets & Transparency

- Young Parliamentarians should advocate for increased national health allocations.
- Importance of monitoring and ensuring transparency in health budget implementation.

ii. Climate Change and Public Health

- Climate-related disasters heightening risks of disease outbreaks, food insecurity, and maternal health challenges.
- Need for health systems to adapt to climate resilience.

iii. Healthy Cities & Infrastructure

- ASEAN requires long-term planning for "healthy cities".
- WHO cited Kuching and Johor Bahru as regional best practices.
- Expansion of digital health infrastructure is essential.

iv. Vaccination & Equity

- WHO targets 90% vaccination coverage for children across ASEAN, particularly against measles.
- Proposal for an ASEAN-wide vaccination framework, modelled after the EU, ensuring cross-border access.
- Suggestion of an ASEAN vaccination card and regional vaccination fund, with higher-GDP countries contributing more.

- Political sensitivity in vaccinating undocumented migrants acknowledged, but the public health necessity stressed.

v. Youth Engagement & Health Advocacy

- WHO underscored the role of youth engagement, ASEAN should mobilize young people as health advocates.
- Need to establish an ASEAN Health Policy Caucus where Young Parliamentarians can push for stronger regional legislation.
- YB Shahar proposed a dedicated WHO session during the AIPA General Assembly to strengthen youth advocacy on health.

vi. Tobacco & Illicit Trade

- Smuggling of tobacco products and e-cigarettes remains a pressing regional issue.
- ASEAN should explore stricter controls on tobacco, potentially aligning them with drug regulations.
- Stronger anti-tobacco movements and regional awareness campaigns required.

vii. Long-Term Outlook

- Recognition that some reforms will take time; planting early initiatives is vital for continuity.
- Shared spirit: “We want all children to get vaccination,” as a unifying ASEAN health goal.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF DELEGATION

WORKING VISIT TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM & PHILLIPINES

13-16 AUGUST, 2025.

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1. **HONORABLE DATO' INDERA MOHD SHAHAR BIN ABDULLAH**
   Member of Parliament for Paya Besar
   Chairperson of the Meeting Young Parliamentarians of AIPA (YPA)

2. **HONORABLE DR. KELVIN YII LEE WUEN**
   Member of Parliament for Bandar Kuching

3. **HONORABLE SENATOR RODERICK**
   Member of Parliament (Upper House)

4. **MUHAMMAD ASYRAFF BIN ABDUL JALAL**
   Research Officer

APPENDIX B

Day 1

13 August 2025 | Wednesday

TIME	PROGRAMME
06:55 hrs **Malaysia Local Time**	**Departure of delegation to Brunei** **Flight Number: R4W2YR** **AirAsia** ****2 hours 30 minutes**
08:55 hrs **Brunei Local Time**	**Arrival of delegation at Brunei International Airport** **Welcomed by:** **1. Embassy Representative**
10:00 hrs	**Depart airport to Hotel** **Address:** **Radisson Hotel Brunei Darussalam, 2203 Jln Tasek, Bandar Seri Begawan BS8674, Brunei** ***7.4km	15 minutes**
10:20 hrs	**Arrival of delegation at The Raddison International Hotel & check-in**
14:00 hrs	**Meeting with Young Parliamentarians of Brunei Darussalam & Courtesy visit to Hon. Dato Seri Setia Abdul Rahman Taib, President of the Legislative Council of Brunei Darussalam.** **Venue :** **Brunei Darussalam Parliament** - **Welcoming Remarks by Hon. Dato Seri Setia Abdul Rahman Taib** - **Speech by Hon. Dato' Indera Mohd Shahar Bin Abdullah** - **Photography Session**
16:00 hrs	**Courtesy Visit with H.E. Datuk Mohd Aini Atan, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Brunei Darussalam**

	Getting an overview of the political landscape & current issues in Brunei Darussalam - Malaysian companies/ investments in Brunei Darussalam. **Venue: Malaysia Embassy**
17:30 hrs	**Rest-en-suite**

Day 2

14 August 2025 | Thursday

TIME	PROGRAMME
07:30 hrs	**Breakfast at hotel**
10:00 hrs	
12:00 hrs	**Luncheon Session with Young Industry Players in Brunei Darussalam during break of YOU 2025 at** **Coffee Up, Botanical Research Center, University Brunei Darussalam** **12:00PM: Introduction by Emcee** **12:05PM: Keynote Remarks by Chair of YPA** **12:15PM: An Open Dialogue Session between the delegates and young industry players chaired by YPA involving topics about cross border economy, cross border payment** **12:50PM: Closing Speech by Chair of YPA** **1.00PM: Photo Session**
14:00 hrs	**Visit Balai Khazanah (optional)**
18:20 hrs	**Departing from Brunei Airport** **Flight Number: 171L6H** **Royal Brunei Airlines **2 hours 25 minutes**
20:45 hrs	**Arriving in Ninoy Aquino International Airport** **Rest-en-suite**

Day 3

15 August 2025 | Friday

TIME	PROGRAMME
07:30 hrs	Breakfast at hotel
08:00 hrs	Depart from hotel to WHO Office
08:30 hrs	Meeting with World Health Organization (WHO) - Discussing ASEAN youth health issues (inclusivity and sustainability)
11:00 hrs	Visit to House of Rep. Meeting with Congressman Brian
14:00 hrs	Engagement session with Global AI Council and Young Local Entrepreneurs in Gig sector
20:30 hrs	Dinner hosted by H.E Dato' Abdul Malik Melvin Castelino Venue: Malaysia House

Day 4

16 August 2025 | Saturday

TIME	PROGRAMME
08:00 hrs	Breakfast at hotel
10:00 hrs	Check out from hotel to Ninoy Aquino International Airport
13:15	Departing from Ninoy Aquino International Airport Flight Number: KIJLUE AirAsia **4 hours
17:15	Arrival at KLIA, Terminal 2

APPENDIX C





Meeting with Young Parliamentarians of Brunei Darussalam & Courtesy visit to Hon. Dato Seri Setia Abdul Rahman Taib, President of the Legislative Council of Brunei Darussalam.





Courtesy Visit with H.E. Datuk Mohd Aini Atan, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Brunei Darussalam.



Luncheon Session with Young Industry Players in Brunei Darussalam during break of YOU 2025 at Coffee Up, Botanical Research Center, University Brunei Darussalam.





Meeting with World Health Organization (WHO) - Discussing ASEAN youth health issues (inclusivity and sustainability).









Visit to House of Rep. Meeting with Congressman Brian.





Dinner hosted by H.E Dato' Abdul Malik Melvin Castelino at Rumah Malaysia.