



كمنتين كبوداياهن، بليادان سوكن
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORTS
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

**MESSAGE FROM
THE HONORABLE MINISTER OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORTS
IN CONJUNCTION WITH INTERNATIONAL SENIOR CITIZENS' DAY 2024**

1. Alhamdulillah, 1st October 2024 marks the 34th Anniversary of the International Day of Older Persons for United Nations (UN) Member States with the theme: **'Ageing with Dignity: The Importance of Strengthening Care and Support Systems for Older Persons Worldwide'**. This year, Brunei Darussalam celebrates this event for the 21st time.
2. In 2023, the elderly population in Brunei Darussalam accounts for **10.8% (48,800 people)** of the total population. Older persons are an important and valuable asset, especially for future generations because they bring life experience and wisdom, which often serve as a source of advice and guidance for the younger generation. From a social perspective, the older population has a role in strengthening and stabilizing families, and serving as a bond between family members. Culturally, our elderly passes down cultural values and traditions to the next generation, ensuring that heritage is not lost over time.
3. We are blessed because the Government of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam along with all levels of society, continuously work together to **ensure the welfare and well-being of the elderly, ensuring that this group is cared for, supported, and respected** through a holistic and integrated approach from various parties. As of August 2024, a total of **43,272** older individuals are receiving the monthly **Old Age Pension**, and from this number, **825** older individuals receive **double benefits: the Old Age Pension and the Disability Allowance**. Additionally, around **350** older individuals also receive Care Provider Allowance as caregivers for recipients of Disability Allowance.
4. Insha'Allah, this year Brunei Darussalam, through the National Council on Social Issues (MKIS), and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports, will launch the **Plan of Action for Elderly: Towards Successful Ageing**. The Plan of Action will emphasize the wellbeing, protection and empowerment of the elderly, with the desired objective to achieve progress and inclusivity for the older population in the nation.
5. We must always support our elderly to be **active** and engage in social, religious, sports, entrepreneurial and educational activities. Recently, we were proud with the success of an **80-year-old graduate who has successfully achieved his Master of Science in Civil Engineering at Universiti Teknologi Brunei**. He serves as a role model for other elderly by showing that **age is not a barrier** for continued growth and lifelong learning.

6. We highly value and appreciate the efforts from various parties, including government agencies, higher education institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), families, local communities, and volunteers, towards strengthening the support system **for older persons**. Among the programs that have been implemented are:
 - a. Dementia Awareness Program, which has been and will continue to be conducted by the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Demensia Brunei, as well as research and awareness-raising programs among the older adults carried out by the Ministry of Health in partnership with Universiti Brunei Darussalam.
 - b. **Elderly Care Project**, under the Department of Community Development, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, non-governmental organizations, and volunteers. Since its inception in 2020, this project cares for the health and well-being of vulnerable older adults, alongside providing direct and ongoing assistance. Through this project, the government also provides **in-kind assistance**, such as **milk and disposable diapers**, to specific elderly individuals according to established guidelines. As of September 2024, **46 older individuals** have received this assistance, which is delivered directly to their homes each month to ensure their welfare.
7. This year, the emphasis on **quality care** has become a focus of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports. With the cooperation of various parties, including government agencies, private sectors, higher education institutions, and non-governmental organisations, **accredited or certified care provider courses** will be **offered**, particularly for carers of older adults and persons with disabilities. On this occasion, **family members and caregivers are urged to fulfill their responsibilities in caring for and not neglecting** this vulnerable group, **ensuring comprehensive care and support**.
8. To all older individuals in Brunei Darussalam, we wish you a happy International Day of Older Persons. With utmost humility, we express our highest appreciation and gratitude for all the contributions and sacrifices made for our ruler, the nation, the community, religion, and the people for the benefit of current and future generations. May the noble efforts you have put forth be accepted by Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala, rewarded abundantly in this world and the Hereafter. We pray for your continued success and that you are always granted strength.

Amin Ya Rabbal Alamin.

Sumbangan Warga Emas, Sumber Kemajuan Negara.