

**MESSAGE BY THE MINISTER OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORTS  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES 2026  
“INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES 2026”**

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1. The **International Family Day**, observed annually on **15 May**, is a global initiative recognised by the United Nations (UN) to highlight the important role of the family institution in the social, economic and cultural development of a nation. Negara Brunei Darussalam also commemorates the National Family Day on every first Sunday of May every year as a manifestation of its continuous commitment to strengthening the family institution as the foundation of the people’s well-being and the nation’s stability. This is also in line with Brunei Darussalam’s ASEAN commitments through the Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on the Importance of the Family for Community Development and Nation Building 2021.
2. This year’s theme, **“Families, Inequalities and Child Wellbeing”**, highlights **increasingly evident global challenges, particularly social inequalities and economic pressures that affect family stability**, such as economic insecurity, the rising cost of living, and disparities in access to education, healthcare services and life opportunities. These challenges undermine the ability of families to provide a positive, stable and conducive environment that supports the balanced physical, emotional and social development of children. Therefore, strengthening the family institution must be viewed as a long-term investment in the nation’s human capital development.
3. Alhamdulillah, in Brunei Darussalam, through the implementation of various initiatives, family intervention approaches in the country have become increasingly comprehensive, strategic and focused on restoring and strengthening family resilience. Based on family cases referred to the Family Unit at the Department of Community Development from 2000 to 2025, a 58% decrease has been recorded in 2025 compared to the previous year, from 62 cases to 26 cases. This development reflects the effectiveness of early intervention approaches, family counselling, mediation, and targeted welfare support in helping families address conflicts more constructively. Nevertheless, some of the referred cases still involve complex issues such as child custody disputes, maintenance and financial matters, as well as accommodation issues. This indicates that socio-economic challenges remain contributing factors affecting family stability, thus requiring a more integrated approach encompassing social, economic and legal aspects.
4. With regards to child wellbeing, recorded cases also serve as an important indicator of the need to continuously strengthen family support and protection systems. Child-related cases decreased to 172 cases in 2025 compared to 188 cases in 2024. While these figures still warrant serious attention, the improvement reflects the effectiveness of various initiatives implemented, including increased public awareness, the strengthening of positive parenting programmes, early intervention for at-risk families, and inter-agency collaboration in reinforcing child monitoring and protection mechanisms. In ensuring that every case is managed effectively, the approaches implemented are guided by the principle of the best interests of the child, through comprehensive social assessments, integrated interventions and coordinated inter-agency support, to ensure that the family environment remains stable, safe and conducive to the holistic development of children.

5. The **National Family Day (HKK)**, celebrated since 2012, also serves as a key platform in coordinating nationwide efforts to strengthen family values and bonds. This year, the celebration was held on 3 May 2026 with the theme **“My Family, My Hope”** with a focus on **“Instilling Brunei’s Core Family Values: Love; Responsibility; Respect; and Care (SaTu HaraPan)”**.
6. Various activities and initiatives in conjunction with National Family Day (HKK) 2026 have been planned as a collective effort to strengthen the family institution and to provide opportunities for families to spend quality time together. Members of the public are also encouraged to organise or participate in family-oriented activities, and community-based activities and programmes at their respective family, government agency, private sector, NGO, and Mukim and Village Consultative Council levels throughout the year.
7. This year, the **Plan of Action on the Family Institution 2025 – 2029**, will be launched, building upon the previous action plan. Through this action plan, the nation’s commitment to strengthening the family institution will continue to be emphasized by focusing on family resilience, family capacity development, strengthening social and economic support systems, as well as monitoring based on outcome indicators such as the Family Resilience Index, which will be developed based on the ASEAN Family Wellbeing Index currently being formulated at the regional level.
8. It is hoped that all stakeholders, whether from government agencies, the private sector, associations, institutions, grassroot leaders or the wider community, will continue to work hand in hand to ensure that every family in this country receives the support they need. Therefore, let us all pray to *Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta’ala* that Negara Brunei Darussalam will continue to prosper in an atmosphere of peace, harmony and stability for the sake of the Monarch, the Nation, the People and Religion, and always remain under His protection and blessing. May every family in this country continue to be blessed with happiness, well-being and harmony towards realising a nation that is *Baldatun Tayyibatun Wa Rabbun Ghafur*.

**Happy International Day of Families 2026  
to all families in Brunei Darussalam.**

***“Instilling Brunei’s Core Family Values: Love; Responsibility; Respect; and Care (SaTu HaraPan)”***.