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Report from

Session 3: Human Resource Capacity Development

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REPORT OF THE NATIONAL SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

7 - 8 September 2005

International Convention Centre

SESSION 3: HUMAN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

I.   Introduction

1.1   The third session for the National Summit on Information Society (NASIS) was chaired by Pg Dr Hjh Rahmah binti Pg Hj Jadid, Consultant & Lecturer, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Institute of Education, Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

Pg Dr Hjh Rahmah welcomed the keynote speakers, panelists and audience. She introduced the theme for the session which is *"Human Resource Capacity Development"*. She began the session by introducing the keynote speakers and the panelists to the audience.

II.   Presentation by the keynote speakers and panellists.

2.1   The keynote address was delivered by Lord John E. Shazell, CEO & President, Teleconsult.

He thanked and congratulates the Minister of Communications, the Deputy Minister of Communication, the Permanent Secretary and everyone involved in organizing the event for a great effort.

He listed out the objectives of the action plan of WSIS initiatives. He emphasized that human capacity development is one of the important task in implementing the action plan.

ICT can contribute to universal worldwide. He explained the ICT is the convergence of Information Technology and Telecommunications which is usually misused and not to be confused with ICT training. WSIS's objective for human capacity is the collection of ideas including training, improving technical and professional skills. This involves a big challenge not only for students and teachers but involving the society. He stressed out that learning is a life long process. It should be done anytime, anyplace and at any age. ICT should be able to make learning a long life process. Using the ICT will help people outside the formal education to be included and hence can be benefit not only in education wise but also be health services and so on.

He then listed out the objectives which include developing domestic courses, developing and promoting programs to improve literacy and setting targets, developing distance learning, training and other forms of educations and training as part of capacity building programs, and developing e-literacy for all, taking advantage of the facilities.

He went on to explain that human capacity development is about empowering the local people, launching training programs as well as conducing specific training programs.

He indicated that Brunei Darussalam has passed the stage whereby Brunei Darussalam is moving towards E-Brunei. He later mentioned that the government has to engage to the private sector especially in capacity development issues. It is also virtually important to understand the transport layer and understand the technical capability.

He also mentioned that JTB (TelBru) have, over the years, worked an advanced infrastructure where DST has long time introduced the 2.5G technology and B-Mobile whom has currently launched the 3G technology.

He concluded his presentation that human capacity development is not a cost but it is an investment of the future – when there is a financial downturn.

2.2   Hj Hamidon bin Hj Abdul Latip, Acting CEO, Syabas Technologies spoke on *"What kinds of skills are required?"*

He thanked the chairperson. He will look in an industry point of view in Brunei's perspective. He gave an example of a typical system/application implementation model which involves the analyzing process, designing process, integrating process, implementing process and supporting process.

He further explained the skill requirements for human capacity development. One has to consider skills such as communication and technical skills for implementing such projects. These include professionals ranging from designers, computer programmers to project management consultant. He wrapped up these skills as multi-functional skills. He added that these skills will make people work in a healthy work environment where people are of different skills.

He then analyzed the Brunei's situation. He emphasized the problem of the local people mistreated the private sector where they depend more on the government sector and not interested to play a role in the industry of the non-governmental sectors. He gave some views on education where he indicated some consideration in the re-design including understanding the nature of the K-economy, the structure of the current system and creativity and innovation, He went on giving his views on employment and ITC procurement.

Hj Hamidon ended his presentation by suggesting the collaborative partnership model.

2.3   Mr Vincent Liew, Information Manager, Brunei Shell Petroleum Sdn Bhd spoke on *"Mindset and attitude readiness – is it really important?"*

Mr Liew began his presentation by sharing BSP's experience on the importance of mindset readiness in ensuring success of automation and computerization. He explained the information management and technology in BSP where currently

there are 250 IT staff. He further explained the journey of computerization and automation starting from 1960s until current date. He spoke of servers used, the storage required and the number of workstations and desktops.

He mentioned on the purpose and scope of automation and computerization by which the purpose includes productivity improvement and enhanced communication. He also quoted the scope of automation and computerization which are data capture, processing, storage and reporting, numerical simulation of complex problems, data/information visualization and business process/governance and control as in ERPs (enterprise resource planning system).

He went on explaining the oil industry comprising of the priory to discovery where IT provides the tools to converts masses of raw seismic data into underground landscape for exploration evaluation, in a new discovery where IT provides the tools to assess the best options to extract the hydrocarbon resources, and also depletion of oil field.

He then emphasized the mindset and attitude in the numerical simulation by which team work is very important. If no one is aware of IT security, he/she will not be allowed to use any IT facilities and it is an important issue in BSP. In the ERP, their mindset and attitude requires an "enterprise first" mindset. He indicated that although it is not user friendly but it is business friendly.

Later on, he mentioned the mindset and attitude for real time systems, IT security, assessing the benefits of IT and overall on automation and computerization.

He wrapped up his presentation that BSP has currently has enough IT staff and facilities. He mentioned that IT does not have to start at the beginning of the journey and always listen to rather many point of views rather than working on an alone basis.

2.4   Hj Abd Rahman Hj Md Hussain, Senior Administration Officer, Public Service Commission spoke on *"Is it personally rewarding to be ICT literate?"*

Hj Abd Rahman began his presentation by thanking the chairman. He firstly commented that being ICT literate is very rewarding and it is a necessity since this era is all about the information technology.

He outlined his education background by which he had no formal training and have no ICT background. But with a great interest and attending trainings, he is now capable of handling basic database and maintaining computer hardware and software.

He listed out how rewarding it is being ICT literate personally that he can get Iin contact with colleagues and families using the e-mails via the broadband internet connection at home and at the office. He also found it very rewarding that it is much easier to get updated news from office colleagues and staff which makes his work so organised.

He also indicated that another effort that he had made was the development of the department's website. The phrase "ICT literacy" has been used loosely used especially in making communication with each other. He questioned that if we can access internet and get e-mails, does that mean that our society is ICT literate? He further added that definition is not enough. And achieving certificates from institutes is also not enough to define how ICT literate we are. He observed that the demand being put upon us is increasing that employment ranging from clerical staff to manager requires us to be ICT literate. Being able to operate word processing is just a minimum requirement. They would have to be able to manage data entry and work with data sheets. Therefore, he added that we need to set standard in certification.

He further outlined that our society has the ability on browsing the internet and the ability to produce power point sheets. This shows how literacy is considered as an advantage while enhancing public service delivery

He concluded his presentation by outlining His Majesty's titah on yesterday's launching of NASIS which is calling for us to be more competent.

2.5	Dr Omar Hj Khalid, Director of Planning, Development & Research, Ministry of Education spoke on *"Is Brunei producing enough right & capable people in ICT industry?"*

Dr Omar extended his thanks to the chairman and began his presentation quoting that ICT literates have substantially increased in this country, but the nation have yet to realise the projects that has to be completed and technical supporters and other IT personnel are still in demand.

Institut Teknologi Brunei (ITB), Technical institutions and vocational institutions also provides wide range of ICT training courses. But the number of places and programs are limited. Therefore, there is a need of more places to conduct these ICT trainings and courses. Ministry of Education is the organization that plays an important role in educating the nation with ICT training courses. The role of teachers in classrooms needs to change to facilitate the students with more ICT awareness and teaching profession is no exception. He also mentioned that teachers need training and updates on information society.

Brunei currently is short of local teachers in the IT industry because there have been no established positions for IT workers in schools. He also mentioned that ICT must be incorporated in our learning system which needs to be developed. The Ministry of Education alone is not well-positioned in facing the demand if there is no joint initiative and enough quantity of workforce.

He concluded that with the rapidity of technological change, more human resource is needed. Demand and supply would definitely increase either locally or globally.

2.6	ST Chang Mahathir, CEO, BITEX Sdn Bhd spoke on *"On-line distance learning – is it accredited?"*

Mr Chang began his presentation by thanking the chairman and started off by saying that self study, with courses from distance learning providers, had been with us for many years. This has lead to a proliferation in courses offered and training providers, with different levels of support and quality, from across the globe.

He added that the vast number of courses available online have increased incredibly over the years. Costs may also be a consideration to opt for E-Learning. The needs for standards of these Online and E-Learning may need the accreditation by the government taking into account some various factors such as course objectives and outcomes, course contents, learner welfare, the provider, the learning support and so on.

These online learning or E-Learning would mean that students won't have to attend classes and may be having occasional lectures. They usually do study on their own either by doing research on the Internet or basically making use of the library. He also added that the students have their freedom to choose in terms of value for money, etc. This could be of an importance to the country where it can create possible human resources and create opportunity for people.

Mr Chang concluded that on-line learning or E-Learning is a good policy and an interactive database.

III. Question and Answers session

3.1 One of the audiences raised the question to Lord John E. Shazell whether we should focus the resources on operational and strategic ICT and should the ICT training be conducted by private or government sector. Lord John E. Shazell replied that the trainings are both equally important that private and government sectors to play their own role. It needs to be coordinated from both the strategic and operational point of view. Mr Vincent Liew added that because IT changes so fast and it is not advisable to teach children to read faster. The thinking process is what matters and the communication skills should be taught properly. These basic building blocks of the information age are very important. Dr Omar Khalid commented on the data collecting, storing, analysis is essential not only for the ministry but also for the society.

3.2 In response to the question on how to advise youth in choosing their qualification, Hj Hamidon Hj Abd Latip answered that certification is culturally important in Asia to get a job. Certification basically is important to get into the employment areas which are actually good to keep pace of time where the ICT world changes so fast. He also encourages people to go for certification to upgrade an individual and be recognizable.

3.3 Another question raised was the importance to upgrade our local IT skills outside the country. Hj Hamidon Hj Abd Latip mentioned that not many organizations make use of it. Brunei is slowly growing in upgrading its IT skills. He gave an example from Singapore and Malaysia where they also go outside to upgrade their IT skills and came back blossoming their industry.

IV. End of session

4.1 The chairperson ended the session by thanking the panelists for their presentation.

4.2 Hj Ibrahim Ali, Chief Executive of Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam and also the Senior Special Duties Officer, Ministry of Communications presented the memento for the chairman, keynote speaker and the panelists.