

Published by: The Brunei Times, 16th March 2010

URL:

<http://www.bt.com.bn/en/business-national/2010/03/16/indonesia-seeks-ties-energy-halal-brunei>

Indonesia seeks ties on energy, halal with Brunei



Dr Anggito Abimanyu. Picture: Goh De No

Ying Chia
BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN

Tuesday, March 16, 2010

INDONESIA wants to boost energy and halal ties with Brunei, a visiting official yesterday said, citing Brunei's expertise in the two fields.

Dr Anggito Abimanyu, deputy to Indonesia's Minister of Finance and acting head of the Fiscal Policy Office, said his government is particularly interested in developing ties with Brunei with regards to the mining of natural energies such as geothermal energy.

"It's an area in which Brunei has a complete advantage, much like Indonesia."

Dr Abimanyu also noted that Indonesia hoped to gain more assistance and involvement from Brunei to do joint projects, especially in the areas of infrastructure, ICT and ecotourism.

"We also want to look at some of the Islamic products such as halal branding and sukuk transactions," he said.

Dr Abimanyu said Indonesia hoped to gain more knowledge and utilise Brunei's halal expertise.

He said that the government should provide regulatory infrastructure and an environment in which companies could enter easily into the halal industry. "I think (Indonesia) is quite early in this. Brunei's been quite advanced, so it's the area which we would like to learn more about,"

he said.

While Indonesia's level of investment in Brunei is admittedly "quite minor", Dr Abimanyu hopes to change that with more discussions between the Indonesia and Brunei governments, adding, "I've invited BEDB to come to Jakarta, and (have) open discussions on the many possibilities."

"I think it's important for further collaborations to take place, to strengthen our resources and to help those countries in need."

With the largest economy in Asean, the discussions will "help us to recognise how Brunei and Indonesia can collaborate on projects and investments", he said.

"I was briefed this morning by Dato Paduka Timothy Ong, acting chairman of the Brunei Economic Development Board, on the opportunities and room for joint investments to take place," he added.

As this was the preliminary meeting, Dr Abimanyu admitted that more "technical" discussions would have to take place in the future.

The BEDB hosted the luncheon yesterday for Dr Abimanyu, who gave a short presentation on Indonesia's current economic and investment climate.

Prominent local business figures and BEDB Chief Executive Vincent Cheong were also present.

The Brunei Times