



MOHAMAD ABU BAKAR

E-government Initiative Sets Stage for Widespread Digital Literacy

IC³ ensures ICT training in Brunei Darussalam is valid and relevant

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When the government of His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam introduced an e-government project, need for a globally recognized standard of digital literacy grew. The project requires more than 10,000 government personnel to receive information and communications technology (ICT) training. The Ministry of Education tasked the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Center for Vocational and Technical Education and Training (SEAMEO VOCTECH) with providing the curriculum.

"As the government of His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam acquires ICT education and skills training, so, too, will the workforce," SEAMEO VOCTECH director Mohamad Abu Bakar said. "With this training, an information economy will grow and global competition will follow."

As they considered assessments of digital literacy to accompany the ICT training, Mr. Mohamad wanted to find an internationally recognized certification that is vendor-independent, sustainable, holistic and applicable to daily ICT use.

"IC³ provides valid and relevant evidence to measure proficiency in the latest key technologies for school, work and life," Mr. Mohamad said. "Moreover, it validates productivity in one's workplace."

Formerly a provider of the International Computer Driving Licence, SEAMEO VOCTECH chose Certiport® Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC³®) to verify knowledge of the critical computing and Internet skills required in the workplace. The accompanying course is suited to secondary educators, higher educators and knowledge workers—anyone who seeks a working knowledge of computers and the Internet.

Mr. Mohamad said ongoing ICT development will determine the standards required of the nation. He is confident IC³ will withstand the test because it is under constant review by hundreds of Subject Matter Experts, assuring its curriculum will always be relevant to the latest ICT developments.

The Brunei Darussalam Ministry of Education trusts and has confidence in SEAMEO VOCTECH's ICT capacity, Mr. Mohamad said. As evidence, the ministry subsidized scholarships for staff and teachers to attend IC³ training and to take certification exams. It also recently replenished SEAMEO VOCTECH's Creativity and Innovation Centre with laptops for staff use during training.

To date, more than 1,600 Brunei Darussalam Ministry of Education staff and teachers have enrolled in digital literacy courses. Of the 234 who have completed the course and taken exams, 53 have earned IC³ credentials. The success of this implementation has caught the attention of other ministries and government departments; the Ministries of Finance, Defense and Health as well as the Royal Brunei Technical Services Department are now investing in digital literacy training and IC³.

Such aspiration and involvement from these government departments indicate top leaders want to provide useful and practical ICT deliverables. For this reason, Mr. Mohamad is determined to pursue and implement IC³ as an initial step toward future progress and at a global stage. Participants in the e-government initiative are encouraged to continue to develop ICT expertise and educate their staff and colleagues with relevant computing skills.





The Brunei Darussalam government is developing ICT plans, such as e-government initiatives for the public sector and e-business programs for private sectors. These plans are undoubtedly strategic measures to bolster the economy and help build the nation.

To support to these plans, SEAMEO VOCTECH hopes to open a new center, SEAMEO ICT, which Mr. Mohamad says will become a harbinger center of ICT in Southeast Asia with heightened competitive status in the international arena. "It will be an honor for the SEAMEO Secretariat to realize this ambitious dream of mine," he disclosed.



"We, as public servants, are united in this laudable goal for our future generation," Mr. Mohamad said on behalf of his organization. "We believe success becomes an endless process and commit to continuing to upgrade our skills to keep abreast with change."

ABOUT CERTIPOINT

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