

اينستيتوت قشاجين اسيان



INSTITUTE OF
ASIAN STUDIES

Brunei and Thailand Halal Industry Cooperation and the implications for Wawasan 2035

Nurul Jannah Kosor

Paul J. Carnegie

Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Working Paper No. 87

Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam

Gadong 2025

Editor-in-Chief, Working Paper Series

Associate Professor Paul J. Carnegie, Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

Authors

Nurul Jannah Kosor graduated with BA (History and International Studies), with a minor in Business Administration, from Universiti Brunei Darussalam. Her academic interests focus on international relations, diplomacy, regional cooperation, and international business. She gained professional experience through an internship at the Royal Thai Embassy in Brunei, where she learned more about diplomatic work and further enriched her understanding of international engagement.

Contact: 21b0141@ubd.edu.bn

Paul J. Carnegie is Associate Professor of Politics at the Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam. Trained in both area studies and comparative politics, his interests focus on the politics of development, state formation, marginality, precarity, and the sociology of identities in Southeast Asia especially Indonesia. He has published the monograph *The Road from Authoritarianism to Democratization in Indonesia* (Palgrave Macmillan), the edited volumes *Human Insecurities in Southeast Asia* and *(Re)presenting Brunei Darussalam: A Sociology of the Everyday* (both Springer) alongside research articles in leading journals such as *Pacific Affairs*, *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, *Journal of Population Research* and *Australian Journal of International Affairs*. He is also a section editor for the *Palgrave Handbook of Ethnicity*. Paul has extensive applied research experience and networks having lived and worked previously in Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Egypt, Fiji, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Contact: paul.carnegie@ubd.edu.bn

The Views expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Institute of Asian Studies or the Universiti Brunei Darussalam.

© Copyright is held by the author(s) of each working paper; no part of this publication may be republished, reprinted or reproduced in any form without permission of the paper's author(s).

Brunei and Thailand Halal Industry Cooperation and the implications for Wawasan 2035

Nurul Jannah Kosor

Paul J. Carnegie

Abstract

The global demand for halal products has surged in recent years, driven by increasing consumer awareness of food safety, hygiene, and quality standards. As part of its Wawasan 2035 strategy for economic diversification, Brunei has placed an emphasis on halal industry development. While it has introduced stringent halal certification standards and sought to expand the international reach of its halal labelled products, it has yet to gain widespread global recognition. Thailand, meanwhile, has set itself the target of becoming an ASEAN halal hub by 2028. While existing scholarship focuses predominantly on Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore, there is limited attention given to the trajectory of Brunei-Thailand halal industry cooperation. Drawing on interview data from key stakeholders in Bruneian and Thai government and business sectors, this paper investigates the opportunities and constraints shaping Brunei's halal industry development and considers whether further bilateral cooperation with Thailand could enhance its competitive market positioning. The findings indicate that while Brunei's halal certification standards serve as a credibility marker, strategic adjustments to brand development and certification frameworks could ensure greater scalable trade relations with Thailand and align more fully with the country's Wawasan 2035 goals. The paper provides fresh insights for policymakers and industry stakeholders seeking to strengthen Brunei's position in the global halal economy.

Keywords: Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, Halal Industry, Bilateral Cooperation, Economic Diversification, Wawasan 2035

Brunei and Thailand Halal Industry Cooperation and the implications for Wawasan 2035

Nurul Jannah Kosor

Paul J. Carnegie

Introduction

In recent years, the worldwide consumption of halal food has increased significantly, driven by growing demand among Muslim consumers (Halal World Institute 2024). This reflects an increase in the number of Muslims around the world with the overall population projected to grow by 35 percent by the year 2030, bringing the total number to 2.2 billion (Siti Majidah Rahim & Nor Surilawana Sulaiman 2023). The religious obligations of Muslims ensure steady demand, even amid economic downturns. As the work of Adams (2008) and Ahmed (2011) note, Muslim customers consistently prioritise halal products, regardless of economic circumstance. It is a stable and substantial market given their daily needs and religious convictions with the added appeal of health advantages, cleanliness and rigorous hygiene standards (Elasrag 2008). Indeed, multinational corporations such as McDonald's, Tesco, KFC, Nestlé and Carrefour, have all launched supplementary 'Muslim-friendly' items to serve this significant customer base (Ahmed 2008).

The health benefits and rising demand for halal products have motivated several countries in Southeast Asia to further develop their halal industry as part of their strategic economic diversification and growth plans (Siti Majidah Rahim and Nor Surilawana Sulaiman 2023). Thailand, for example, is seeking to compete with established names such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore and become an ASEAN halal hub by 2028 (Salama 2024). Similarly, Brunei's Wawasan 2035 emphasises the strategic importance of developing its halal industry in fostering a more diversified and sustainable economy.¹ As part of this vision, the Brunei government is seeking to prioritise the halal industry and elevate greater awareness of its halal

¹ See Wawasan Brunei 2035 www.wawasanbrunei.gov.bn

products to tap into the lucrative global halal market (Nor Surilawana Sulaiman et al. 2023). Although its global reach remains limited, it has developed halal certification standards and sought to expand the international recognition for its halal labelled products in food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and health products (Izni Azrein Noor Azalie, & Nurfajriyah Haji Samad 2022).

Thailand, with its established halal industry network and international recognition, presents an opportunity for Brunei to improve mutual recognition on certification standards and harmonize trade infrastructure, and market integration. However, what role Thailand can play in furthering Brunei's ambitions and contribute to its economic diversification and international trade efforts is underexplored. As such, the following paper investigates the extent to which cooperation between Brunei and Thailand on halal industry development can align with Brunei's Wawasan 2035 objectives.

Methodology

This paper's methodological approach is broadly qualitative. It uses a set of semi-structured interviews with stakeholders to evaluate their perspectives and experiences of halal industry development cooperation. The data of which is then cross-referenced with relevant policy and halal certification documents, news reports, scholarly articles and statistical information on halal certification and trade between Brunei and Thailand. It is an approach that ensures a comprehensive empirical understanding of the factors and interests influencing cooperation in the halal-scape between both countries. This allows for a balanced assessment of cooperative relations and how certification and brand development initiatives have influenced broader economic diversification and international trade objectives.

The interview data comes from a purposively sampled set of key informants from the Thai Embassy, the Halal Food Control Division (Bahagian Kawalan Makanan Halal - BKMh), Thai Business, and Bruneian distributor sectors who are involved in halal-related activities in Brunei. While the purposive sample is not fully comprehensive of stakeholders involved in Brunei-Thai halal industry cooperation and development, it is sufficiently representative to give a decent sense of the levels of cooperation and types of development involved. It provides fresh insight into Halal industry cooperation than previously available and the extent to which this aligns with Wawasan 2035 objectives.

Halal Industry Development and Certification in Southeast Asia

Given the expansion of the worldwide halal market, Southeast Asia has become an active participant with countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore implementing halal certification criteria (Norfadzilah Kifli 2023). This has propelled the region into significant player status in the global halal market and a promoter of halal certification regimes (Man & Pauzi 2017). Malaysia's JAKIM (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia) is highly regarded in the region because its halal certification has a reputation for stringency and viewed as valid by international markets. Somewhat similarly, Indonesia's Halal certification issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) caters for its large Muslim population and therefore has been key in shaping regional standards for halal products. Singapore's MUIS (Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura) combines halal regulations with its widely recognized food safety standards. This facilitates Singaporean firms to become accredited centers for halal goods (Norazla Wahab et al. 2016). These countries have effectively utilized halal certification to promote halal export trade especially within the food, cosmetics, and pharmaceutical sectors.

In this regional context, Brunei and Thailand both hold significant potential for expanding their halal industries internationally. Thailand, despite being a Buddhist majority country, has made notable strides in improving its halal product offerings. The Thai Federation's report indicated a five percent growth in the halal export sector in 2021 (Lubis et al. 2022). It could witness 1.2 percent increase in its annual economic growth if it meets its ambitious halal sector growth targets of 4 percent on year (Arunmas 2024).

Brunei is known as an Islamic country with stringent regulations on halal certification and a commitment to maintaining standards in halal practices (Noryati Haji Ibrahim 2022). It has a well-established halal certification system overseen by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA). The Majlis Ugama Islam Brunei (MUIB) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MoRA) functions as the halal certification authority and principal halal advisor, tasked with issuing halal certifications, licenses, and labels for enterprises and goods (Elasrag 2016). The difference between the Halal permit (label) and Halal Certificate are as follows:

a) Brunei Halal Permit/Label: The label indicates that a product or service complies with the stringent halal criteria established by Brunei's government. It is mostly used for branding objectives and signifies halal adherence.

b) Halal Certificate: A legal authorization issued to individual products or food-related businesses, such as restaurants and manufacturers, ensuring that they comply with Islamic dietary laws and food safety regulations. (Noryati Ibrahim 2022).

The Brunei government launched the Brunei halal foods program in 2009 to serve as a platform for promoting local halal products internationally and to counter surplus imports. It aims to promote job creation and economic diversification within the country by encouraging local SMEs, producers, and entrepreneurs to embrace the halal economy. The government-owned company entered into an agreement with Hamitan Marketing, a prominent distributor in the country, to distribute Brunei Halal Foods products across 500 national retail outlets; this distribution arrangement is part of Ghanim's strategy to reduce reliance on imports and enhance the consumption of domestic products (Siti Majidah Rahim & Nor Surilawana Sulaiman 2023).

While a significant amount of scholarship on halal matters in Southeast Asia focuses on Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore, the bilateral relations between Thailand and Brunei on halal label certification and brand development remain relatively understudied. There are limited studies on Thailand's ambitions to become a global halal hub and the potential of cooperation on halal industry expansion for Brunei's economic diversification efforts. As Thailand and Brunei navigate the production complexities of the global halal market, there is a strategic convergence of ambitions for both. Leveraging Thailand's halal production and scalability expertise with Brunei's rigorous certification standards could create a mutually beneficial partnership.

This section's brief overview identified key concepts and themes to cluster the analysis of the paper's collected data in the next section, namely market access, certification processes, trade barriers, regulatory challenges, and mutual recognition of halal standards. Analysis of the data provides fresh insight on the attitudes, varied objectives, and institutional challenges influencing halal collaboration between Brunei and Thailand especially in matters of knowledge transfer on halal industry certification and labelling processes.

Sampling and Demographics

This section outlines the sampling and coding procedures from a set of purposive interviews with key informants. As mentioned previously, data were collected from informants with knowledge of Halal industry matters in Brunei including representatives from the Thai embassy and Halal Food Control Division (Bahagian Kawalan Makanan Halal - BKMh) alongside Thai Business and Bruneian distributor stakeholders. A series of semi-structured interviews were conducted in a mix of Bahasa Melayu and English that were then translated and fully transcribed into English. Informants were coded as follows: Thai Embassy, D1 and D2. Halal Food Control Division, BO1, BO2 etc. Thai business, TB1 and Distributor, BD1 (see Table 1).

Additionally, observations of non-verbal cues, contextual factors, and participant interactions and voice recordings were utilized to capture detailed data for analysis and further its richness. To ensure precision and reliability in transcription, the recorded data was transcribed with the assistance of the AI tool, Turboscribe and cross-verified with Evernote, before undergoing manual review by the researcher. This multi-layered verification process helped ensure the fidelity of the transcribed data remained as close as possible to the original dialogue, reducing misinterpretations or loss of nuance. As a purposive and representative sample, the triangulation of their views and perspectives are essential for the study to build an in-depth picture of halal sector cooperation between the two countries and industry dynamics in Brunei.

Informant Coding

Informant interviews were conducted in person with a total of 10 individuals from different governmental and non-governmental bodies and coded accordingly as in Table 1:

Sector	Role	Code
Halal Food Control Division (BKMH)	Officer under Unit Halal	BO1
	Officer under Halal Meat Management	BO2
	Officer under Halal Policy and International Unit	BO3
	Officer under Unit Halal	BO4
	Religious Officer	BO5
	Officer under Halal Inspection	BO6
Thai Diplomat	Minister Counsellor	D1
	Counsellor	D2
Thai Business	Manager	TB1
Bruneian Distributor	Distributor	BD1

Table 1. Informant Sector, Code and Role.

As mentioned, primary interview data were cross-referenced with secondary sources to corroborate claims made by informants and identify broader industry trends affecting Brunei-Thailand halal cooperation.

Analysis of Collected Data and Findings

This section presents the data from the interviews and carries out a thematic analysis of market access, certification processes, trade barriers, regulatory challenges, and mutual recognition of halal standards. The collected data were categorized into the five themes to systematically examine the challenges and opportunities in Brunei-Thailand halal industry collaboration. As Braun & Clarke (2006) note, thematic analysis is an appropriate technique for detecting, interpreting, and reporting patterns within data. It is especially beneficial when attempting to identify structural patterns, motivations and behaviour underlying general appearances (Herbert & Rubin 2005).

Market Access

One of the key aspects influencing Brunei-Thailand halal industry collaboration is market access, particularly in terms of recognition of Brunei's halal certification, trade barriers, and investment potential. Findings from the interviews indicate that while Brunei's halal certification is highly regarded, it lacks widespread international recognition, making it challenging for Brunei to expand its halal exports. This section critically examines the challenges and opportunities in market access, drawing from interview responses to assess how Brunei and Thailand can strengthen their halal trade relations.

Achieving Brunei Halal certification is recognised as one of the most stringent in the region. As D1 emphasised:

"We think that of course Brunei is a Muslim country who is very strict, adhere very strictly to the Sharia law and halal system. So, what we perceive is that the branding, the certification of Brunei halal food is strong and well-recognized in Muslim world. I think that's the strong points from Brunei's side."

This indicates that the Brunei Halal certificate is respected and that recognition provides Brunei with a competitive advantage in positioning itself as a trusted halal certification body.

However, when discussing the process of importing goods into Brunei, some products are relatively easy to navigate, while others face significant challenges in gaining market entry. Both D2 and BD1 agreed that dry products with a halal logo certified by the Thai government are not particularly difficult to import. As D2 explained:

“When the exporter export Thai food to Brunei, there is this Halal Thai, Thailand Halal certificate. And everything would have to be applied through food authority of Brunei. I believe the procedure is not that complicated.”

BD1 further confirmed the impression:

“It's quite easy because we import the dry food, I mean the dry products. It is easy to get the certificate from the Ministry of Food. They will give each product, if you want to import the product, you must get certificate from the company.”

Despite that, informants highlighted obstacles in market access, particularly for certain ingredients and products that require extensive approval processes to meet Brunei's strict halal certification standards. TB1 emphasized the difficulties:

“Businesses must ensure all ingredients and processes meet the standards, which can be costly and time-consuming.”

Additionally, D1 and BD1 stated that products involving wet foods such as livestock chicken and meat are hard to get approval from the Brunei government as it involved different agencies.

As D2 noted:

“Anything from the slaughterhouse in Thailand, the slaughtering procedure is very strict. But then for the fresh food, fresh products, I think there are more procedure because the inspection team from Brunei would have to fly to Thailand to inspect the factory.”

This indicates that the checks on livestock especially on meat is such a complex procedure which was confirmed by BKM. Figure 1 below details the procedure when importing livestock from other countries to Brunei.

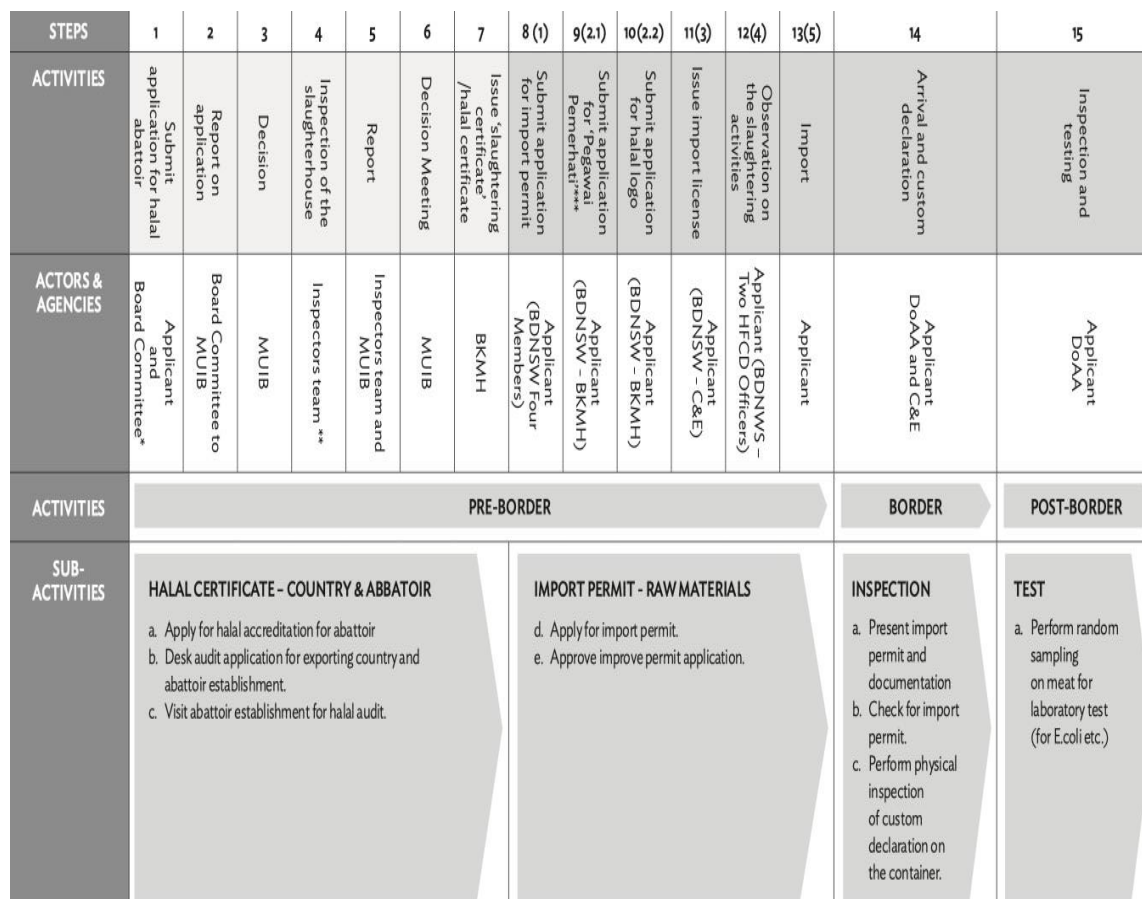


Figure 1. Halal Meat Procurement

Source: A. M. Khalid et al., “Brunei Darussalam: Halal Meat and Meat Products Processing,” in Reducing Unnecessary Regulatory Burdens in ASEAN: Country Studies, ed. Jeremy Gross and P. S. Intal Jr. (Jakarta: ERIA, 2018), 89–117.

By examining the procedure above, it is clear that Brunei maintains its reputation as one of the most stringent halal certification authorities. The complexity of the process can be attributed to Brunei’s commitment to importing only the highest quality meat while ensuring full compliance with Islamic practices. This is evident in the fact that the procedure cannot be bypassed, as it is legally mandated by the country’s legislative framework.

Based on the data, there is potential for both nations to collaborate to address each other’s weaknesses. As highlighted in the literature review, Thailand’s halal certification process - though improving - faces credibility issues due to concerns about consistency and quality assurance. Meanwhile, Brunei struggles with standardizing its halal logistics infrastructure to meet growing demand. By partnering with Brunei, Thailand could enhance the credibility of its halal certification, while Brunei could leverage Thailand’s well-developed logistics infrastructure to bring scalability to its halal supply chain and distribution network.

Certification Processes

The growing demand of the Halal market has led to countries seeking to improve their halal certification to tap into a lucrative market. Halal certification plays a critical role in regulating halal trade, ensuring compliance with Islamic dietary laws and international food safety standards. While both Brunei and Thailand have established halal certification systems, the findings indicate key differences in their processes, regulatory structures, and global recognition. Brunei's certification process is among the most stringent in ASEAN, ensuring credibility but also creating trade barriers due to its complex and multi-agency approval system. Similarly, Thailand's certification process is structured carefully to facilitate exports, but it still struggles with credibility and consistency concerns in various international markets. This section examines Brunei's certification process, Thailand's approach, and the potential for certification harmonization or collaboration to ease trade and strengthen halal industry ties.

When discussing Brunei's halal certification, previous chapters highlighted its reputation as one of the most stringent in ASEAN and outlined its complex procedural requirements. However, despite its credibility, Brunei's halal certification is not widely recognized in other countries, restricting the ability of Brunei-certified halal products to gain purchase in international markets.

TB1 further pointed out that some suppliers struggle to fully understand Brunei's strict halal requirements, leading to delays in compliance:

"Some suppliers didn't fully understand Brunei's strict halal standards, and it took time to find compliant products. The paperwork and inspections also required a lot of effort."

Both TB1 and BD1 agreed that Brunei's halal certification would benefit from wider international recognition, as it would simplify trade for exporters and importers. As BD1 noted:

"Brunei could recognize more international halal certifications, provide clearer guidelines, and simplify the application process to help foreign businesses comply more easily."

D2 echoed the point:

"if they have the right information and if Thai investor, they know the procedure, they know the right direction to go to, it might be easier and it might, you know, make them reconsider coming to Brunei."

Recognizing this challenge, the Brunei government has taken several initiatives to enhance the global recognition of its halal certification. These efforts include conducting meetings with foreign halal authorities, paying accreditation fees, and establishing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with other countries.

BO1 highlighted these ongoing efforts:

"What we're doing right now, which is meetings with different countries, or ongoing communication with other countries to get our logo accredited internationally. In discussion, MOU, meeting with other countries about just to get this logo to be recognised."

These initiatives demonstrate Brunei's dedication to enhancing the integrity and acceptability of its halal certification. Achieving comprehensive worldwide recognition requires ongoing collaboration with global halal authorities, enhanced trade relationships, and conformity with international halal standards. As BO3 highlighted:

"We're not recognised as a CAB... This is the main challenge for Brunei's halal industry to become more recognised."

Meanwhile, Thailand's certification process, approved and managed by the Central Islamic Council of Thailand (CICOT), is a government-appointed body. The process is rigorous and involves several steps as detailed in Figure 3.

Certification Process	
1. Submitting documents to the Central Islamic Council of Thailand	Businesses applying for Halal certification must submit their application to CICOT, where a Halal affairs officer verifies the documents
2. Halal Training	First-time applicants must complete Halal training with the Halal Standard Institute of Thailand under CICOT. They must provide training records to auditors during inspections.
3. Halal Audit Committee	After training, CICOT forms an audit committee with experts in food science, manufacturing, and livestock (for slaughterhouses).
4. Lab analysis	The audit team collects product and raw material samples for testing at the Halal Standard Institute of Thailand, with results sent to the Halal Committee.
5. On site audits	The team inspects the entire production process, including warehouses and raw materials.
6. Approval	CICOT grants final approval and issues the Halal certificate along with a contract.

Figure 3: Steps in the Certification process

Source: Ayman Falak Medina, "Thailand's Islamic Economy," ASEAN Business News, September 16, 2022, <https://www.aseanbriefing.com/news/thailands-islamic-economy-sourcing-and-consumer-market-opportunities/>

Furthermore, Thailand has successfully gained global recognition, with its halal certification accepted in 57 countries under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) agreements (Thongnoi 2024). This widespread acceptance has allowed Thailand to export halal products more easily, solidifying its position as a leading halal exporter, it currently ranks 15th globally.

Data suggest that while Brunei's halal certification is well regarded, its restricted international acknowledgment constrains commercial prospects. On the other hand, Thailand has significant worldwide recognition but lacks equivalent religious legitimacy. Both nations could consider aligning certification requirements and adopting Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) to enhance cooperation within their respective halal sectors.

Trade Barriers

A further obstacle in Brunei-Thailand halal trade relations is the presence of logistical and economic trade barriers that make it difficult for businesses - particularly Thai exporters - to penetrate the Brunei halal market. Data indicate that high transportation costs, country specific regulations, and trade policies affect the importation of halal-certified products into Brunei. Additionally, while Muara Port is strategically located to facilitate halal exports, it has yet to fully realize its potential as a regional halal trade hub.

From the data, the most common trade barrier faced by distributors are high transportation costs and limits on product quantities. As BD1 expressed:

“Bringing the product to Brunei is quite costly. Because we have to pay the auction price, which is quite expensive - they will give a minimum order quantity. That means you cannot order one box.”

As a result, distributors face financial strain due to high upfront costs and minimum order requirements, making it difficult for small businesses to compete in the market. It places limits on product variety and reduces market accessibility, as only well-funded distributors can afford to import goods in bulk.

Furthermore, when trying to enter the international market, the Brunei government also struggles due to the cost and abiding by different countries' policies when importing goods. As BO6 noted:

“Where you have complied to the foreign country's importing requirements.”

BO2 further elaborated:

“It's like that. If we export to other countries, for example, we need to abide by their relations, requirements, things like that.”

These barriers increase compliance costs and delays, making it harder for Brunei's halal products to compete in global markets. However, D1 suggested a potential solution to reduce trade restrictions by considering Muara port as a strategic trade halal hub.

“Brunei is trying to establish itself as a hub to connect the PMAK region, both, you know, as trading hub, trying to expand the Muara port to be a center, to be a hub to reach out to this area- we have technology, we have food, we have everything. If Brunei want to attract, want to gain expertise from Thailand in this part about Halal food, one way is to promote that Brunei.”

Evidently, logistical and regulatory challenges place constraints on Brunei-Thailand halal trade. The main trade barriers identified include high transportation costs, bulk order requirements, regulatory compliance issues, and under-utilization of Muara Port as a trade hub.

Regulatory Challenges

One of the key regulatory challenges facing Brunei is its lack of recognition as a Conformity Assessment Body (CAB). This challenge was highlighted by BO3:

“First off, BKMH, how we deal with the Halal certification processes, we're not even a conformity assessment body. So, we're not recognised that way professionally in that field. Other bodies around the world, if they're a Halal certification body, which is a CAB, a conformity assessment body, they would be recognised or qualified under that. They'd be accredited. But we don't have that currently. So, we still have our own technical regulations that we just stick to, but we're not recognised as a CAB. So, that's the main challenge, I think. This is my opinion. For the Brunei Halal industry to become more recognised, that's the barrier right there.”

This indicates that Brunei's halal certification lacks international accreditation, making it difficult for its certification to gain widespread acceptance in global markets. Without CAB recognition, Brunei's halal certification body is not officially accredited under internationally recognized assessment standards, which limits its ability to facilitate halal trade.

Consequently, halal goods from Brunei need greater certification upon exportation to other nations, resulting in increased prices and obstacles for firms. This issue diminishes Brunei's competitiveness in the global halal market, since some countries prefer to acquire

halal-certified products from CABs that are unfortunately recognized for complying with the standards.

Furthermore, Brunei's inability to establish a CAB impedes the nation from signing further unilateral Mutual Recognition Agreements. Halal certification organizations that enter into Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) eliminate several redundant inspections or approval procedures by acknowledging and accepting each other's criteria and standards. Without these partnerships, halal certification in Brunei remains isolated, resulting in increased costs and complexities for exports.

Mutual Recognition of Halal Standards

Lastly, mutual recognition of halal standards - that the two nations are currently working on – would be a significant step in cooperation. This section explores the potential for Brunei-Thailand halal cooperation, focusing on knowledge-sharing initiatives, economic benefits, sectoral collaboration, and long-term institutional frameworks to support halal industry development.

Firstly, Thailand's developed halal processing industry and strong export networks present an opportunity for Brunei to tap into global halal markets while strengthening its own halal certification credibility. D1 emphasized the potential for collaboration:

"Brunei should not see itself as just a small market of 400,000 people. Instead, it should position itself as a center for the region. If Brunei works with Thailand, it can utilize Thailand's expertise, technology, and market access to expand its halal industry."

By leveraging Thailand's processing capabilities and Brunei's certification credibility, both countries could establish a more conducive halal trade framework, allowing Brunei to expand its halal exports into Thailand and other ASEAN markets.

BO6 highlighted past efforts:

"In 2018, BKMH attended the Thailand Halal Assembly, where discussions on halal certification and production standards took place. These kinds of exchanges are valuable for strengthening halal industry cooperation."

The data indicate that Brunei and Thailand acknowledge the potential for collaboration in the halal business, specifically Thailand's processing and logistics proficiency alongside Brunei's certification credibility and raw materials. Despite the occurrence of knowledge-sharing activities, like Brunei's involvement in the Thailand Halal Assembly, a formal mutual

recognition agreement (MRA) has not yet been implemented. However, ongoing negotiations for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) demonstrate both governments' commitment to enhancing halal collaboration. Formalizing this collaboration via trade agreements might improve trade efficiency, diminish regulatory obstacles, and broaden halal market access throughout ASEAN.

Opportunities and Challenges

There are identifiable opportunities and challenges for halal sector collaboration between Brunei and Thailand. The primary opportunities indicated from the interview data include knowledge transfer, investment and collaborative manufacturing alliances and the prospect of establishing Muara Port as a pivotal halal trading centre.

D1 from the Thai Embassy emphasised the potential for Brunei to expand its reach beyond its domestic market:

"Brunei should not see itself as just a small market of 400,000 people. Instead, it should position itself as a center for the region. If Brunei works with Thailand, it can utilize Thailand's expertise, technology, and market access to expand its halal industry."

"Brunei needs to explore its own potential—what it has to offer to the market, particularly in food, such as fisheries."

"Pharmaceuticals are also interesting. There is potential for co-investment or joint initiatives in that area."

Nonetheless, other challenges hinder successful cooperation, such as regulatory and bureaucratic trade impediments. These aspects influence the effectiveness of trade flows, certification procedures, and investment prospects between the two nations.

Having said that, the distinct position Brunei and Thailand occupy in the halal business offer opportunities for complimentary partnership. Interview evidence suggests that Brunei's stringent halal certification and regulatory framework may instil significant legitimacy and trust in Thailand's worldwide halal market and food processing sector, while the latter's manufacturing scale, logistics networks and export orientation could drive expansion in Brunei's growth ambitions. This could bring greater partnership ties in knowledge transfer, investment and collaborative manufacturing alliances with the additional prospect of joint efforts to develop Muara Port as a pivotal halal trading center.

Knowledge Transfer

When examining the ongoing knowledge transfer initiatives, informants acknowledged that current exchanges are limited but emphasized that efforts are being made to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enhance cooperation. They confirmed that discussions on an MOU agreement are actively underway, covering various aspects of halal industry cooperation and other sectors. D1 elaborated:

“Well one thing I can tell you that we're working on the MOU on halal cooperation between Thailand and Brunei and once that's finished that's finalized I hope that based on that cooperation we can establish more let's say investment from Thailand and in Brunei using our expertise to utilize Brunei's potential for export market-perhaps like I mentioned the BIMP-EAGA region and also vice versa.”

BO2 added further support:

“I think a lot. International level. One is Halal. Because in MOU between countries there are a lot with sectors like there are from agriculture, so Halal is on its own.”

Evidently, knowledge transfer between the two parties remains limited - possibly due to a lack of initiative and formal agreements - however, there have been several collaborative efforts to leverage their respective strengths in the halal industry, which could further enhance their development and cooperation.

Investment and Collaborative Manufacturing Alliances

Although knowledge transfer remains limited, ongoing MOU discussions indicate a commitment to enhancing collaboration. The following section explores another critical area of cooperation—investment and joint manufacturing. Interviews indicate Brunei has high-quality raw halal resources, especially in the seafood and agricultural sector, although it lacks extensive food processing facilities. Thailand has a developed halal food manufacturing infrastructure, processing proficiency, and extensive export networks.

As D2 pointed out:

“Brunei has a lot of potential, especially raw materials. The fish is very abundant. And Thailand has technology and innovation. while Brunei has the raw material. So, if they collaborate, for example we invest in terms of investment, I know that there are some manufacturers, who is very interested in investing in Brunei, using the raw material in Brunei. And then those investors will bring in all the technology, even building a factory here in Brunei.”

While information from BKMh is limited, BO1 cast a note of doubt:

“It involved several agencies for the investment to take place and it’s not only BKMh role to decide and we are not the correct channel for that, probably the fisheries department has a say in that.”

Although collaboration is possible and holds significant potential, informant BO1 noted, it involves multiple agencies and departments. This makes cross-country cooperation - whether in the halal industry or other sectors - more complex. As a result, investment and collaboration may face challenges, requiring substantial effort, time, and coordination among various stakeholders.

Muara Port’s Potential for Halal Trade

Furthermore, D1 outlined additional opportunities for Brunei and Thailand to collaborate, including considering Muara port as strategic importance in connecting ASEAN halal markets.² They emphasized that Brunei’s small domestic market should not be considered a limitation but an opportunity to serve as a gateway to a much larger halal consumer base, including Indonesia, Borneo, and the southern Philippines. D1 underscored the significance of this regional connectivity:

“As Brunei is trying to establish itself as a hub to connect the PMAK region, both as a trading hub and by expanding Muara Port to be a center, this area—including the southern Philippines and Borneo—is a major market for halal food. If Brunei can promote itself not just as a market of 400,000 people but as a center to this region, it would be more attractive for larger manufacturers and investors who want to access a market of 300 million, including Indonesia.”

² Under the auspices of the Muara Port Company and commenced in September 2024, Brunei’s Muara Port Expansion Project is set to add 250m container berth and 88m service berth which upgrades the existing 250m berth quay to 500m – it will enable vessels of up to 50,000 deadweight tonnage – alongside the reclamation of land to support new terminal buildings and facilities. First phase completion is scheduled for Q3, 2027. There was also the launch in March 2025 of a new Brunei based container shipping company *Warisan Shipping Line* (WSL) intended to provide intra-ASEAN maritime logistics and reliable short-sea connections between Maura, Singapore, Sabah (Lahad Datu) and Sarawak (Samalaju).

Given that Brunei's Wawasan 2035 vision encourages economic diversification, positioning the development of Muara Port as a halal logistics hub could bring significant strategic benefit. It would enhance Brunei's capacity to facilitate halal exports from Thailand and other ASEAN countries, thereby increasing trade flow into Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Furthermore, sources indicated that Muara Port's function as a trade hub could draw foreign investment in halal manufacturing, prompting companies to establish production facilities in Brunei to capitalize on its halal certification and logistical connectivity.

D1 further elaborated:

"If an investor wants to explore this market, they could set up production in Brunei, utilize this connection and this port, and expand from Brunei to reach out to the broader ASEAN halal market. That's also another possibility."

Although the data reveal little formal information exchange at the moment, continuing MOU talks reflect a readiness for broader collaboration. There is potential enhance cooperation particularly with knowledge transfer, investment, and commerce via Muara Port. Despite these possibilities other constraints continue to hinder cooperation especially regulatory and bureaucratic impediments to trade.

Bureaucratic Hurdles in Halal Trade

The data suggest difficulties in importing and exporting products. As TB1 and BD1 both agreed importing halal meat between the two countries involves several processes.

According to BD1:

"If we want to import halal raw meat from Thailand, we have to pay the Bruneian officer from MUIB to go there to inspect their slaughtering house. Hence, it's very complicated and expensive procedure."

This was confirmed by BKMh, as BO2 noted:

"In order to be accredited by Brunei, the importer must first submit an application. the application is then reviewed by LMPH (Halal Permit Committee), which determines whether all requirements are met. If approved, two Jawatan kuasa or officers from BKMh will be sent to conduct an inspection."

Moves to streamline the procedure - such as appointing a government representative to conduct the inspection instead of requiring the importer to cover the inspection fees - are not straightforward. BO2 explained that:

“It is already stated in our legislation. The procedures are outlined there, and they follow the legal framework. Nothing can supersede these requirements, as they are mandated by law.”

Similarly, BO1 added:

“Even if you want to appeal, you still have to follow the requirements set by the government. These requirements are established by Majlis Ugama Islam (MUIB) and are mandated by law. At the moment, they cannot be abolished or superseded by any other laws.”

It is a process already embedded within Brunei’s legal framework, and the stringency reflects Brunei’s strong commitment to maintaining the integrity and credibility of its halal certification. While the complexity of the procedure may pose difficulties for importers, it also ensures that halal standards are upheld at the highest level, reinforcing consumer confidence in Brunei’s halal-certified products.

Discussion and Summary of Findings

While there are opportunities for collaboration between Brunei and Thailand, as the data show certain factors hinder the effectiveness of these efforts. One key observation is the differing perspectives of both countries regarding the halal industry.

For instance, Thailand views Brunei as a potential halal hub due to its access to raw materials and strategic location for global halal trade. However, based on the interview data, Brunei has yet to fully realize this potential. When asked about areas for strengthened collaboration, informants from both countries agreed on cooperation in the halal food sector.

Despite its fisheries potential, Brunei still faces limitations in food production and the potential to expand collaboration into other halal sectors, such as pharmaceuticals or cosmetics offers lucrative avenues. The data indicate that while there is a foundation for cooperation, Brunei must first identify and develop its key strengths in the halal industry to maximize collaboration with Thailand.

One infrastructure development project identified as having real potential for Brunei-Muara Port. Thailand has expressed willingness to assist in its development, offering an

opportunity for Brunei to leverage Thailand's logistics expertise. Enhancing Muara Port as a regional halal trade hub would align with Brunei's goal of improving connectivity and strengthening trade infrastructure.

Data also indicate that a significant challenge is the absence of CAB accreditation for Brunei's halal certification authority. Without this recognition, Brunei-certified halal products face limited acceptance in international markets. A lack of accreditation prevents Brunei from signing Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) with other halal-certifying bodies. This places limits on the country's ability to diversify its halal exports. As Kamariah Ismail et al (2024) previously highlighted, Brunei struggles with international credibility. It restricts the country's ability to participate in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) halal markets.

One of the avenues for achieving Brunei's vision 2035 is through improving and growing its halal industry sector. The study findings show, Brunei's halal industry has potential with the demand globally for halal products remaining high. However, the findings place emphasis on the importance of international halal certification recognition, improved trade relations, sector investment and the development of Muara Port as key in achieving that strategic goal. Data shows that Brunei's halal certification is well-respected for its stringency but lacks widespread international recognition, limiting the country's ability to export halal products efficiently. There is further indication that leveraging Thailand's well-established halal processing industry and extensive export networks holds potential to strengthen Brunei's position in the global halal market.

The signing of the agriculture pact at Istana Nurul Iman in 2015 highlighted the shared ambitions of Brunei and Thailand (Salama 2015). The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) emphasized collaborative projects in halal food production, which were further supported by visits from leaders of both nations. These diplomatic engagements, including official visits in 2023 and 2024 focused on strengthening halal industry cooperation, with Thailand seeking to export halal-certified goods like chicken meat and jasmine rice to Brunei (Bangkok Post 2023). However, Thailand's halal certification process - while improving - still faces credibility issues over consistency and quality assurance (The Nation 2024). In contrast, Brunei faces challenges in standardizing its halal logistics infrastructure to meet growing demand and improving the reach of its international recognition (Siti Majidah Rahim & Nor Surilawana Sulaiman 2023).

Enhancing Brunei's halal industry infrastructure through further collaboration with Thailand and attracting foreign investment to create new economic opportunities in non-oil

sectors seems a prudent path, however, existing regulatory and infrastructure challenges limit its current contributions to Wawasan 2035. Addressing these barriers - securing CAB accreditation, streamlining certification processes, investing in Muara Port, and fostering SME growth - could significantly bolster Brunei's global halal market position, economic diversification, and job creation. Table 2 below compares Brunei's halal industry's current contributions to Wawasan 2035 and its potential impact if key challenges are addressed.

Factors	Current Contributions	Potential Contributions
Economic Diversification	Moderate (Limited to food exports)	High (expansion into pharmaceuticals, cosmetics)
Global Halal Market Access	Low (No CAB/MRAs)	High (CAB accreditation and MRAs)
Infrastructure (Muara Port)	Low (Underdeveloped)	High (regional logistics hub)
Job Creation	Low	Moderate (SME growth in halal sectors)

Table 2. Current -v- Potential Contributions to Wawasan 2035.

Conclusion

As this paper has shown, the extent to which Brunei can achieve global market integration is often underappreciated in regional economic discussions and underexplored in mainstream halal industry research. There is a complex set of factors and interests shaping further cooperation between Brunei and Thailand on halal industry development and aligning that with Brunei's Wawasan 2035 objectives. This highlighted different approaches to halal industry development, international trade positioning, and economic diversification agendas. Identifying various aspects of Brunei's halal industry allowed for a consideration of the implications of regulatory obligations for economic diversification, trade, and integration into foreign markets. This provided insight into the degree to which Brunei's halal certification system, trade regulations, and regional cooperation affect its capacity to establish itself as a worldwide halal center.

Data findings indicate that Brunei's recognition in the global halal market is influenced by the regulatory framework governing its certification system. Despite the country's reputation for high halal standards, the absence of Conformity Assessment Body (CAB)

accreditation and Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) currently limits its market access. There is evidence to suggest that while Brunei is a trusted purveyor of halal products, it not a particularly well-known player in the ASEAN and OIC halal economies. There is room to leverage its high halal regulation standards and national branding efforts to position itself more visibly. Data further suggests that further regulatory harmonisation with regional partners could enhance international cooperation and enable Brunei to expand its halal industry beyond food exports. For instance, the development of Muara Port as halal trade hub could facilitate diversified expansion into lucrative halal pharmaceutical and cosmetics markets. Comparative analysis with Thailand's CICOT and Malaysia's JAKIM demonstrates that while Brunei's regulatory rigidity is a strength in maintaining halal integrity, it also presents challenges for market scalability and trade optimisation. Prioritizing compliance over commercial flexibility reinforces its reputation for strict halal governance, but a lack of mutual recognition of halal standards and certification alignment constrain its ability to maximize economic benefits.

Interview data supports the view that Brunei's halal sector, despite challenges, holds significant strategic value as a driver of economic diversification and growth. The findings demonstrate, Brunei is a stringently regulated but potentially influential halal market player. Brunei's halal strategy of leveraging the nation's Islamic reputation to promote its halal certification, differentiates it from others in the region but the data also revealed an array of variables that constrain Brunei's ability to fully capitalize on the potential of its halal industry. The findings indicate that the lack of CAB certification, rigid bureaucracy, and insufficient halal trade infrastructure are kerbs to greater global competitiveness. This suggests that expanding Brunei's halal market share will involve greater emphasis on regional alliances and public-private partnerships, particularly in light of ASEAN halal trade networks and market integration schemes.

A step in this direction could involve the digitization of the certification process. Establishing a specialized online application, payment, and tracking site for certificates would accelerate the approval process and compliance with Halal requirements. Malaysia's *Halal Malaysia Portal* may well serve as a suitable model for enabling companies to fulfil criteria standards more swiftly.³

³ See Halal Malaysia Portal <https://myehalal.halal.gov.my/portal-halal/v1/>.

References

- Abdul Ghafar Ismail, and Mohd Ali Mohd Noor (2016) Halal Finance and Halal Foods: Are They Falling Apart? *Economica* 12:2.
- Adams, Isiaka (2011). Globalization: Explaining the Dynamics and Challenges of the Halāl Food Surge.” *Intellectual Discourse* 19 (1): 123–45.
- AETOSWire (2021). Thai Halal Industry Poised for Strong Growth. *AETOSWire*, September 1.
- Ahmed, Allam (2008). Marketing of Halal Meat in the United Kingdom.” *British Food Journal* 110 (7): 655–70.
- Alwines, Aaron (2020). Brunei halal foods to Be Distributed Nationwide with Hamitan Marketing. *Biz Brunei*, October 15.
- Bangkok Post (2023). PM Advances Thai-Brunei Relations during Official Visit. *Bangkok Post*, October 10. <https://www.bangkokpost.com/thailand/general/2661571/pm-advances-thai-brunei-relations-during-official-visit>.
- Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clarke (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3 (2): 77–101.
- BruDirect (2016). Monarch Hails UNISSA Plan to Set up Centre of Excellence for Halal Research in Titah. BruDirect, October 23, <https://brudirect.com/news.php?id=16594>.
- Elasrag, Hussein (2016). Halal Industry: Key Challenges and Opportunities. MPRA Paper 69631, University Library of Munich: 1-34.
- Khaosod (2024). Brunei and Thailand Highlight 40 Years of Diplomatic Relations, *Khaosod English* April 29, <https://www.khaosodenglish.com/politics/2024/04/29/brunei-and-thailand-highlight-40-years-of-diplomatic-relations/>.
- Halal Malaysia Portal (2023). *Halal Malaysia Portal*. <https://myehalal.halal.gov.my/portal-halal/v1/>.
- Halal World Institute (2024). Halal Food Market, Size, Global Forecast 2024: A \$4,569.69 Billion Industry by 2030 - Key Trends, Share, Growth, Insight, Impact of Inflation, Company Analysis. *Halal World Institute*, March 2. <https://halalworldinstitute.org/en/news/institute-news/item/119-halal-food-market>.

- Izni Azrein Noor Azalie, & Nurfajriyah Haji Samad. (2022). Brunei as a global halal food hub: Production network and strategic relations in halal food production. *Journal of Contemporary Islamic Studies*, 8: 1-22.
- Jitsiree Thongnoi (2024). Thailand, Where Buddhism Reigns, Challenges Malaysia for Asia's Halal Crown. *Al Jazeera*, October 17.
<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2024/10/17/thailand-where-buddhism-reigns-challenges-malaysia-for-asias-halal-crown>.
- Kamariah Ismail, Syahnur Farhana, Haji Shahlehi, Vivi Shaya, and Syahnur Shahlehi. (2024). SMEs' Perspectives on the Benefits and Challenges of Halal Certificate Application in Brunei Darussalam. *ASEAN Journal on Science and Technology for Development* 40(1). <https://doi.org/10.61931/2224-9028.1557>.
- King V.T. and Carnegie, P.J. (2018). Towards a Social Science Understanding of Human Security. *Journal of Human Security Studies*, 7(1): 1-17
- Lian Kwen Fee, Carnegie, P.J., Noor Hasharina Hassan (eds.) (2023). *(Re)presenting Brunei Darussalam: A Sociology of the Everyday*. Singapore: Springer.
- Lubis, Firsty Ramadhona Amalia, Muhammad Arsy R.G.P, and Risya Yuandita (2022). Comparative Study of the Potential of the Halal Industry in Developed Countries vs Developing Countries. *ARBITRASE: Journal of Economics and Accounting* 3(1): 95–102. <https://doi.org/10.47065/arbitrase.v3i1.459>.
- Man, Sa'adan, and Norhidayah Pauzi (2017). The Implication of Differences in Halal Standard of Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei and Singapore.” *The Journal of Muamalat and Islamic Finance Research* 14(2): 157–70. <https://doi.org/10.12816/0045784>.
- Medina, Ayman Falak (2022). Thailand's Islamic Economy. *ASEAN Business News*, September 16. <https://www.aseanbriefing.com/news/thailands-islamic-economy-sourcing-and-consumer-market-opportunities/>.
- Mohd Nawawi, Mohd Saiful Anwar, Mohd Fauzi Abu-Hussin, Muhamad Syazwan Faid, Norhidayah Pauzi, Saadan Man, and Noratiqah Mohd Sabri (2019). The Emergence of Halal Food Industry in Non-Muslim Countries: A Case Study of Thailand. *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 11(4): 917–31. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jima-05-2018-0082>.
- Morgan, Alex (2024). Thailand Aims to Become SE Asia's Leading Halal Hub by 2028. *Thaiger*, February 28. <https://thethaiger.com/news/business/thailand-aims-to-become-southeast-asias-leading-halal-hub-by-2028>.
- Nor Surilawana Sulaiman, Rose Abdullah, and Norkhairiah Hashim (2023). Halal Industry Development in Brunei Darussalam: Realities and Challenges. *KnE Social Sciences*, October 30, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v8i18.14308>.

- Noryati Haji Ibrahim (2022). Halal Policy in Brunei Darussalam. *Journal of Halal Science and Technology* 1 (1): 86–91.
- Phusadee Arunmas (2024). Cabinet Sees Nation as Halal Hub. Bangkok Post, February 27. <https://www.bangkokpost.com/business/general/2749529/cabinet-sees-nation-as-halal-hub>.
- Ritchie, Jane, and Jane Lewis (eds.) (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Royal Thai Embassy Brunei (2022). The Royal Thai Embassy Attended the Signing Ceremony of Strategic Alliances Agreement, Organized by the International Halal Trade Hub & Services and the Cottage and Youth Initiative Program. - สถานเอกอัครราชทูต ณ บันดาร์เสรีเบกาวัน. <https://bsb.thaiembassy.org/en/content/the-royal-thai-embassy-attended-the-signing-ceremo?cate=5d8306b915e39c31b4001e6f>.
- Salama (2015). Brunei, Thailand Eye Joint Projects to Produce Halal Food - HalalFocus.net - Daily Halal Market News.” *Halal Focus*, March 26. <https://halalfocus.net/brunei-thailand-eye-joint-projects-to-produce-halal-food/>.
- Salama (2024). Thailand Aims to Become Southeast Asia’s Leading Halal Hub by 2028. Daily Halal Market News. *Halal Focus*, February 28. <https://halalfocus.net/land-aims-to-become-southeast-asias-leading-halal-hub-by-2028/>.
- Siti Majidah Rahim, and Nor Surilawana Sulaiman. “Role of Industry Players in Brunei’s Halal Industry Development.” *KnE Social Sciences*, October 30, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v8i18.14309>.
- Siti Norfadzilah Kifli, (2023). Halal Certification in Brunei Darussalam: Bureaucratisation in Everyday Life. In Lian Kwen Fee, Carnegie, P.J., Noor Hasharina Hassan (eds) *(Re)presenting Brunei Darussalam; A Sociology of the Everyday*, 35-49, Singapore: Springer.
- The Nation (2024). Fast-Growing Thai Halal Industry Poised for Big Leap in 2025. *The Nation*, September 7. <https://www.nationthailand.com/business/economy/40041263>.
- The Nation (2024a) Thailand’s Halal Industry Drives 335M Baht in Trade, Aiming for ASEAN Hub. *The Nation*, September 24. <https://www.nationthailand.com/business/trade/40041766>.

- Wahab, Norazla, Farah Shahwahid, Norziah Othman, Syaripah Nazirah, and Syed Ager (2016). Contributions of Malaysia and Singapore in the Development of Halal Industry in the ASEAN Region, *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 5(2): 37-46.
- Wannasupchue, Wannasiri, Mohhidin Othman, Farah Adibah Che Ishak, Ungku Fatimah Ungku Zainal Abidin, and Siti Fatimah Mohamad (2019). A Conceptual Paper for Development of Halal Food Service System in Thailand. *International Journal of Asian Social Science* 9(1): 96–105.
- Wawasan Brunei (n.d). *Wawasan Brunei 2035*.
<https://www.wawasanbrunei.gov.bn/SitePages/Home.aspx>.
- Yang Wangli (2024). Thailand Aims to Become Halal Hub. *China Daily*.
<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202403/01/WS65e1381ca31082fc043b9f77.html>

List of IAS Working Papers

1. King, Victor T., Culture and Identity: Some Borneo Comparisons. Working Paper No. 1 Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2012.
2. Evers, Hans-Dieter and Solvay Gerke, Local Knowledge and the Digital Divide: Focus on Southeast Asia. Working Paper No. 2. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2012.
3. King, Victor T., Borneo and Beyond: Reflections on Borneo Studies, Anthropology and the Social Sciences. Working Paper No. 3. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2013.
4. King, Victor T., UNESCO in Southeast Asia: World Heritage Sites in Comparative Perspective. Working Paper No. 4. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2013.
5. Purwaningrum, Farah, Knowledge Transfer Within an Industrial Cluster in the Jakarta Metropolitan Area. Working Paper No. 5. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2013.
6. Evers, Hans-Dieter, Ndah, Anthony Banyouko & Yahya, Liyana, Epistemic Landscape Atlas of Brunei Darussalam. Working Paper No. 6. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2013.
7. Carnegie, Paul J., Is the Indonesian Transition a Model for the Arab Spring? Working Paper No. 7. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2013.
8. Lian Kwen Fee, Citizenship Regimes and the Politics of Difference in Southeast Asia. Working Paper No. 8. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2013.
9. Purwaningrum, Farah, Ariff Lim, Syamimi, Evers, Hans-Dieter & Ndah, Anthony Banyouko, The Governance of Knowledge: Perspectives from Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia. Working Paper No. 9. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2014.
10. Facal, Gabriel, Hyper-centralization of Political Power and Fragmentation of Local Authority Networks in Banten (Indonesia). Working Paper No.10. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2014.
11. Hussainmiya, B.A. and Asbol Haji Mail, “No Federation Please-We Are Bruneians”: Scuttling the Northern Borneo Closer Association Proposals. Working Paper No.11. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2014.
12. Mufidah Abdul Hakim. Pengangun as Ritual Specialist in Brunei Darussalam. Working Paper No.12. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2014.
13. Bensaoud, Mariam. Between R2P and the ASEAN Way:The case of Myanmar’s Cylcone Nargis. Working Paper No.13. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2015.
14. Nurul Umillah binti Abdul Razak, Adira Rehafizzan binti Anuar, Dk. Siti Nurul Islam binti Pg. Mohd Sahar, & Nur Hidayah binti Matsuni, Domestic Maids in Brunei: A Case Study. Working Paper No.14. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2015.
15. Zawawi Ibrahim, From Island to Nation-state Formations and Developmentalism: Penan Story-telling as Narratives of ‘territorialising space’ and Reclaiming Stewardship. Working Paper No.15. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2015.

16. Cuong The Bui, Social Stratification in the Southeast Region of Viet Nam. Working Paper No. 16 Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2015.
17. Sagoo, Kiran, Reconsidering Ethnicity: Classification and Boundary Formation. Working Paper No. 17. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2015.
18. Zawawi Ibrahim, Disciplining Rock Music and Identity Contestations: Hybridization, Islam and New Musical Genres in Contemporary Malaysian Popular Music. Working Paper No.18. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2015.
19. Kong Ho Shui, Digital Memoir of the South China Sea. Working Paper No. 19. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2015.
20. Ullah, AKM Ahsan; Yusof, Yusnani Mohamed; D'Aria, Maria. How safe is Safe? 'Safe migration' in Southeast Asia. Working Paper No. 20. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2016.
21. Oishi, Mikio. Co-existing Differences: Towards an East Asian Way Of Incompatibility Mangement. Working Paper No. 21. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2016.
22. Carnegie, Paul J., Of Social Imaginary and Violence: Responding to Islamist Militancy in Indonesia. Working Paper No. 22. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2016.
23. Rosidi, Imron. Being Active Consumers: Indonesian Muslim Youth Engaging With Korean Television Dramas. Working Paper No. 23. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2016.
24. King, Victor T., Convergence and Divergence: Issues of State and Region in Tourism Development in Malaysian Borneo, Brunei Darussalam and Indonesian Kalimantan. Working Paper No. 24. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2016.
25. Dhont, Frank, Marles, Jane E. & Jukim, Maslin. Memories of World War II: Oral History of Brunei Darussalam (Dec. 1941-June 1942). Working Paper No. 25. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2016.
26. Ta-Wei Chu, Contestation between Riparian People and States: The Sesan River Hydropower Projects, Cambodia. Working Paper No. 26. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2016.
27. Nugroho, Stefani. Post-Authoritarian Discourses of "Indonesia" in Television Commercials. Working Paper No. 27. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2016.
28. Muhammad Faiz Zul Hamdi, Norhidayah Abdullah, and Hazimatula Diyana Narudin, Space, Place, and Identity: How Migration have Transformed Kampong Ayer. Working Paper No. 28. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
29. Chin, Wei Lee. Tourism, Communities, and Quality of Life Indicators in Bali. Working Paper No. 29. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
30. Jetin, Bruno. "One Belt-One Road Initiative" and ASEAN Connectivity: Synergy Issues and Potentialities. Working Paper No. 30. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
31. Maier, Hendrik M.J. Silent the Sea, Writing the Shores – Traveling over the South China Sea. Working Paper No. 31. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
32. Hoon, Chang-Yau. Between Hybridity and Identity: Chineseness as a Cultural Resource in Indonesia. Working Paper No. 32. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.

33. Forbes, Vivian Louis. Re-framing the South China Sea: Geographical Reality and Historical Fact and Fiction. Working Paper No. 33. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
34. Oishi, Mikio, Absorbing External Shocks: ASEAN's Approach to Regional Stability. Working Paper No. 34. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
35. King, Victor T., Emerging Tourisms and Tourism Studies in Southeast Asia. Working Paper No. 35. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
36. Noor Hasharina Hassan, Housing Matters: The Value of Housing. Working Paper No. 36. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
37. Md Mizanur Rahman, Beyond Skilled Immigration: The Making of New Immigrant Enterprises in Canada. Working Paper No. 37. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2017.
38. Faizul H. Ibrahim, Kitchen Anthropology: Understanding Food, Cooking and Eating in Bruneian Middle-Class Families. Working Paper No. 38. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2018.
39. Siti Mazidah Haji Mohamad, The Performance of Religiosity on Social Media: Three Future Research Directions. Working Paper No. 39. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2018.
40. King, Victor T., Tourism and Leisure in Thailand: Erik Cohen and Beyond. Working Paper No. 40. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2018.
41. Munakata, Mizuki & Franco, F. Merlin, comparative analysis of the Portrayal of Rainforests and People in Tourism Promotional Videos. Working Paper No. 41. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2018.
42. Nur Shawatriqah Binti Hj Md Sahrifulhafiz & Chang-Yau Hoon, The Cultural Identity of the Chinese-Malays in Brunei: Acculturation and Hybridity. Working Paper No. 42. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2018.
43. Knudsen, Magne. Agrarian transition and smallholder success through local networks: A case study from Mindanao. Working Paper No. 43. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2018.
44. Huesca, Eliseo Jr. & Fiesta, Margie D. Everyday Voices in Marginal Places: Political Anxiety, Resistance, and Mass Support under Duterte's Martial Law. Working Paper No. 44. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2018.
45. Nur E'zzati Rasyidah Abdul Samad, Malay Traditional Marriage Ceremonies in Brunei: Continuity and Change. Working Paper No. 45. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2018.
46. Chattoraj, Diotima & Gerharz, Eva. Difficult Return: Muslims' ambivalent attachment to Jaffna in Post-Conflict Sri Lanka. Working Paper No. 46. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2019.
47. Nur E'zzati Rasyidah binti Haji Abdul Samad, Malay Traditional Marriage Ceremonies in Brunei: Continuity and Change. Working Paper No. 47. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2019.
48. Izzati Jaidin, Ageing and Malay Muslim Women in Brunei. Working Paper No. 48. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2019.
49. King, Victor T., The Construction of Southeast Asia as an Academic Field of Study: Personages, Programmes and Problems. Working Paper No. 49. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2019.

50. Hajah Siti Norfadzilah binti Haji Kifli, Halal Certification in Brunei. Working Paper No. 50. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2019.
51. Belezaire, Cordelia, Rethinking the Limits of Public Service Labour Casualization in Developing States. Working Paper No. 51. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2019.
52. King, Victor T., 'Wild Borneo': Anthropologists at War in the Rainforest. Working Paper No. 52. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
53. Lian Kwen Fee, Retracing the Political Construction of Race and Ethnic Identity in Malaysia and Singapore: Career of a Concept. Working Paper No. 53. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
54. Mahfuzah Abd Wahab, Performative Mimicry and Postcolonial Exoticism: A Re-Politicising of the Female Body in the Work of Cheryl Lu-Lien Tan and Amir Falique. Working Paper No. 54. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
55. Carnegie, Paul J., On Constitutions and Power: An Anatomy of Indonesian Reforms 1999-2002. Working Paper No. 55. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
56. Mahirah Nazatul Hazimah and Lian Kwen Fee, The Iban of Melilas, Ulu Belait: From Migrants to Citizens. Working Paper No. 56. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
57. Chan, Jennifer, K.L. and King, Victor T., Covid-19 and Tourism in Southeast Asia. Working Paper No. 57. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
58. Zawawi Ibrahim, The Anthropology of Remembering and Memory as Ethnography: Reflections on a Fishing Village and Firth's *Malay Fishermen* Working Paper No. 58. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
59. Franco, F. Merlin, Samuel, Godson, Francis, T. Mutualism between Humans and Palms: The Curious Case of the Palmyra Palm (*Borassus flabellifer* L.), and its Tapper. Working Paper No. 59. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
60. Tong Chee Kiong and Cheuk Yin Lee, From Periphery to Center to Periphery: Chinese Studies in Southeast Asia, 1960-2000. Working Paper No. 60. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2020.
61. Ade Roddiane bin Haji Mohd Rosdi, and Carnegie, Paul J., Illegal Fishing and the Challenges of Maritime Co-ordination in Brunei's EEZ. Working Paper No. 61. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2021.
62. Fadzillah, T.P.M. Adi Nabil and Chang-Yau Hoon, Changing Notions of Masculinity among Young Malay Men in Brunei Darussalam. Working Paper No. 62. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2021.
63. Jetin, Bruno. How will the COVID-19 pandemic affect the regions? A comparative analysis of the EU and ASEAN. Working Paper No. 63. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2021.
64. Yong Suk Zhen, Caroline A., Siu Tzyy Wei and Carnegie, Paul, J., Digital Divides and Paradigm Shifts in the Time of COVID-19. Working Paper No. 64. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2021.
65. King, Victor.T. Knudsen, Magne, The Iban of Temburong: Migration, Adaptation and Identity in Brunei Darussalam. Working Paper No. 65. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2021.

66. Ananta, Aris, Arifin, Evi Nurvidya Arifin, Purbowati, Ari and Carnegie, Paul J., Migration, Ethnic Diversity, and Economic Growth: Towards an Empirical Understanding of Regional Development in Indonesia. Working Paper No. 66. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2021.
67. Lian Kwen Fee, Yabit Alas, Tong Chee Kiong and Faizul Ibrahim. Who are the Dusun of Brunei? Representation and Deconstruction of an Ethnic Identity. Working Paper No. 67. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2022.
68. Muhammad Arafat. Landscape of Grief: Place-Making in Thailand's Deep South. Working Paper No. 68. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2022.
69. Teramura, Nobumichi. JICA and Regional Soft Power: Japan's Legal and Judicial Development Project in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos since 1996. Working Paper No. 69. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2022.
70. Nadia H. Yashaiya and Abdillah Noh. Public Service Motivation in an Ethnically Heterogeneous Society: Towards a New Conceptual Framework. Working Paper No. 70. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2022.
71. Ta-Wei Chu and Carnegie, Paul J. Reflections on a Livelihood Study of Sesan Riverine Communities in Cambodia and the Challenges of Transdisciplinary Research in the Global South. Working Paper No. 71. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2022.
72. Arensen, Lisa. Speaking for the Spirits: A Reflection on Knowledge, Expertise, and Methodology in Ethnographic Fieldwork on Religion. Working Paper No. 72. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2023.
73. Kelley, Liam C. Revisiting the Chinese Sources on Early Southeast Asian History. Working Paper No. 73. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2023.
74. Ooi Keat Gin. A Compendium of Armed Conflicts in Southeast Asia: In Search of Typology. Working Paper No. 74. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2023.
75. Lian Kwen Fee. Identity Matters: Methodological Travails from Malaysia to Indonesia. Working Paper No. 75. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2023.
76. Dk Nur Hazirah Pg Hassani. Women as Agents of Patriarchy in *The Girl from the Coast* (1991) by Pramoedya Ananta Toer. Working Paper No. 76. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2023.
77. Carnegie, Paul J. Precarity Matters: Conceptual Travails in Southeast Asia. Working Paper No. 77. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2024.
78. Mohammad Adi and Muhammad Arafat. Rolling Heritage: Gulintangan as inalienable gift in Brunei Darussalam. Working Paper No. 78. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2024.
79. King Victor T. Covid-19 and Post-Covid Transitions: Case Material from the Lao People's Democratic Republic in a Southeast Asian Context. Working Paper No. 79. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2024.
80. Amirah Japar. Polygamy in Brunei: Examining the Family Structure and Experiences of Half-Siblings. Working Paper No. 80. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2024.
81. Lee Cheuk Yin. Wisdom of the East: Zheng He and his Maritime Expeditions. Working Paper No. 81. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2024.

82. Siti Nurfarina Hasriana and Sin Yee Koh. University Graduates and Online Food Entrepreneurship in Brunei Darussalam. IAS Working Paper No. 82. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2025.
83. Hjh Nur Hazirah Hj Awang Hamdani. Living with Landslide Risk in Penanjong, Tutong. IAS Working Paper No. 83. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2025.
84. Westly Lo Siong Wei. Doing Fieldwork on Indonesian Chinese Migrant Workers in Brunei Darussalam. IAS Working Paper No. 84. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2025.
85. Ili Arina Zainul. Urang versus Orang: The frequency of Bruneian students' use of Standard and Brunei Malay. IAS Working Paper No. 85. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2025.
86. Lee Cheuk Yin. Ong Sum Ping and the Early History of Borneo in Chinese Sources. IAS Working Paper No. 86. Gadong: Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam 2025.