APEC Telecenter Training

COUNTRY REPORT :
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM'S INITIATIVES IN
BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AiTi)

www.aiti.gov.bn

Brunei Darussalam in brief

- Capital City: *Bandar Seri Begawan*
- Area : *5,765 square Km*
- Population: *348,800 (December 2003)*

ICT industry players

- Ministry of Communications - Policy maker;

- Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AiTi) – Regulator;

- Brunei Darussalam National IT Council (BIT Council) – provides the supporting role in the implementation of e-Government, e-Business and e-Brunei Darussalam; and

- Telecoms Department and DST Communications – Operators and service providers.

AiTi in brief

The Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam (AiTi) was established by the Authority For Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam Order, 2001 **(**"AiTi Order"**)**.
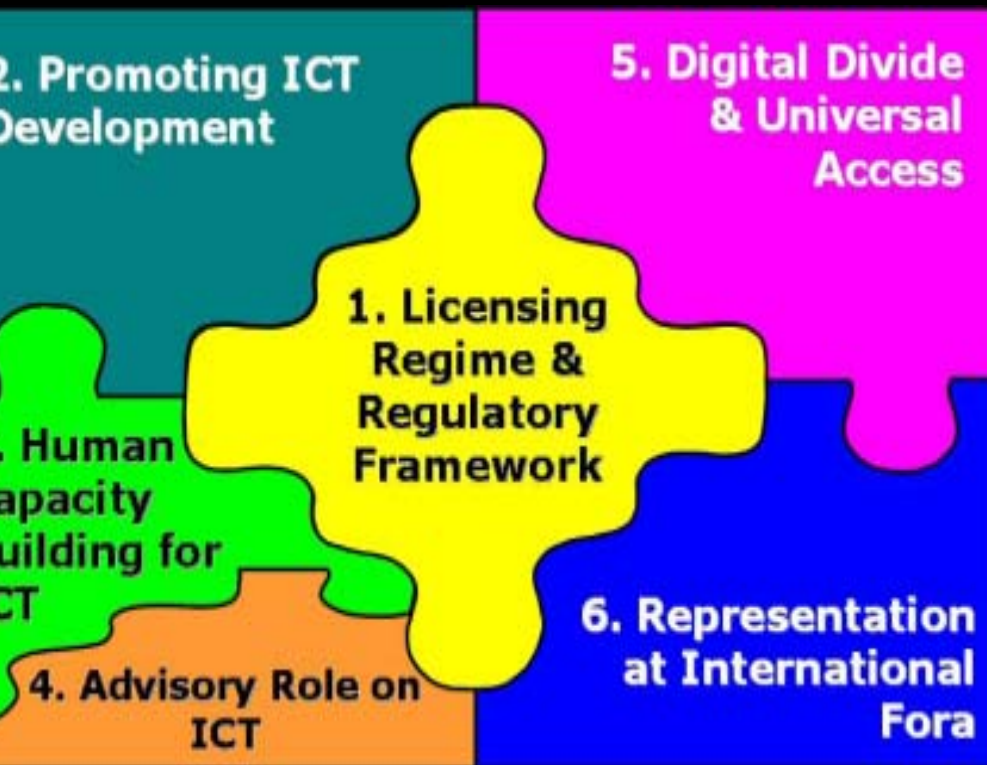
AiTi is an independent statutory body responsible for regulating and developing Brunei's ICT industry.

AiTi commenced operations on 1st January 2003.

AiTi replaces the Telecommunications Department as the Authority which regulates and develops the local ICT industry.

AiTi aims to contribute towards the diversification and development of the economy through the development and growth of the local ICT industry.

Addressing The Digital Divide

2. Promoting ICT Development

5. Digital Divide & Universal Access

1. Licensing Regime & Regulatory Framework

Human Capacity Building for ICT

4. Advisory Role on ICT

6. Representation at International Fora

- AiTi has set up the Industry Development and Human Capacity Building Group to address the issue of Digital Divide.

- Digital Divide and Universal Access is one of AiTi's six Key Thrust Areas.

AiTi Key Thrust Area

5. Digital Divide & Universal Access

- **Regulatory framework to designate Service Providers to provide US+ (such as voice & internet access).**

- **Increase PC penetration ratio through ownership of budget PCs for low income earners via special projects.**

- **Jointly developing ICT based curriculums with relevant institutions to stimulate the use of PCs for course study etc.**
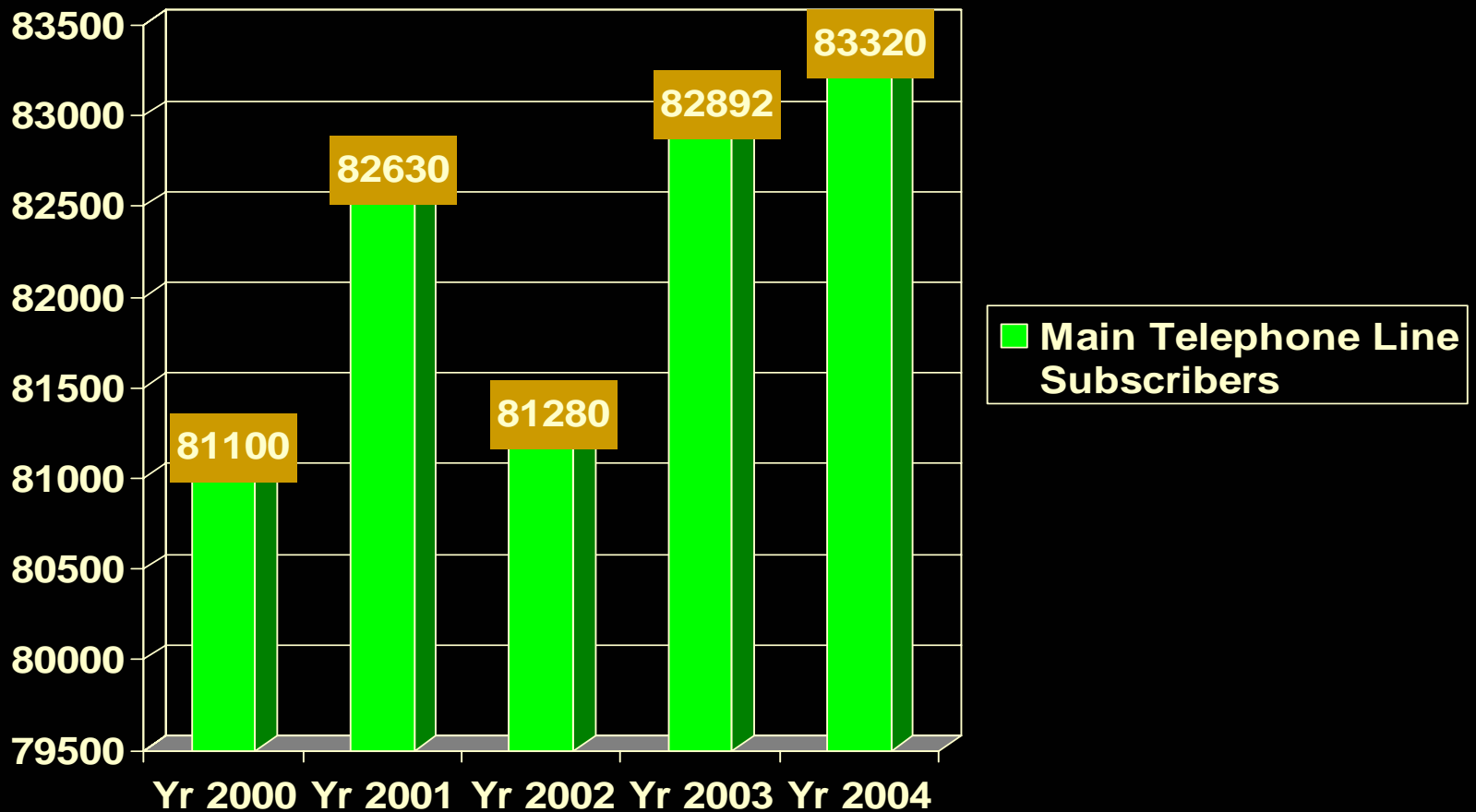
Universal Service Obligation

- *A nationwide rural communication project*
- **AFFECTED AREAS** : **Temburong, Tutong and Belait**

District	Cost (B$)	No. of subs	Completion date
Temburong	2.9m	110	May 2001
Tutong	2.2m	227	May 2001
Belait	4m	185	April 2002

- **PROJECT FULLY COMPLETED: year 2002**
- **OUTCOME OF PROJECT**: **Rural community in all three districts are connected with the rest of the country**

Fixed Telephone Line

Telephone lines vs. Households in Brunei Darussalam
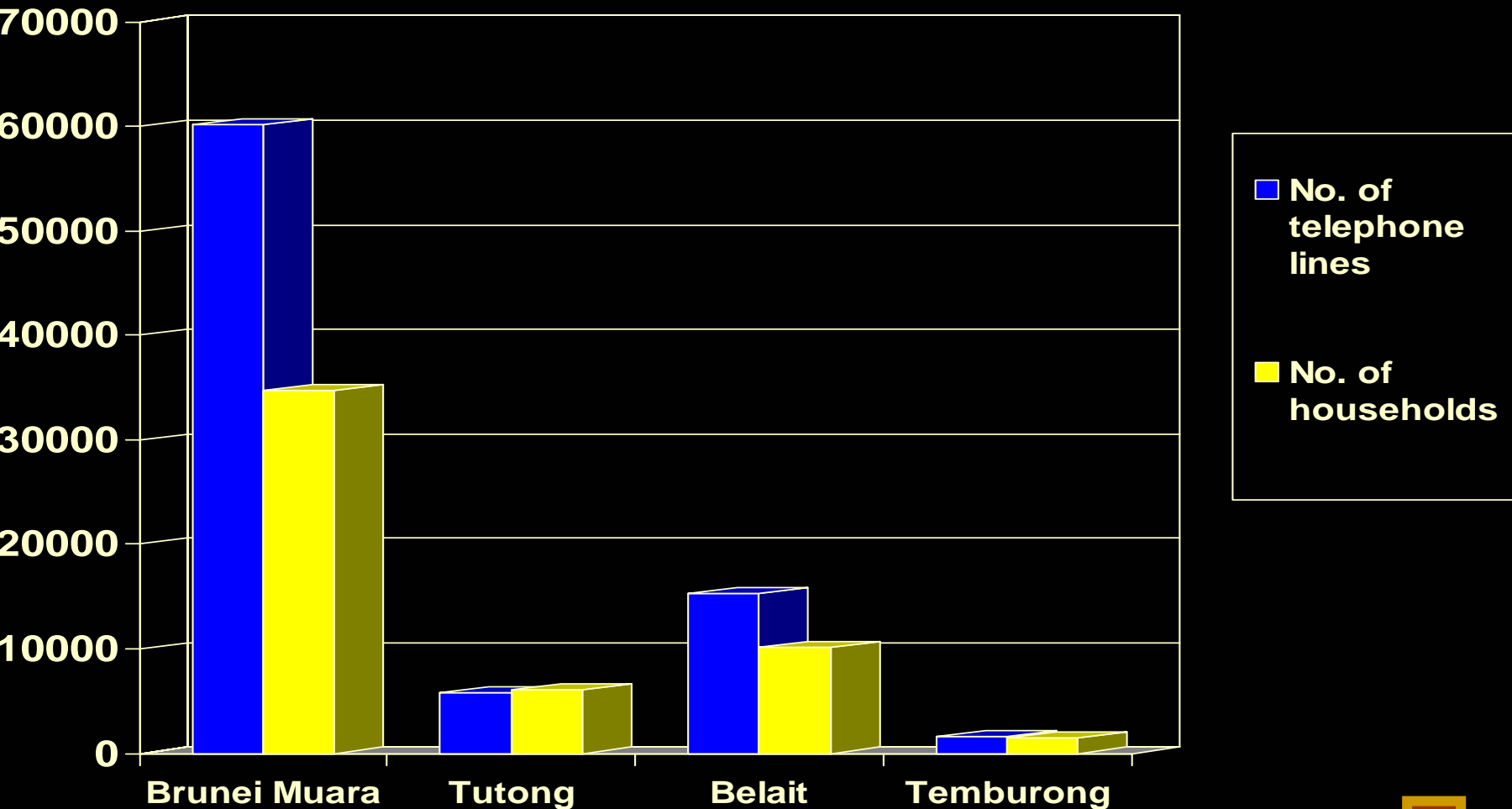
Source: Telecommunications Department, JTB

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Universal Service

LOCATION OF EXCHANGES

41 local exchanges (Fully digital) 80,000 fixed lines

LEGEND :
- 6ESS GATEWAY EXCHANGE
- 6ESS TANDEM EXCHANGE
- 6ESS HOST EXCHANGE
- EWSD HOST EXCHANGE
- 6ESS REMOTE EXCHANGE
- EWSD REMOTE EXCHANGE
- EWSD RSDLU

Brunei has achieved the aim of providing the basic communication services to the public.
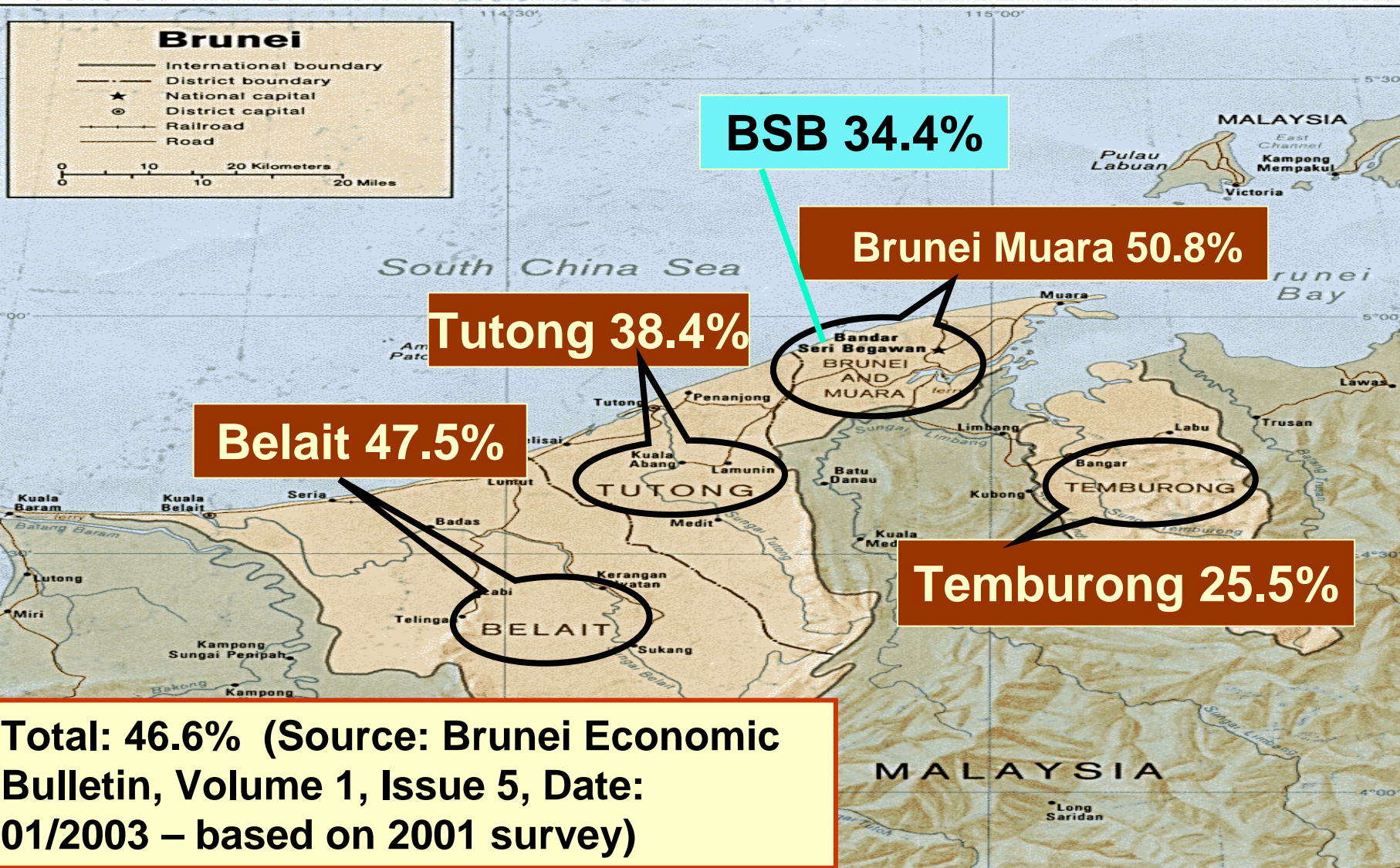
Digital Divide in Brunei Darussalam

- To bridge digital divide in Brunei Darussalam is to encourage Internet usage among the society using existing infrastructure

- To educate the public on maximising Internet usage

Internet : Rural Areas

- **Apart from providing basic telephony, the rural areas are also provided with the internet access through the dial up at speed of up to 56 kbps.**

PC Ownership in Brunei Darussalam
(per private household)

BSB 34.4%

Brunei Muara 50.8%

Tutong 38.4%

Belait 47.5%

Temburong 25.5%

Total: 46.6% (Source: Brunei Economic Bulletin, Volume 1, Issue 5, Date: 01/2003 – based on 2001 survey)

Internet Access

- Post Paid Internet Penetration is about 30%

- Public Access via Cybercafes and other Community Services such as Post Office.

- The number of cybercafes has been increasing.To date, 76 cybercafes registered in Brunei Darussalam

Mukim.Net

- Under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**
- One of E-Brunei Strategic Initiatives
- Status of Mukim.Net: To be implemented in the near future
- How?: Setting up strategically located centres at each mukim
  - **Providing advice to potential business community on the effective use of technology eg- on-line business, consultancy & IT services, training Courses, Forums & Workshops, Promotion & marketing of Mukim/Kampong Products**
  - **Providing general community services- eg e-voting of Penghulu & Ketua Kampong, lingkages to other sites, access to equipment & facilities-photocopying, scanning & printing.**

Mukim.Net

- **Target Customers/ Users:**
  - Parents
  - Students
  - Housewives, Retirees, Unemployed
  - Self-employed, Small Business People
  - Penghulu & Ketua Kampong
- **Objectives**
  - To create a knowledge based and information rich country
  - To improve the standard of living esp. in rural areas
  - To enable public access at anytime, anywhere, anyhow
  - To enable communications and interactions through electronic and multimedia channels

Internet for Schools project

- Under the **Ministry of Education**
- Launched in 2002 as one of the projects under the "Short Term Economic Recovery Project"
- Status of Internet for Schools: Nearly 100% implemented
- How?:
  - **Providing Internet Connectivity & Accessibility for all Secondary and Primary Schools in Brunei Darussalam**
  - **Providing computer hardware and software for secondary and primary schools where computers are provided for Internet access at the administration room and library of each school to be used by the school's staffs and students.**
  - **Providing computer hardware and software for ICT Services and Resource Centre in the Ministry of Education.**

Business and Entrepreneurs Development Centre

- Under the **Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources**
- Status : on going since 1999
- How?:
  - **Conducting ICT courses to support the development of SMEs**
  - **Targeted participants are SMEs, retirees, unemployed graduates and those intending to set up their own business**
  - **Courses offered ranging from basic Microsoft courses, web designs and programming and courses on e-commerce and marketing.**

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Summary

- Although, there is no 'telecenters' in Brunei Darussalam yet, but initiatives to bridge digital divide have been actively pursued by various agencies

- To explore possibilities of engaging collaborative work to reduce the digital gap, particularly in the rural areas.

- Telecenters can be considered as one of the methods to reduce digital gap in rural areas.

THANK YOU

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