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Sultan hopes Islamic education meet contributes to global ecosystem

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His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam

expressed hope that the International Conference of Islamic Universities (ICIU) will make a significant contribution to the global Islamic higher education institution ecosystem.

The monarch said this during a titah at the opening of the conference at The Empire Brunei, Jerudong yesterday.

His Majesty also noted that Islamic higher learning institutions have existed for over 1,000 years, long before their Western counterparts, with Al-Qarawiyyin University in Morocco and Al-Azhar University in Egypt having been the centres of knowledge since the

9th and 10th Centuries. "These two universities," the monarch said, "have produced a great number of academicians and Islamic scholars, who specialise in medicine, mathematics, engineering and technology."

His Majesty added, "It is undisputed that these education centres have produced scholars who are *Huffaz* Al-Quran before exploring their chosen fields of expertise and making contribution to civilisation.

"The education system adopted by these universities has retained its relevancy until this day, because they have produced graduates who have gone on to become great thinkers that are cognisant of the global community."

The monarch hoped that the gathering of Islamic scholars will create a platform on which to find a way to further honour Islamic higher education institutions, particularly amid the challenges faced by their graduates.

His Majesty also noted the potential of Universiti Islam Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA) in aligning the university with its established objectives.

However, programmes offered "must not solely focus on basic knowledge of *Fardhu Ain* but also meet the needs of *Fardhu Kifayah*".



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam during the exhibition yesterday. PHOTO: MUIZ MATDANI



His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Al-Marhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien Sa'adul Khairi Waddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam delivers a titah. PHOTO: BAHYIAH BAKIR

As such, the monarch called on the university to expand its curriculum to include fields such as agriculture, science and technology, which His Majesty described as the "pulse of life of the 21st Century".

Nonetheless, the monarch commended the university for its efforts in collaborating with the Asian Islamic Universities Association (AIUA) in organising the ICIU 2023 as well as the 13th AIUA general meeting.