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CSPS expanding mandate to become global think tank

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| James Kon |

CENTRE for Strategic and Policy Studies (CSPS), a government-funded corporate body set up to undertake independent and objective policy research and analysis on strategic issues concerning Brunei Darussalam, is expanding its mandate to be an internationally recognised 'Foresight Think Tank'.

"In view of an increasingly uncertain and rapidly changing society, policymakers have started to adopt foresight analysis instead of a business as usual approach," said Dr Diana Cheong, Chief Researcher of CSPS, on the sidelines of the Forum on Strategic Foresight and Horizon Scanning for Policy Making.

Foresight studies, she said, "create alternative futures by making basic policy assumptions problematic. In questioning the future through the analysis of emerging issues and scenarios, the objective is to improve our current scenario by creating policy options for new and more desirable futures, especially those based on our Wawasan 2035 objectives."

Explaining the new mandate, she said, "This expertise is an addition and a value-added dimension to CSPS's flagship as the premier think tank for strategic policy studies on Brunei Darussalam."

Dr Cheong further stated that a number of work tasks have been identified and CSPS will try to carry them out as suggested by Dato Paduka Awang Haji Mohamad Roselan bin Haji Mohamad Daud, Acting Minister at the Prime Minister's Office at the forum.

Outlining the work tasks towards the new mandate, she said, "Firstly, CSPS aims to build foresight capacity into its existing policy research and advisory role, while secondly, it seeks to build expert knowledge and capacity in the application of foresight and horizon scanning methodologies that can be disseminated across Brunei.

"Thirdly, it aims to support the application of foresight in policy making by running foresight workshops in collaboration with the government and the community," Dr Cheong said.

As the fourth task, CSPS aims to develop a CSPS-based foresight network that can address specific strategic challenges for Brunei.

Finally, as its fifth task, Dr Cheong said, "CSPS aims to collaborate with researchers and experts locally and from around the world to build a more international outlook, (so as) to build up its expertise with alternative foresight understanding."