



SARAWAK

BAHÁ'Í NEWSLETTER

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Message from the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Sarawak

To the Baha'is of Sarawak

Dearly loved Friends,

By the time you read this message, the fasting period has just ended and the friends are celebrating Naw-Ruz, which has been designated by Baha'u'llah as a feast to mark the end of fasting. We are most pleased that, through the diligent effort of a few dedicated friends, the day of Naw-Ruz on 21 March has once again appeared in the Sarawak Government Almanac and marked as the Baha'i New Year.

As the beloved Guardian has written that the fasting period serves "to refresh and reinvigorate the spiritual forces latent" in our soul, we feel confident that the friends are now spiritually ready for the next Five Year Plan, which will be launched by the beloved Universal House of Justice this coming Ridvan in April 2011. Our beloved Supreme Body has already given us a year to prepare for this Plan, which is "the next stage of the great enterprise on which the Baha'i world is embarked" for the "transformation of humanity" as envisioned by Bahá'u'lláh.

Towards this end, the beloved House has lovingly, in its letter dated 1 Jan 2011 to every one of us, called upon every Baha'i to "resolve to make this global enterprise a personal concern and become as occupied with the well-being of the human family as you are with that of your dearest kin". In the same letter, it has also called upon the friends to thoughtfully study the features of the Plan as set out in its 28 Dec 2010 letter to the Conference of the Continental Board of Counsellors.

A national institutional meeting was recently held in Kuching on 25 – 27 Feb to study this message. Among the 53 participants attending were Counsellors George Soraya and Ircham Sujadmiko, 8 members of your Spiritual Assembly and 5 Auxiliary Board members. Similar studies are being planned at the regional and cluster levels. We strongly urge the friends to avail themselves to attend any one of these gatherings, which the House has even encouraged to be held "in local communities, in neighbourhoods and villages, or in the home".

We have every confidence that the friends will step up to the challenges of the next Plan and be assured of victories because the beloved Supreme Body has in its 1 Jan 2011 letter assured us that we "posses a potent instrument for spiritually empowering the masses of humanity to take charge of their own destiny, an instrument tempered in the crucible of experience".

Shake off your lethargy, be cheered and revived for action with this call of Bahá'u'lláh: "I am the Sun of Wisdom and the Ocean of Knowledge. I cheer the faint and revive the dead. I am the guiding Light that illumineth the way. I am the royal Falcon on the arm of the Almighty. I unfold the drooping of every broken bird and start it on its flight".

A Joyous Naw-Ruz to every follower of the Blessed Beauty in Sarawak!

With loving greetings,
Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of Sarawak

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

1 January 2011

To the Bahá'ís of the World

Dearly loved Friends,

For the past five days, the Continental Counsellors have been gathered in conference in the Holy Land, engaged in earnest deliberation at once insightful and clear visioned, well grounded and confident, on the progress of the Divine Plan. The joy and wonder of this gathering, now entering its closing moments, has come from the vivid retelling of your numerous exploits, deeds which secured the astonishing attainment of the goal of the Five Year Plan one year early. It is hard to express in words how much love for you has been shown in these few, fleeting days. We praise God that He has raised up a community so accomplished and render thanks to Him for releasing your marvellous potentialities. You it is who, whether in collective endeavours or individual efforts, are presenting the verities of the Faith and assisting souls to recognize the Blessed Beauty. You it is who, in your tens of thousands, are serving as tutors of study circles wherever receptivity is kindled. You it is who, without thought of self, are providing spiritual education to the child and kindly fellowship to the junior youth. You it is who, through visits to homes and invitations to yours, are forging ties of spiritual kinship that foster a sense of community. You it is who, when called to serve on the institutions and agencies of the Cause, are accompanying others and rejoicing in their achievements. And it is all of us, whatever our share in this undertaking, who labour and long, strive and supplicate for the transformation of humanity, envisioned by Bahá'u'lláh, to be hastened.

A new five-year horizon now beckons, rich with portent. The features of the Plan that will begin this Ridvan are set out in a letter we addressed to the Counsellors Conference at its opening session and which was transmitted to National Spiritual Assemblies the same day. We hope that you will be able to give it thoughtful study, alongside the message we addressed to you at Ridvan 2010, at gathering of all kinds—whether at the national, regional, or cluster level, in local communities, in neighbourhoods and villages, or in the home. We are certain that, through the consultations about the Plan in which you participate, your understanding will deepen and, conscious of the spiritual forces that support you, you will resolve to make this global enterprise a personal concern and become as occupied with the well-being of the human family as you are with that your dearest kin. It brings us great joy that so many souls throughout the Bahá'í community are ready to thus distinguish themselves. But what gratifies us beyond this is the certain knowledge that victories will be won in the next five years by youth and adults, men and women, who may at present be wholly unaware of Bahá'u'lláh's coming, much less acquainted with the “society-building power” of His Faith. For you possess a potent instrument for spiritually empowering the masses of humanity to take charge of their own destiny, an instrument tempered in the crucible of experience. You know well, and have heard clearly, the call of Bahá'u'lláh: “I am the Sun of Wisdom and the Ocean of Knowledge. I cheer the faint and revive the dead. I am the guiding Light that illumineth the way. I am the royal Falcon on the arm of the Almighty. I unfold the drooping wings of every broken bird and start it on its flight.”

Our abiding prayers are with each of you.

Signed: The Universal House of Justice

National Institutional Meeting

The national institutional meeting held in Kuching on 25-27 February 2011 was one of those events that was filled with an air of excitement and those who participated in it left with eager anticipation of better achievement in store for the future.

Members of the institutions numbering about 50—the Regional Councils, Cluster Coordinators, Local Assembly members of Kuching cluster, Auxiliary Board Members and National Assembly members were specially invited to study the message of the Supreme Body addressed to the Conference of the Continental Board of Counsellors dated 28 December 2010. The Board of Counsellors was represented by George Soraya and Ircham Sujadmiko.

The program proper started at 2.30pm on Friday at the Bahá'í Centre with a reading through of the whole document in English. Several individuals had been earlier assigned to read a few paragraphs each. On top of that the letter dated 1 January 2011 was also read. Then the participants were divided into seven groups of 6 to 7 individuals. Throughout the next two days each group discussed the message paragraph by paragraph. On Saturday and Sunday, the gathering continued at Telang Usan Hotel where some of the outstation participants and guests were lodged. At the end of each study session, representative of each group may or may not present the insight gained from the discussion. But what was obvious was that everyone realized the import of the message and be prepared to get organized for follow up events. This is just the beginning.

The significance of the 28 December 2010 message was reflected in a letter addressed to the Bahá'ís of the World dated 1 January 2011 in which the House of Justice hopes the believers “will be able to give it thoughtful study, alongside the message we addressed to you at Ridvan 2010, at gatherings of all kinds—whether at the national, regional, or cluster level, in local communities, in neighbourhoods and villages, or in the home.” At the time of writing, the Regional Council for northern region is preparing for a similar event to be held in Miri City at the Bahá'í Centre on the weekend of 12-13 March 2011. Members of the Area Growth Committees and cluster coordinators were all invited to attend. All three National Coordinators and two members of the National Assembly will be present along with Mr. George Soraya.

Following these two major events it is expected that by Ridvan 2011 the more advanced clusters would have organised study of the message either at cluster or local level. A “warm-up” visit was made to the central region by Mr. Ircham Sujadmiko. Accompanied by Ms. Geriti Katik and Mr. Sears Maxwell of Kuching he made an over night visit to Rumah Nanggai in the Selangau cluster and also to Rumah Baling in Mukah cluster. They also stopped by at Sibu to meet with Auxiliary Board Member Mrs. Annie Teng.

Delegates to the 2011 National Convention

As in previous years, 38 delegates were elected throughout the State. For the first time, seven delegates out of the 38 were of the fairer gender. The National Convention will be held at Penview Inn, Kuching on 30 Apr – 2 May (Saturday 2pm – Monday 1pm).

The allocation for each electoral unit are as follows:

Southern Region

Lundu + Bau	3 Kaon Joken, Jinis Ghip, Arisandy Nissen
Kuching + Samarahan	4 Dajai Mancha, Chin CC, Thomas Ngadan, Kong Ah Fah
Sebuyau + Sebanggan	3 Lagan Jampie, Albert Ladi, Tukang Sanyat
Simunjan-Asajaya	2 Edil Layong + Letan Entebang
Balai Ringin + Gedong	2 Linyau Gelai, Nyamut Gelai
Serian + Tebakang	3 Seko Sugan, Galah Siar, Ronnie Tandak
Sri Aman + Betong + Pantu	1 Sigom Betek
Lbk Antu	1 Tunku Surik
Saratok	1 Robin Kuyong

Central Region

Sibu + Sarikei	2 Kong Ing, Tan Hock Siew
Kapit + Merit + Balleh + Song	2 Jesion Meding, Kullan Baweng
Kanowit + Julau	1 Clarence Suai Kirak
Mukah	1 Jeraman Nyaring
Selangau	1 Catherine Semi Anjat

Northern Region

Bintulu + Tatau + Sebauh + Tubau	3 Robert Ting SH, Usik Bansan, Ovat Lani
Bakong-Tinjar	3 Nyawai Unsa, Govindasamy (Dorai), Gu Enchana
Niah-Suai	2 Elam Langgoh, Riki Pindi
Miri + Marudi	2 Sebastian Lebong Punggai, Alexson Kelling Buja
Limbang + Lawas	1 Rata Blanda

9th cycle of growth in Simunjan

Report by Dana Aman, Secretary of the Area Growth Committee

Hosted by the community of Kampung Batu Mumong, the launching of the 9th cycle of growth was attended by 50 believers from five communities. Mr. Edil Layong spoke briefly on the history of the Faith and the message dated 28 December 2010 from the Universal House of Justice. Each local community made plans to increase the number of core activities in their own area of jurisdiction. With the help of Mrs. Rosa Banggal a member of the Regional Council, the Area Growth Committee also came up with an overall program for the cycle. The launching ceremony was made merrier with songs and ended with a remark by Mr. Hipong Likam.

Condolence to the family of the late Mr. Baru anak Selading of Kampung Enteban, Betong who passed away on 28 February 2011. He was one of the early believers who accepted the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and served on the Local Spiritual Assembly for many years. He attend the Bahá'í World Congress in New York in 1992.

Congratulations to Peterus Chubot and Ann Linggi on the birth of their daughter Velma Valera on 14 February 2011 and to Ovat Lani and Noraini Empaga on the birth of their daughter Divine Clara on 9 February 2011.

Local Spiritual Assembly

Election of Local Spiritual Assembly is between sunset 20 April and sunset 21 April 2011. All local communities are reminded to elect the nine members of their Local Spiritual Assembly and submit a report using the form provided to the National Assembly as soon as possible after the event.

..These Spiritual Assemblies are aided by the Spirit of God. Their defender is `Abdu'l-Bahá. Over them he spreadeth His wings. What bounty is there greater than this? These Spiritual Assemblies are shining lamps and heavenly gardens, from which the fragrances of holiness are diffused over all regions, and the lights of knowledge are shed abroad over all created things. From them the spirit of the life streameth in every direction. They, indeed, are the potent source of the progress of man, at all times and under all conditions. What bounty is there greater than this?

Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Bahá