



FIRST QUARTER 2024 | Q1 2024

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

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CONTENTS

01.

Gross Domestic Product

02.

Consumer Price Index

03.

International Merchandise Trade

04.




Fiscal

05.

Priority Sectors Developments

MAIN INDICATORS OF
THE BRUNEI DARUSSALAM ECONOMY
Q1 2024



GDP

 Overall Economy (y-o-y growth)	6.8%
 Oil & Gas (y-o-y growth)	8.9%
 Non-Oil & Gas (y-o-y growth)	5.0%

PRICES

 Overall Prices (y-o-y growth)	-0.3%
 Food (y-o-y growth)	1.6%
 Non-Food (y-o-y growth)	-0.8%




FDI

 FDI Flows BND Million	-264.1
 FDI Stock BND Million	8,266.0

TRADE

 Total Trade BND Million	6,834.6
 Exports BND Million	4,265.3
 Imports BND Million	2,569.4

FISCAL

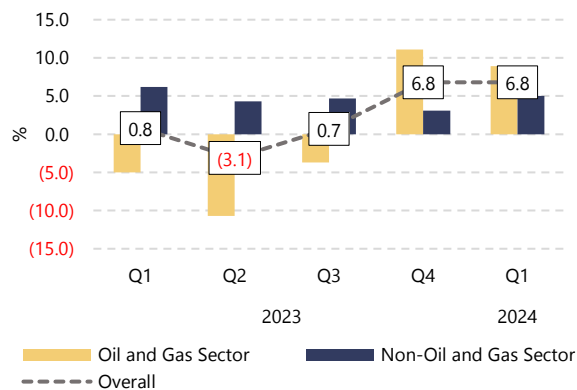
 Fiscal Balance BND Million	-754.7
 Revenue BND Million	977.5
 Expenditure BND Million	1,732.2

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Overview

Brunei Darussalam's economy marked the first quarter of 2024 (Q1 2024) with a significant 6.8 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) growth. The positive growth was underpinned by improvements in both the Oil and Gas and Non-Oil and Gas Sector by 8.9 per cent and 5.0 per cent respectively (**Exhibit 1**).

Exhibit 1 : GDP Growth (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Oil and Gas Performance

The Oil and Gas Sector expanded on the back of higher production of crude oil, natural gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) (**Table 1**). Specifically, the higher production of crude oil and natural gas was mainly due to the production from a new oil field that started operation in October 2023.

Table 1 : Production of Crude Oil, Natural Gas and LNG (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Crude Oil (Thousand barrels /day)	91.0	102.1
Natural Gas (Million m ³ /day)	25.9	30.5
LNG (MMBtu/day)	718,862	811,516

Source: Energy Department, Prime Minister's Office

Non-Oil and Gas Performance

The expansion of the Non-Oil and Gas Sector was supported by positive growth recorded in several subsectors (**Table 2**).

Table 2 : Growth of Selected Non-Oil & Gas Sectors (Q1 2024)

	% Growth
Manufacture of Petroleum & Chemical Products	26.8
Other Manufacturing	22.2
Communication	17.2
Electricity and Water	13.2
Wholesale and Retail Trade	9.3
Hotels	8.0
Business Services	3.7
Construction	3.3
Livestock & Poultry	2.8
Transportation & Logistics	2.3

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

The Manufacture of Petroleum and Chemical Products subsector gained from higher production of petrochemical products (**Table 3**) particularly diesel and naphtha, as well as urea fertilizer. Whereas, the production of methanol declined slightly.

Table 3 : Production of Petrochemical Products, Methanol and Urea (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Petrochemical Products (Tonnes)	1,644,649	2,154,806
Urea* (Metric Tonnes)	226,908	309,333
Methanol (Metric Tonnes)	178,477	178,394

Source: *Energy Department, Prime Minister's Office, **Hengyi Shd Bhd and ***Brunei Fertilizer Industries & Energy Department,

The Other Manufacturing subsector showed an improvement, mainly driven by non-metallic mineral products manufacturing activities.

The progress of the Communication subsector was parallel to a rise in the number of mobile and internet subscribers (**Table 4**). For mobile subscriptions, the increase was observed in both prepaid and postpaid, while for internet subscriptions, both mobile and fixed broadband reported increases.

Table 4 : Number of Internet and Mobile Subscribers (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Internet (Subscriptions)	632,357	640,643
Mobile (Subscriptions)	535,239	542,579

Source: Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry of Brunei Darussalam

Meanwhile, growth in the Electricity and Water subsector was induced by increased electricity production. As such, the increase in electricity production was in line with higher consumption from domestic and government activities. In particular, the increased domestic consumption of electricity coincided with the Ramadhan and school holiday periods in March 2024.

This is accompanied by an improved turnout in the Wholesale and Retail Trade subsector, which is reflected in the increased retail sales volume index, particularly for Department Store, Electrical Household Appliances and Lighting Equipment in Specialized Stores and Textiles, Wearing Apparel & Footwear (Table 5). Furthermore, there was also an uptick in the wholesale activity, particularly sale of motor vehicles. As such, this development is reflected by an increase in the number of newly registered vehicles (Table 6). Additionally, both petrol station retail sales and fuel consumption also increased (Table 5 & 6).

Table 5 : Quarterly Retail Index Sales Volume Index, Weight and Growth Rate by Activity (2019 = 100), Q1 2024

	Weights	% Growth (Q1 2023/Q1 2024)
Department Store	2,576	9.7
Supermarket	1,711	-0.01
Mini Mart	271	2.2
Food and Beverages in Specialised Stores	200	15.6
Petrol Station	1,192	4.1
Computer & Telecommunications Equipment	593	-5.7
Textiles, Wearing Apparel & Footwear	373	22.9
Hardware, Paints and Glass in Specialised Stores	607	10.8
Furniture & Household Equipment	326	19.7

Electrical Household Appliances and Lighting Equipment in Specialised Stores	586	17.0
Books, Newspapers and Stationery in Specialised Stores	137	1.4
Recreational Goods	186	-4.2
Pharmaceutical and Medical Goods, Cosmetic and Toilet Articles in Specialized Stores	227	-12.2
Watches & Jewellery	355	-5.5
Others	659	2.5
Total	10,000	5.9

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Table 6 : Number of Newly Registered Vehicles and Personal Loans for Vehicles (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Newly Registered Vehicles (Unit)*	3,975	4,226
Fuel Consumption (Cubic Meter)***	188.5	200.0

Source: *Land Transport Department, Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications; and **Energy Department, Prime Minister's Office

As for the Hotels subsector, its upturn was supported by an increase in international tourist arrivals by air. The increase was also in line with the increase in average occupancy rate and average length of stay (Table 7).

Table 7 : International Tourist Arrival by Air, Average Occupancy Rate and Average Length of Stay (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
International Tourist Arrival by Air	28,443	54,797
Average Occupancy Rate (%)	30.9	31.8
Average Length of Stay (days)	5.9	6.7

Source: Tourism Department, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

Turning to the Construction subsector, its improvement was in line with an increase in development expenditure, among which mainly in the Security Sector.

Correspondingly, the progress in the Business Services subsector was mainly traced to increased engineering and technical activities in line with intensified construction activities.

Elsewhere, the Livestock & Poultry subsector grew on the back of higher production of broiler, cattle and goats (Table 8).

Table 8 : Production of Broilers, Cattle and Goats and Buffaloes (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Broilers (MT)	7,717.9	7,729.5
Cattle (MT)	119.4	216.9
Goats (MT)	7.7	9.9

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

As for the Transportation & Logistics subsector, its growth was fueled by the air transport activity, associated with an increase in the number of air passengers (Table 9) and flight frequency (Table 10).

Table 9 : Air Arrivals and Departures (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Arrivals (Persons)	111,781	126,248
Departures (Persons)	95,358	120,916

Source: Department of Immigration, Ministry of Home Affairs

Table 10 : Scheduled Aircraft Movements (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Scheduled Aircraft Movements (Unit)	2,262	2,703

Source: Department of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Transport and Infocommunications

On the other hand, several subsectors registered negative growth as follows:

- The Fishery subsector experienced a downturn, marred by lower production in the aquaculture industry, offsetting the increase in the capture industry (Table 11).

Table 11 : Production of Capture and Aquaculture Industries (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Capture (MT)	3,768.3	4,006.4
Aquaculture (MT)	604.1	332.8
Total (MT)	4,372.4	4,339.2

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

- The Finance Subsector contracted with a reduction in profitability in the banking sector. The reduction is contributed by the increasing interest/profit costs amid the current interest rate environment.
- The Government Services subsector recorded a subdued growth in line with a decrease in personal emoluments.

GDP by Expenditure

By expenditure approach, the increase in GDP growth in Q1 2024 was driven by a rise in the Net Exports of Goods and Services by 9.7 per cent, Gross Capital Formation by 9.1 per cent (contributed by both private and government investments) and followed by Household Final Consumption Expenditure by 7.5 per cent. Whereas the Government Final Consumption Expenditure recorded a decrease of 5.1 per cent (Table 12).

Table 12 : GDP by Expenditure (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023 (BND Million)	Q1 2024 (BND Million)	% Growth (Q1 2023/ Q1 2024)
Government Final Consumption Expenditure	1,224.8	1,162.4	-5.1
Household Final Consumption Expenditure	1,593.4	1,713.6	7.5
Gross Capital Formation (Investment)	1,057.6	1,154.1	9.1
Net Exports of Goods and Services	967.3	1,061.0	9.7
Exports of Goods and Services	3,486.4	3,992.5	14.5
Imports of Goods and Services	2,519.1	2,931.6	16.4
GDP	4,657.5	4,973.1	6.8

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Regional GDP Developments

In Q1 2024, most economies in the ASEAN region posted positive growth (Table 13).

Table 13 : GDP Growth of Selected ASEAN Countries (Q1 2024)

Countries	Q1 2024 (% y-o-y)
Indonesia	5.1
Malaysia	4.2
Singapore	2.7
Philippines	5.7
Vietnam	5.7
Thailand	1.5

Source: Badan Pusat Statistik (Indonesia); Bank Negara Malaysia (Malaysia); Ministry of Trade and Industry (Singapore); Philippine Statistics Authority (Philippines); General Statistics Office of Vietnam (Vietnam); and Office of National Economic and Social Development Council (Thailand). *Advance estimates.

In Q1 2024, Indonesia’s economy grew by 5.1 per cent with several industries observing encouraging growth. Among others, the Manufacturing industry expanded with several activities reporting growth upturns such as the food and beverages activity on the back of robust domestic demand during the period of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. Meanwhile, the manufacturing of steel and chemicals activity also improved, driven by increased domestic and external demand. The Construction industry performed solidly, anchored by increased development of government and private infrastructure projects. Additionally, growth was also in line with increased production and sales of cement during the same period. The Mining and Quarrying industry grew, supported by increased production of copper ore to meet both domestic and external demand. As for the Wholesale and Retail Trade industry, its progress was reflected by the increase in the country’s retail sales index during the same period¹.

Malaysia’s economy expanded 4.2 per cent in Q1 2024 with the Services and Manufacturing sectors propelling the overall performance. In particular, the Services sector’s expansion was aided by subsectors such as Wholesale and Retail Trade, Transportation and Storage and Business Services. On the other hand, the growth of the Manufacturing sector emanated from an enhanced performance in non-metallic mineral products; basic metal and fabricated metal products;

petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products; followed by wood products, furniture, paper products and printing. Additionally, the Mining and Quarrying sector also gained, attributed to higher crude oil and natural gas production².

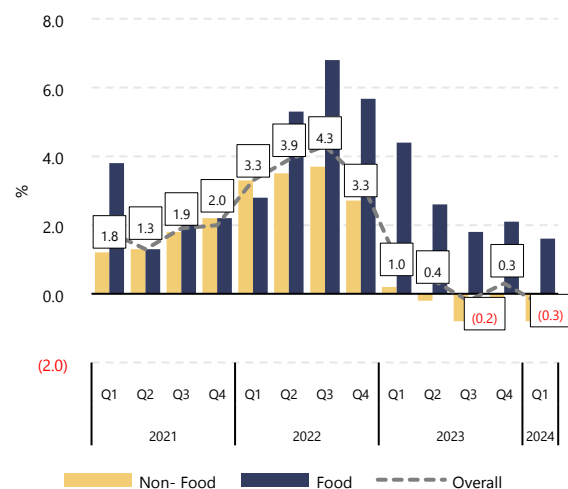
Singapore’s economy grew by 2.7 per cent y-o-y in Q1 2024. Among the contributors to growth include the construction sector, supported by public sector construction output; the wholesale trade sector was mainly driven by an increase in petroleum and chemical products; the information & communications sector, bolstered by continued strong demand for IT and digital solutions; the finance & insurance sector, benefited from strong performance of the banking and activities auxiliary to financial services segments; and accommodation sector buoyed by the continued recovery in international visitor arrivals³.

Consumer Price Index

Overview

In Q1 2024, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) registered a marginal decrease of 0.3 per cent y-o-y compared to Q1 2023. The decrease was mainly due to a 0.8 per cent decrease in the Non-Food Index. Meanwhile, the Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages Index registered an increase of 1.6 per cent (Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2 : Consumer Price Index (% Growth y-o-y), Q1 2021 – Q1 2024



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

¹ Indonesia’s GDP Growth in Q1-2024 was 5.11 Percent (y-on-y) and Indonesia’s GDP Growth in Q1-2024 was -0.83 Percent (q-to-q) (May 6, 2024). *Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia.*

² Quarterly Gross Domestic Product : First Quarter 2024 (May 17, 2024). *Department of Statistics Malaysia.*

³ Singapore’s GDP Grew by 2.7 Per Cent in the First Quarter of 2024 (April 12, 2024). *Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore.*

Table 14 : Consumer Price Index (% Growth y-o-y), Q1 2023 & Q1 2024

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Overall CPI	1.0	-0.3
Food	4.4	1.6
Non-Food	0.2	-0.8

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Non-Food Prices

In Q1 2024, the decrease in the Non-Food index was mainly driven by the fall in the following commodities:

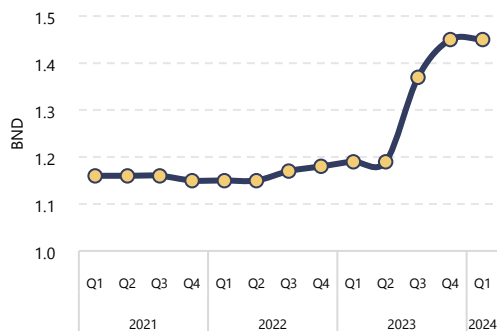
- Clothing and Footwear prices experienced a significant reduction of 10.4 per cent, which was in line with the decline in the price of garments.
- Communication prices decreased by 3.0 per cent, primarily driven by a continuous fall in telephone and telefax service prices in line with the cheapest internet plan offered since September 2023.
- Transport prices declined by 0.5 per cent, in line with a decrease in motor car prices for selected car models and brands.

Food and Non-Alcoholic Prices

The increase in the Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages index in Q1 2024 was associated with the rise in the following commodities:

- Non-Alcoholic Beverages prices increased by 10.8 per cent, mainly attributed by a rise in soft drinks price (**Exhibit 4**) in particular ready-to-consume drinks⁴.

Exhibit 3 : Average Prices of Soft Drinks (BND/ML), Q1 2021 – Q1 2024



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

- Milk, Dairy Products and Eggs prices increased by 4.1 per cent, primarily contributed by the rise in price of eggs, caused by a shortage of supply⁵.

Table 15 : Average Number of Eggs (in Million) Q1 2023 Q1 2024

Eggs (Pcs)	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
	43.7	43.0

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources & Tourism

- Rice and Cereals prices rose by 1.1 per cent, mainly contributed by an increase in the imported raw material prices for biscuit and cookie products.

Selected World Developments

Table 16 : Selected Countries Consumer Price Index, Q1 (January - March) 2024

Q1 2023 / Q1 2024

% Changes	Overall	Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages
Australia	3.6	3.8
Singapore	3.0	3.4
Malaysia	1.7	1.9
Philippines	3.3	4.5

Sources: Countries CPI Data Statistics

In Q1 2024, Australia's inflation rate increased by 3.6 per cent, mainly due to increases in both the Food and Non-Food indices. The increase in the Food index was driven by higher prices of bread and cereal products, dairy products, and other food products such as condiments. Meanwhile, the Non-Food index also increased, in line with the rise in rental cost for housing, insurance, and spare parts and motor vehicle parts and accessories⁶.

Singapore's inflation rate eased to a positive 3.0 per cent in Q1 2024 y-o-y compared to 6.1 per cent in Q1 2023. The increase was mainly attributed to the rise in the prices of foods such as bread & cereals, non-alcoholic beverages, and milk, cheese & eggs. Meanwhile, the Non-Food prices also increased, mainly contributing to the rise in recreational & cultural services, housing & utilities, and petrol fuels⁷.

⁴ Amendments to the customs import and excise duties effective 17 May 2023, Royal Customs and Excise Department, Ministry of Finance and Economy.

⁵ Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism (MPRT).

⁶ Consumer price index (March 2024). *Australia Bureau of Statistics.*

⁷ Singapore Consumer Price Index (March 2024). *Ministry of Trade and Industry.*

In Malaysia, the inflation rate increased by 1.7 per cent in Q1 2024 compared to the same period of the previous year. The increase was mainly attributed to the surge in the Food and Beverages Index. Meanwhile, the increase in the Non-Food Index was in line with the rise in rental costs for housing, the cost of health services and dining expenses in restaurants and cafés⁸.

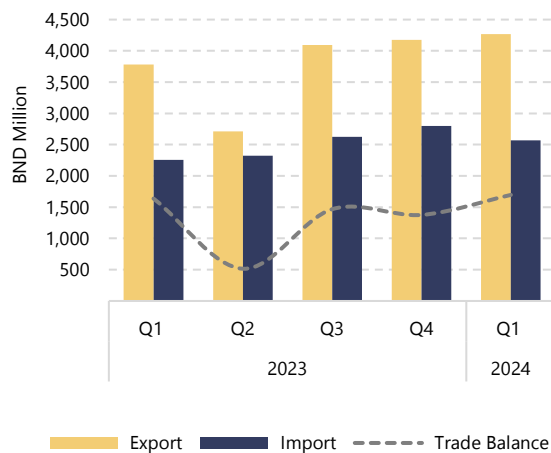
Meanwhile, the Philippines' inflation rate in Q1 2024 was 3.3 per cent compared to the same period last year, mainly due to an increase in Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages prices. Non-Food prices also rise, driven by increased dining expenses in restaurants and cafés, personal care expenses, and housing rentals⁹.

International Merchandise Trade

Overview

Brunei Darussalam's total merchandise trade in Q1 2024 rose by 13.1 per cent to BND6,834.6 million, from BND6,042.4 million in Q1 of the previous year. This increase was attributed to a rise in both exports and imports by 12.7 per cent and 13.8 per cent, respectively, driven mainly by the recovery in downstream petrochemical exports and increased imports of crude oil. Overall, the country's trade balance remained in surplus, growing to BND1,695.9 million this quarter (**Exhibit 4**).

Exhibit 4 : Trade Statistics (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



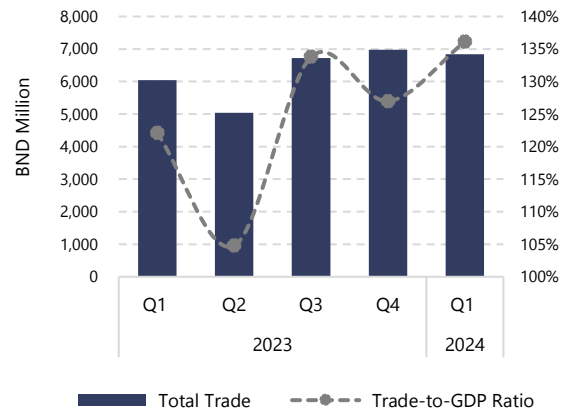
Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

⁸ Consumer Price Index (March 2024). Department of Statistics Malaysia.

⁹ Consumer price index for all income households by commodity group (2018=100) (March, 2024). Philippine Statistics Authority.

Meanwhile, total trade as a percentage of GDP increased to 136.1 per cent from 122.1 per cent in the same quarter of 2023¹⁰ (**Exhibit 5**). This improvement aligns with improved trade performance, which contributed to the economic growth in this quarter.

Exhibit 5 : Trade-to-GDP Ratio (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Estimates by Department of Planning, Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Exports Development

Brunei Darussalam's total exports in Q1 2024 amounted to BND4,265.3 million, rising from BND3,783.9 million in Q1 2023 (**Table 17**). This increase was mainly driven by the recovery in downstream petrochemical exports (**Table 22**).

Table 17 : Exports (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Change
Domestic Exports	3,696.3	4,156.5	460.2
Re-Exports	87.6	108.8	21.2
Total Exports	3,783.9	4,265.3	481.4

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Oil and gas commodities accounted for 40.6 per cent of the total exports, while non-oil and gas exports accounted for 59.4 per cent.

In Q1 2024, oil and gas exports decreased by 1.6 per cent, mainly due to the decline in LNG, which was attributed to price factors (**Tables 18, 20 & 22**).

¹⁰ The trade-to-GDP ratio indicates a country's openness or integration into the global economy. The ratio measures domestic producers' reliance on foreign markets (export) as well as domestic demand's reliance on foreign supplies of goods and services (import).

Table 18 : Exports Value of Crude Oil and LNG (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Change
Crude Oil	612.2	834.1	221.9
LNG	1,149.0	898.8	-250.2
Total	1,761.1	1,732.9	-28.2

Source: Energy Department, Prime Minister's Office

Table 19 : Exports Volume of Crude Oil and LNG (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Crude Oil (Thousand barrels per day)	59.4	77.5
LNG (MMBtu per day)	744,388	749,356

Source: Energy Department, Prime Minister's Office

Table 20 : Prices of Crude Oil and LNG (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Crude Oil (USD/barrel)	85.84	88.14
LNG (USD/MMBtu)	12.87	9.83

Source: Energy Department, Prime Minister's Office

The domestic export value from the downstream industry rose to BND2,419.0 million in Q1 2024 from BND1,902.8 million in Q1 2023 (Table 22), mainly attributed to the increase in export value of petrochemicals products (particularly jet fuel and paraxylene) and urea. These products are mainly exported to Australia, Malaysia and Singapore.

Table 21 : Downstream Exports (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Change
Petrochemical Products	1,682.5	2,200.4	517.9
Methanol	67.9	59.9	-8.0
Urea	149.7	157.0	7.3
Polygel	2.7	1.6	-1.1
Total	1,902.8	2,419.0	516.1

Meanwhile, the value of other domestic exports decreased further to BND4.6 million in Q1 2024 compared to BND32.4 million in Q1 2023 (Table 22). This was mainly due to the fall in domestic exports of manufactured goods from BND23.8 million to BND2.1 million, contributed mainly by the fall in exports of steel

products to the USA, as well as domestic exports of food from BND4.6 million to BND1.1 million, mainly driven by lowered production of aquaculture by 44.9 per cent.

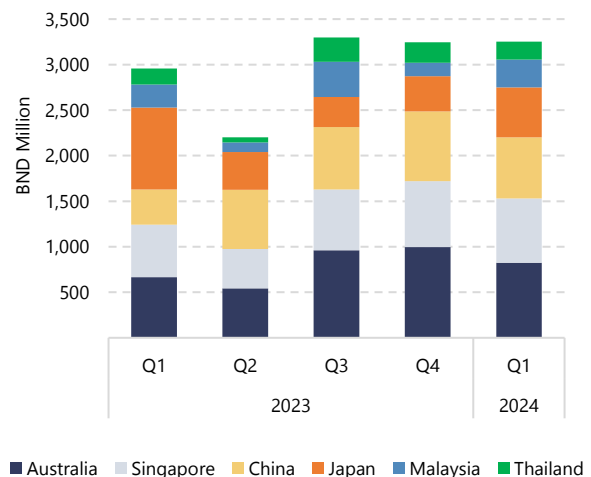
Table 22 : Domestic Exports (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Change
Oil and Gas (Crude Oil & LNG)	1,761.1	1,732.9	-28.2
Downstream (Petrochemical Products, Methanol, Urea & Polygel)	1,902.8	2,419.0	516.2
Others	32.4	4.6	-27.8
Total	3,696.3	4,156.5	460.3

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Australia remains the top destination for domestic exports this quarter, primarily consisting of automotive diesel fuels and crude oil (Exhibit 6). This was followed by Singapore, consisting mainly of various mineral fuels, including automotive fuels, crude and light oils. Additionally, the regular export of eggs to Singapore has continued into the first quarter of 2024. China ranks third in exports, mainly consisting of downstream petrochemicals as well as LNG.

Exhibit 6 : Domestic Exports (Top 6 Destinations) Q1 2023 – Q1 2024



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Imports Development

Brunei Darussalam's total imports in Q1 2024 rose to BND2,569.4 million from BND2,258.5 million in Q1 2023. The increase was primarily due to feedstock for the downstream petrochemical industry, particularly crude oil. Other categories also rose, such as imports of manufactured goods, particularly woven fabric (**Table 23**).

Table 23 : Imports by Commodity (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	Change
Mineral Fuels	1,220.8	1,691.9	471.1
Machinery & Transport Equipment	296.5	237.7	-58.8
Manufactured Goods	113.5	234.3	120.8
Food	199.0	180.4	-18.6
Chemicals	294.9	99.6	-195.3
Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles	96.7	91.4	-5.3
Beverages and Tobacco	19.8	15.3	-4.5
Crude Materials, Inedible	5.8	10.4	4.6
Animal Vegetable Oils and Fats	7.7	5.6	-2.1
Miscellaneous Transactions	3.9	2.8	-1.1
Total	2,258.5	2,569.4	310.9

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

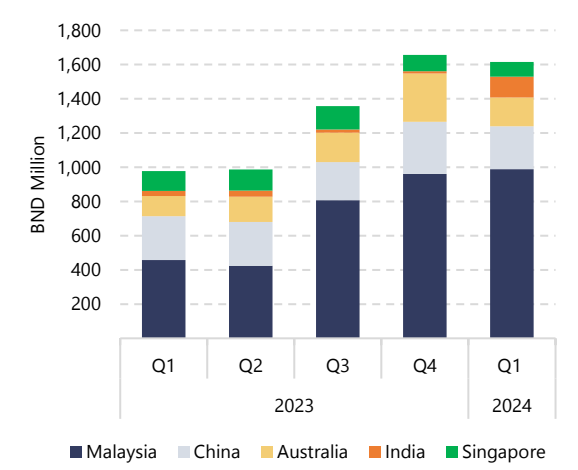
Imports from Malaysia remain the largest, amounting to BND988.7 million this quarter. The majority of our imports were mineral fuels (77.9 per cent), consisting mainly of crude oil for use by the petrochemical industry, as well as food items (8.7 per cent), including feedstocks, fruits, aquaculture, and other various food products.

Most of Brunei Darussalam's food imports continue to be sourced from Malaysia, accounting for 47.9 per cent of the total food imports in Q1 2024. Due to the perishable nature of food products, importing food from a nearby bordering country such as Malaysia offers advantages. As a result, a sizeable amount of food imports from Malaysia were transported by land, comprising 46.7 per cent, while 52.7 per cent were

transported by sea, and 0.6 per cent were transported by air.

China was the second largest recorded at BND250.8 million, mostly comprising motor spirit imports. This was followed by imports from Australia, consisting mainly of crude oil. Crude oil imports serve as feedstock for the petrochemical industry. Imports of food from Australia accounted for 6.5 per cent of total food imports, consisting mainly among others, meats, live animals and dairy products (**Exhibit 7**).

Exhibit 7 : Import Origins (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Global Trade Developments

In line with the World Trade Organisation's forecast for trade performance to pick up in 2024, the first quarter showed growth in several neighbouring countries, including Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. (**Table 24**).

In Q1 2024, Malaysia recorded growth in total trade due to an increase in both exports and imports value. The rise in exports was contributed by higher exports of manufactured and mining goods. Imports also rose significantly, primarily due to an increase in imports of capital and intermediate goods for the manufacturing of export products.

Singapore's total trade rebounded this quarter, reversing the decline experienced last year. This improvement was driven by increases in both exports and imports, mainly due to a rise in non-oil exports.

Thailand experienced total trade growth primarily due to an increase in import value. However, export values declined, driven by lower export values for

commodities such as air conditioners and components, circuit boards, and chemicals.

In Q1 2024, Vietnam’s total trade recorded an increase compared to the same period in the previous year due to rises in both export and import values. The growth in exports was fueled by higher demand in major export markets and a continued economic recovery post-COVID-19¹¹.

Table 24 : Total Trade Growth y-o-y in ASEAN Countries (Q1 2024)

Countries	Total Trade Growth (%)
Malaysia	7.1
Singapore	4.8
Thailand	2.0
Vietnam	15.5

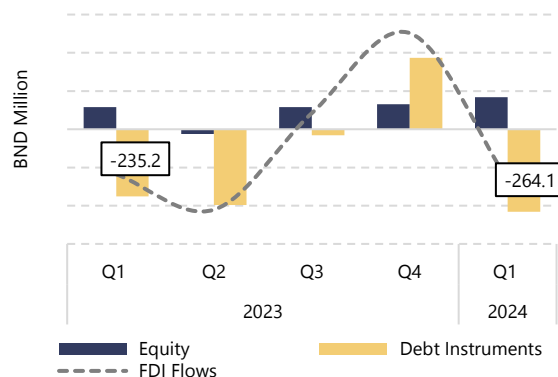
Source: Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation, Bank Negara Malaysia, Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore, Department of Statistics Singapore, Trade Policy and Strategy Office, Thailand, General Statistics Office, Vietnam

Foreign Direct Investment

Overview

In the first quarter of 2024, Brunei Darussalam recorded a negative Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flow of BND264.1 million, an increase in negative flow compared to the same period last year at negative BND235.2 million (**Exhibit 8**). These negative flows were in line with loan repayments from downstream petrochemical industry to its parent company. Despite this, the equity component was higher than any quarters in 2023 at BND167.7 million. This further proved that the increase in reinvested earnings in Q1 2024 indicated ongoing investment in the company’s growth, with profits being used to further enhance the business.

Exhibit 8 : FDI Flows (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

By economic activities, the increase in negative FDI flow was mainly contributed by the manufacturing sector in particular the downstream petrochemical industry (**Table 25**).

Table 25 : FDI Flows by Economic Activity (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

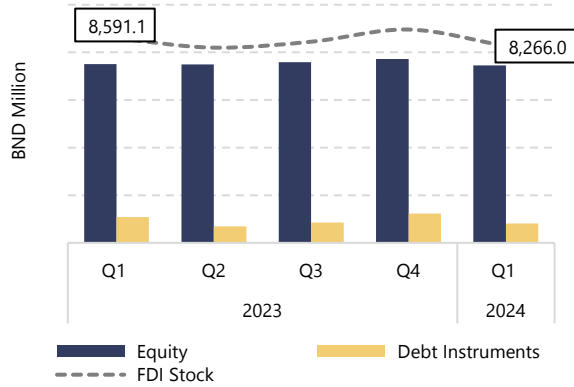
BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Mining and Quarrying	141.0	95.1
Manufacturing	-398.0	-425.2
Construction	4.4	3.5
Wholesale and Retail Trade	-0.2	-1.2
Financial and Insurance Activities	28.5	40.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	-1.1	2.1
Other Activities	-9.8	21.5
FDI Flows	-235.2	-264.1

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

FDI stock saw a reduction of 3.8 per cent to BND8,266.0 million in Q1 2024 compared to BND8,591.1 million in Q1 2023 (**Exhibit 9 & Table 26**). This decrease was attributed to a 0.7 per cent fall in equity to BND7,450.1 million from BND7,506.3 million in Q1 2023, particularly due to the closure of operations by one of the oil and gas-related companies. Additionally, a 24.8 per cent reduction in debt in the downstream petrochemical industry due to loan repayments also contributed to the decrease in FDI stock.

¹¹ Vietnam’s gross domestic product (GDP) in the first quarter of 2024 reaches the highest record of the same period during the period of 2020-2023. ARC Group.

Exhibit 9 : FDI Stock (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

The decline in the FDI stock by economic activity was mainly driven by reductions in activities such as mining & quarrying, manufacturing, construction, and professional, scientific & technical. However, this decline was moderated by increases in FDI stock in wholesale and retail trade, and financial and insurance activities.

Table 26 : FDI Stock by Economic Activity (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Mining and Quarrying	3,388.8	3,069.1
Manufacturing	3,307.3	3,065.4
Construction	112.5	63.5
Wholesale and Retail Trade	181.9	210.9
Financial and Insurance Activities	1,049.1	1,205.4
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	263.3	228.4
Other Activities	288.2	423.3
FDI Stock	8,591.1	8,266.0

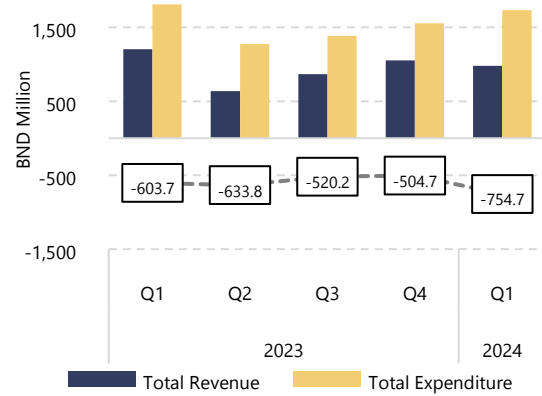
Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Fiscal¹²

In Q1 2024, Brunei Darussalam's fiscal deficit widened to BND754.7 million compared to a deficit of BND603.7 million in the same period last year (**Exhibit 10**). This was mainly due to a fall in the government revenue from BND1,205.9 million in Q1 2023 to BND977.5 million in Q1 2024 despite a decrease in expenditure

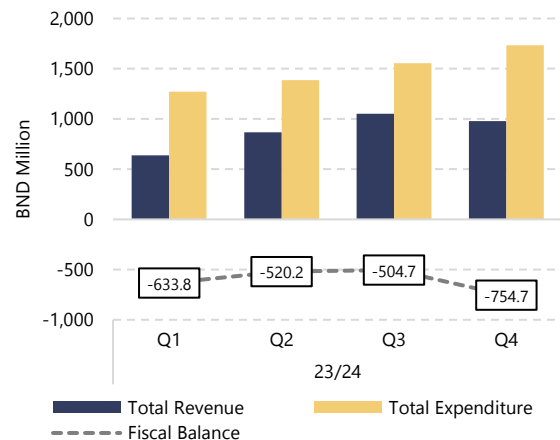
from BND1,809.6 million in Q1 2023 to BND1,732.2 million in Q1 2024.

Exhibit 10 : Fiscal Balance (Calendar Year Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Treasury Department, Ministry of Finance and Economy

Exhibit 11 : Fiscal Balance (Financial Year 2023/2024)



Source: Treasury Department, Ministry of Finance and Economy

The decline in government revenue in Q1 2024 was mainly due to a decrease in oil and gas revenue (from BND870.3 million in Q1 2023 to BND688.6 million), driven by lower LNG prices. The LNG price fell from USD12.9 per MMBtu in Q1 2023 to USD9.8 per MMBtu in Q1 2024. The decrease in oil and gas revenue significantly impacted the overall government revenue, as it constitutes a substantial portion, representing 70.4 per cent of the total revenue in Q1 2024. Other than that, the decline in returns from investment and savings and government operations (mainly taxes and fees,

¹² The reporting is based on calendar year.

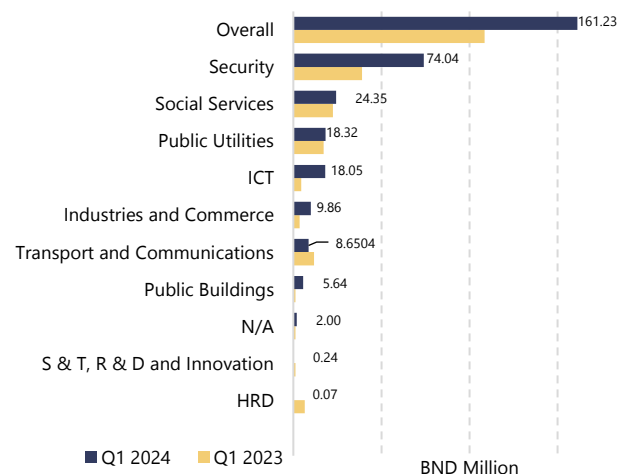
charges & rent) also contributed to the decline in government revenue.

As for total government expenditure, the fall was primarily due to a decrease in ordinary expenditure by 10.1 per cent, from BND1,386.9 million in Q1 2023 to BND1,246.6 million in Q1 2024, which was primarily driven by a decline in Personnel Emoluments (PE) and other charges annual recurrent (OCAR) expenditure by 1.4 per cent and 15.0 per cent respectively. However, the decline was offset by a rise in charged and development expenditures by 3.2 per cent and 48.6 per cent respectively.

The increase in development expenditure was in line with a significant rise in project expenditure under the Info-Communications and Technology Sector by BND13.6 million. A notable project contributing to this increase is the Bru-HIMS 2.0 System under the Info-Communications and Technology Sector. The objective of the Bru-HIMS 2.0 System is to update and upgrade the IT infrastructure and capabilities of the Bru-HIMS with the latest ICT technology and hardware, ensuring that the system is more secure and has high availability.

However, there were significant drop in project expenditure under Human Resource Development (HRD) Sector by BND6.5 million; and Transport and Communications Sector by BND3.1 million. This decline was due to projects nearing or reaching completion (**Exhibit 12**).

Exhibit 12 : Main National Development Plan Sectors Expenditure, Q1 2023 & Q1 2024



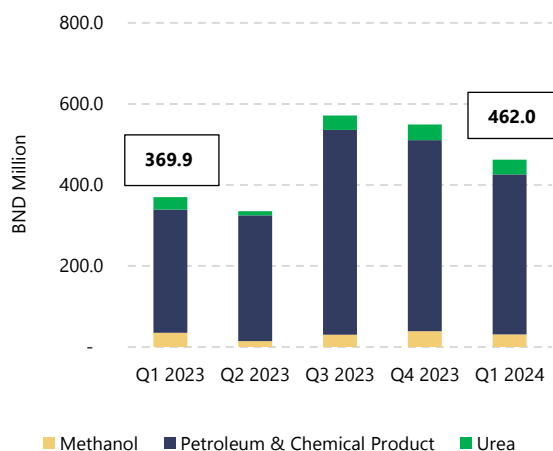
Source: Treasury Department, Ministry of Finance and Economy

Priority Sectors Development

Downstream Oil and Gas

In Q1 2024, the GDP value at current price of the Downstream Oil and Gas Sector increased from BND369.9 million in the same period of the previous year to BND462.0 million (**Exhibit 13**). The increase was attributed to a rise in the value of Petroleum and Chemical products and Urea.

Exhibit 13 : Downstream Oil and Gas Sector GVA at Current Prices (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

PETROLEUM AND CHEMICAL PRODUCTS

In this quarter, Petroleum and Chemical Products increased to BND395.2 million from BND303.6 million during the same period last year. This notable increase in this subsector was primarily attributed to a rise in the production of Jet Fuel and Paraxylene (**Table 27**). However, the prices for these products recorded a decline (**Table 28**).

Table 27 : Selected Petroleum and Chemical Products, (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

Production		Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
		Tonnes		
Production	Jet Fuel	15,306	178,229	1,064.4
	Paraxylene	263,941	338,590	28.3

Source: Hengyi Industries Sdn Bhd

Table 28 : Selected Petroleum and Chemical Products, (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

		Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
		(USD/MT)		
Price	Jet Fuel	830.0	790.1	-4.8
	Paraxylene	1,030.0	1,023.3	-0.6

Source: Hengyi Industries Sdn Bhd

UREA

The value of Urea also increased this quarter, rising from BND31.2 million in Q1 2023 to BND35.8 million. This increase was mainly attributed to higher production in response to increased external demand, particularly from countries such as Australia, Thailand, and Chile, as well as from a new market, i.e. Nepal (Table 29).

Table 29 : Production of Urea, (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

		Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
		Metric Tonnes		
Production		226,908	309,333	36.3
		(USD/MT)		
Price		371.6	338.9	-8.8

Source: Brunei Fertilizer Sdn Bhd & World Commodity Price, World Bank

METHANOL

The value of methanol, however, decreased from BND35.1 million to BND31.0 million in Q1 2024. This decline was due to a reduction in both methanol production and price. The decrease in methanol production was caused by unscheduled plant shutdowns during the last two months of the first quarter (Table 30).

Table 30 : Production and Price of Methanol, (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

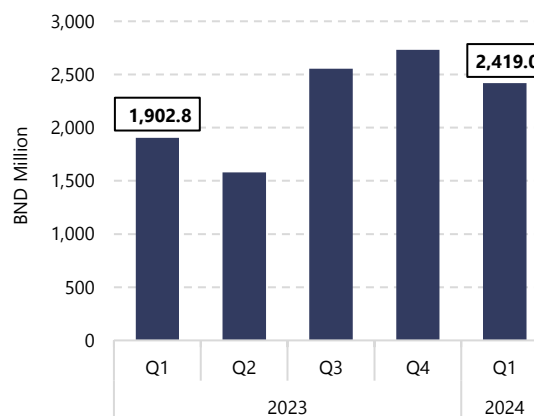
		Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
		Metric Tonnes		
Production		178,477	178,394	-0.05
		(USD/MT)		
Price		288.1	268.9	-6.7

Source: Energy Department, Prime Minister's Office

EXPORTS FROM DOWNSTREAM OIL AND GAS

In Q1 2024, the export value of the Downstream Oil and Gas Sector increased from BND1,902.8 million in Q1 2023 to BND2,419.0 million (Exhibit 14). This rise was attributed to higher export volumes of petroleum and chemical products, particularly Jet Fuel, Diesel and Paraxylene as well as urea (Table 31).

Exhibit 14 : Downstream Oil & Gas Exports, (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Table 31 : Downstream Oil & Gas Exports Volume, (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)

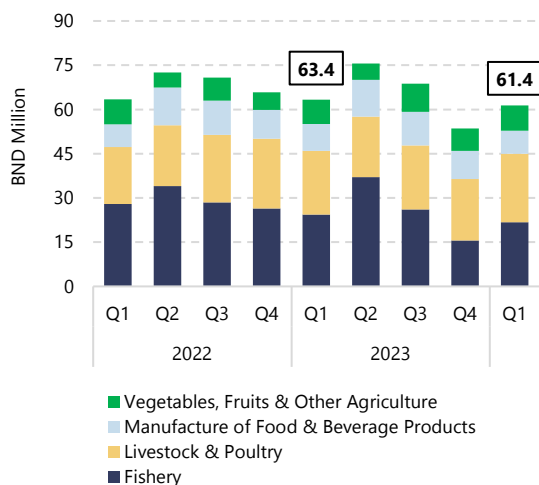
		Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
		Tonnes		
Export Volume	Jet Fuel	0	161,356	
	Paraxylene	263,940	338,590	28.3
	Diesel	566,438	657,757	16.1
	Urea	269,356	336,029	24.8

Source: Hengyi Industries Sdn Bhd and Brunei Fertilizer Sdn Bhd

Food

In the first quarter of 2024, the Food Sector comprising of Vegetables, Fruits, and Other Agriculture; Livestock and Poultry; Fishery; and Manufacture of Food and Beverage Products contributed BND61.4 million which declined from BND63.4 million in the same quarter last year (Exhibit 15).

Exhibit 15 : Food Sector GVA at Current Prices (Q1 2022 – Q1 2024)



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

VEGETABLES, FRUITS, AND OTHER AGRICULTURE

In this quarter, Vegetables, Fruits, and Other Agriculture were valued at BND8.6 million, showing an increase from BND8.3 million in Q1 2023.

The increase was in line with the rise in paddy, vegetables and fruits production (**Table 32**) attributed to the early harvesting paddy, the extension of the Agricultural Development Area (KKP), the increased in production of pilot project areas, as well as an increase in non-seasonal fruits production¹³.

Table 32 : Agriculture Production

	Tonnes	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Paddy		1,305.8	1,485.0	13.7
Vegetables		1,899.4	2,029.1	6.8
Fruits		1,299.3	1,579.4	21.6
Miscellaneous Crops		441.0	407.1	-7.7

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY

Livestock and Poultry was valued at BND23.2 million in Q1 2024, slightly higher compared to previous year at BND21.6 million. The increase was in line with the rise of production of buffaloes & cattle, goat & sheep and broilers (**Table 33**).

Production of buffaloes & cattle and goat & sheep has recorded an increase of 17.1 per cent and 36.9 per cent

¹³ Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

¹⁴ Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

respectively, this is due to frozen meat supply from imported source has decreased. On the contrary, the locally slaughtered meat had increase to accommodate such differences as the price and the availability of these meats are now stabilize¹⁴.

On the other hand, eggs recorded a decrease of 1.6 per cent, which resulted from a decline in the number of layers hens which has been culled in this first quarter of 2024¹⁵.

Table 33 : Livestock and Poultry Production

	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
(Metric Tonnes)			
Buffaloes & Cattles	216.0	252.9	17.1
Goat & Sheep	11.1	15.2	36.9
Broilers	7,717.9	7,729.5	0.2
(Million)			
Eggs	43.7	43.0	-1.6

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

FISHERY

This subsector was experiencing a decline, with the amount decreasing from BND24.4 million in Q1 2023 to BND21.7 million this quarter. This was mainly due to the decrease in the production of aquaculture activities and commercial capture activities.

The decrease in the production of aquaculture activities was heavily impacted by the fall in shrimp/prawn production by 55.5 per cent, primarily due to the spread of shrimp disease infection known as Enterocytozoon Hepatopenaei (EHP) and Acute Hepatopancreas Necrosis Disease (AHPND)¹⁶ (**Table 34**).

Table 34: Aquaculture Industry Production

	Tonnes	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Fish in Cages		68.6	90.7	32.2
Shrimp/Prawn		530.9	236.3	-55.5
Fresh Water Fish		4.2	5.7	-8.8

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

¹⁵ Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

¹⁶ Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

Furthermore, the negative performance in commercial capture activities was mainly due to a shortage of vessel crew and unfavourable weather conditions¹⁷ (Table 35).

Table 35 : Capture Industry Production

Tonnes	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Commercial Scale	453.1	388.5	-14.3
Small Scale	3,315.2	3,618.0	9.1

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

MANUFACTURE OF FOOD & BEVERAGE PRODUCTS

The Manufacture of Food & Beverage Products has experienced a marginal decline this quarter, amounting to BND7.8 million compared to BND9.1 million in Q1 2023.

The decline was in line with the decrease in production of agrifood by 58.2 per cent due to low domestic demand, mainly for meat-processed food. Furthermore, the recorded production of processed food-fisheries dropped by 54.7 per cent (Table 36) which was in line with the decrease in aquaculture production and commercial capture production¹⁸.

Table 36 : Manufacture of Food and Beverage Production

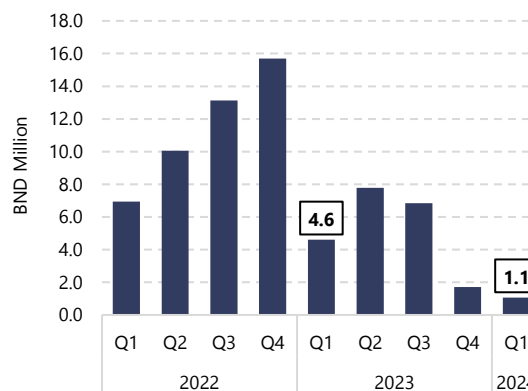
Tonnes	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Agrifood	18,652.7	7,798.4	-58.2
Processed Food-Fisheries	552.4	250.5	-54.7

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

EXPORTS FROM FOOD SECTORS

Domestic food exports dropped drastically from BND4.6 million in Q1 2023 to BND1.1 million in Q1 2024 (Exhibit 16). This is due to low shrimp exports, mainly to Taiwan, Japan, and Singapore, which was in line with the decrease in production due to the spread of shrimp disease infection diseases known as Enterocytozoon Hepatopenaei (EHP) and Acute Hepatopancreas Necrosis Disease (AHPND).

Exhibit 16 : Food Exports, Q1 2022 – Q4 2023



Source: Department of Economic Planning & Statistics

In addition, other initiatives aimed at accelerating the development of the food industry are among others:

- The Centre for Strategic and Policy Studies (CSPS) launch a pioneering project aimed at promoting youth engagement and employment in Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Agriculture and Food Systems. The project aims to identify efficiency and quality improvements in Brunei’s rice value chain, analyse policy impacts, and develop collaborative strategies. It will also implement a **pilot bio-circular-green rice value chain project** with youth and MSMEs as key participants, ultimately enhancing food security and rice self-sufficiency in Brunei Darussalam.¹⁹
- The Universiti Teknologi Brunei (UTB) is committed to integrating cutting-edge research into its teaching methods, providing students with an innovative and forward-looking academic experience as well as addressing global challenges such as climate change, food security, and technological advancements in its research. Vertical rice farming, in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture and Agrifood, utilises **IoT-based solutions to monitor and regulate paddy plantations, improving seed production**. Recent breakthroughs include an AI predictive system for biomass in prawn aquaculture showcasing AI’s potential in optimising farming practices, contributing to sustainability and efficiency in the aquaculture industry²⁰.

¹⁷ Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

¹⁸ Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

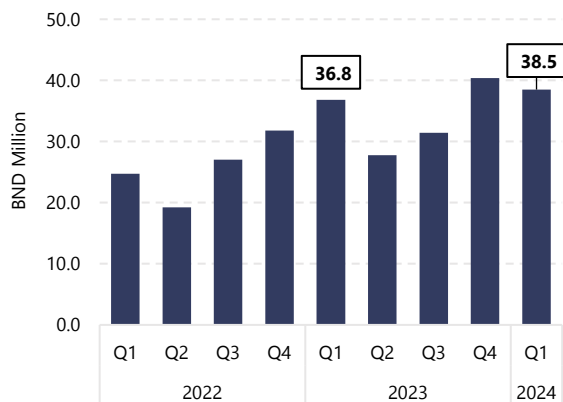
¹⁹ New project aims to boost youth in agriculture. (June 28, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

²⁰ Cutting-edge research across diverse disciplines (February 13, 2024), *Borneo Bulletin*.

Tourism

The Tourism Sector comprising activities of Hotels, and other tourism related activities such as Restaurants, Transportation and Other Services in Brunei Darussalam recorded a positive growth contributing about BND38.5 million in first quarter 2024, higher than BND36.8 million recorded in Q1 2023 last year (**Exhibit 17**).

Exhibit 17 : Tourism GVA at Current Prices (Q1 2022 – Q1 2024)



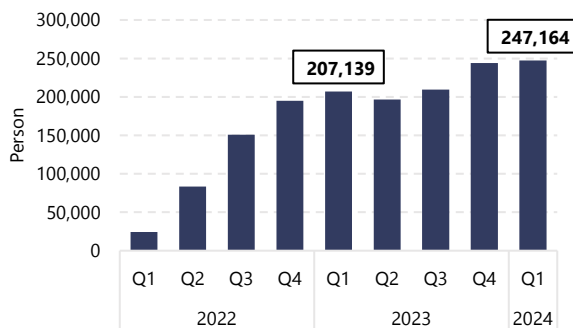
Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

TRANSPORTATION

The tourism-related transportation activity recorded a slight increase from BND17.2 million in Q1 2023 to BND17.9 million in Q1 2024.

The improvement in this sector was supported primarily by air transport given an increase in air arrivals and departures recorded at 247,164 persons, marking a growth of 19.3 per cent compared to Q1 2023 (**Exhibit 18**).

Exhibit 18 : Total Air Arrivals and Departures (Q1 2022 – Q1 2024)



Source: Department of Immigration, Ministry of Home Affairs

As such, the encouraging growth was also in line with an increase in the aircraft movement by 18.5 per cent and an improvement in flight frequency by 19.5 per cent in Q1 2024 (**Table 37**).

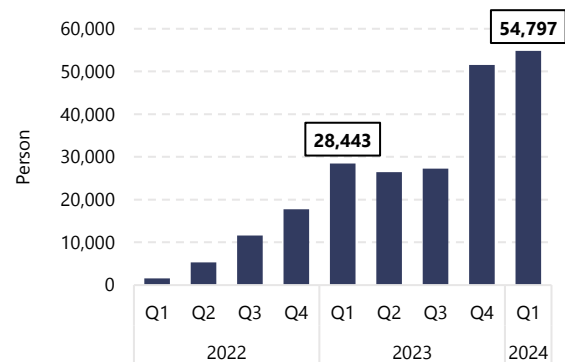
Table 37 : Aircraft Movements and Flight Frequency (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

Unit	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Aircraft Movement (Excluding Military)	2,511	2,976	18.5
Flight Frequency	2,262	2,703	19.5

Source: Department of Immigration, Ministry of Home Affairs

Moreover, a significant growth was recorded in the number of international air arrivals which registered at 54,797 tourists in Q1 2024 compared to 28,443 tourists in Q1 2023 (**Exhibit 19**).

Exhibit 19 : International Air Arrivals (Q1 2022 – Q1 2024)



Source: Tourism Development Department, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

Arrivals by land and sea (including via cruise ships) continued to build on the momentum of recovery in Q1 2024, recording arrivals of 1,117,522 persons and 15,292 persons respectively; marking a substantial surge of 1,132,814 persons in total compared to 18,890 in Q1 2023 (**Table 38**).

Table 38 : Arrivals by Land and Sea (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

Persons	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Arrivals By Land	849,891	1,117,522
Arrivals By Sea	9,082	15,292
Total	18,890	1,132,814

Source: Department of Immigration, Ministry of Home Affairs

HOTELS

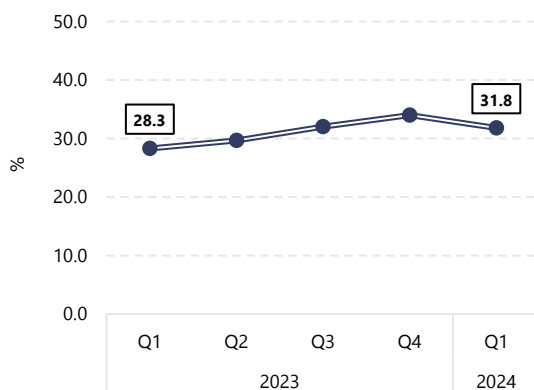
In Q1 2024, the accommodation and hospitality activity also contributed an increase from BND9.6 million Q1 2023 to BND10.5 million.

Such improvement was due to the rise in the number of international tourist arrivals. In addition, this was also partly bolstered by the royal wedding ceremony that was held in January 2024²¹.

Correspondingly, the average occupancy rate marked a continuous increase in Q1 2024 which contributed to 31.8 per cent compared from 28.3 per cent in Q1 2023 (**Exhibit 20**).

Moreover, such growth in the accommodation and hospitality activity was also supported in terms of tourists spending their days in Brunei Darussalam; where longer average stays have been recorded approximately from 6 days in Q1 2023 to 7 days in Q1 2024 (**Table 39**).

Exhibit 20 : Occupancy Rate of Hotels, Resorts, Apartments and Guest Houses (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

Table 39 : Average Length of Stay (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

Days	Q1 2023	Q1 2024
Length of Stay	5.9	6.7

Source: Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism

RESTAURANTS

This sector has shown a slight increase in its performance from BND7.32 million in Q1 2023 to BND7.34 million in Q1 2024.

Consequently, the result has also been reflected to the Food and Beverages Service activities mainly the Catering Service activities, Other Food Service activities and Beverage Serving activities.

However, sales activities particularly for Restaurants and Fast-Food Outlets have slowed down by 4.6 per cent and 3.4 per cent respectively (**Table 40**).

Table 40 : Quarterly Food & Beverages Estimated Value of Sales by Activity (Q1 2023 & Q1 2024)

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Restaurants	71.5	68.2	-4.6
Fast-Food Outlets	20.2	19.5	-3.4
Catering Service Activities	5.8	6.0	3.3
Other Food Service Activities	10.0	11.2	11.9
Beverage Serving Activities	2.6	2.8	7.8

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

In an effort to revitalise the tourism industry, several initiatives have been introduced. Among others include:

- The first Tourism Service Providers (TSPs) Enhancement Workshop programme as one of the initiatives by Tourism Development Department (TDD) aimed to **boost the value of products and packages offered**, to foster confidence in the products and provide resources in upgrading their products for the tourists²².
- With Brunei Darussalam's growing significance in the arrival of cruises, the Sultanate is consistently **welcoming more cruise ships** for cruise tourism since the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions:
 - As such, in February 2024, the 'Norwegian Jewel' cruise ship arrived in Brunei Darussalam after departing from Phu My, Vietnam, carrying 2,101 international passengers along with 1,027 crew members. The foreign travellers had the opportunity for a day tour to discover the nation's landmarks, such as

²¹ Royal Wedding ceremonies begin. (January 07, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

²² Over 400,000 tourists expected in 2026 (February 20, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

the Royal Regalia Museum, Mosques, Istana Nurul Iman, and Kampong Ayer²³.

- In addition, another cruise ship, 'Oceania Insignia', has docked at the Muara Port Terminal with 601 travellers including 400 crew members onboard. With tour packages, the passengers had the chance to explore the popular landmarks of Brunei and created enchanting experiences during their brief stay in Brunei Darussalam²⁴.
- In addition, the 'Crystal Symphony' was marked as the fourth cruise ship that arrived to Brunei Muara Port in March 2024. The travellers were provided with a day tour to explore the places of attraction in the Sultanate; including Temburong Rainforest Lodge in Batang Duri for a rainforest experience. Nonetheless, Brunei Darussalam is looking forward to welcoming another three cruise ships arrival this year, thus, continuously strengthened its position to become one of the renowned destinations on the global cruise map ever since the recovery in the cruise ship arrivals in 2023²⁵.
- **Familiarisation trip** is also part of TDD's initiatives in enhancing tourism sector in Brunei Darussalam. The travel agents in United Kingdom (UK) have been visiting the Sultanate for a three-day trip in early March this year to study about Brunei Darussalam with regards to its potential for the UK travellers as their travel destination. The event was coordinated by the tourism department in collaboration with Royal Brunei Airlines (RBA) through showcasing the Brunei's natural wonders, cultural heritage, and adventures. These tour visits to the country's local places of attraction, among others, including trips to local markets, hotel accommodations, river cruising, museums, mosques and around Brunei city. As part of the trip, the travel agencies had the opportunity to taste the local delicacies as well as communicating with the locals in the area of visit to learn more about the customs and traditions. This initiative in hope to encourage the foreign travel agencies to promote Brunei Darussalam as a preferred travel destination in their country, furthermore, in making a significant contribution to Brunei's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)²⁶.
- **First online directory for Brunei tourism products has launched** recently this year through 'www.explorebrunei.gov.bn' directory by Tourism Department. With the listing of several 300 tourism activities, the website may act as a platform to promote businesses in Brunei with their offerings, at the same time, attracting the customers. This initiative also aimed to increase the visibility of the enterprises to be well-known by foreign travellers or customers as well as to further enhance connectivity between the two parties²⁷.
- **Brunei Mid-Year Conference and Exhibition (Brunei MYCE)** was held this year to centre for events and exhibitions focusing on knowledge sharing as well as new findings in different range of sectors from within and outside the nation. The discussions involved among the policy makers, entrepreneurs, scientists, lecturers, students and the participants who joined the conference. Through international engagements, this event seeks to boost the business travellers and tourists who contribute to the nation's GDP in terms of various economic activities such as aviation, hospitality and accommodation, restaurants, and transportation²⁸.
- Moreover, the tourism department has involved in the **39th Seoul International Travel Fair (SITF)** in Seoul during mid-May this year to boost and generate tourism in Brunei. In the event, Tourism Development Department had organised a networking session for promoting tourism packages which were tailored for Korean travellers. In the session, there were 11 Korean travel agencies participated for one-on-one networking with Brunei representatives to explore the Brunei tourism packages for area of potential collaborations. In addition, Brunei Darussalam has obtained the 'Best Marketing Award' during the exhibition²⁹.
- Several training workshops and career talks continue to be conducted as part of Tourism Development Department's initiatives to

²³ Brunei welcomes Norwegian Jewel. (February 24, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

²⁴ Oceania Insignia passengers enchanted by local attractions. (March 15, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

²⁵ Crystal Symphony Cruise Port in Brunei. (March 10, 2024). *Freme Travel*.

²⁶ UK travel agents explore Sultanate. (March 8, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

²⁷ Tourism directory launched with over 300 listings. (April 10, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

²⁸ Brunei MYCE returns tomorrow. (May 29, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

²⁹ Brunei receives Best Tourism Marketing award. (May 15, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

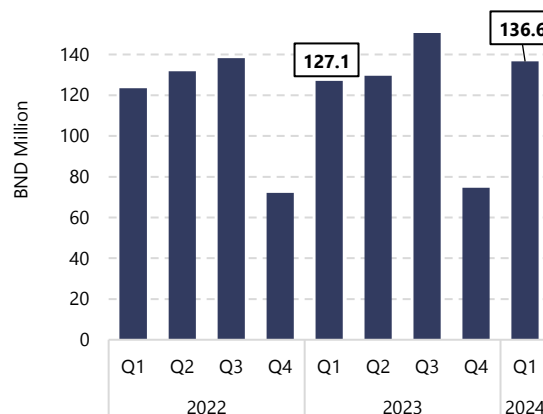
strengthen tourism-related knowledge and skills; including the discovery of career paths in the hospitality and tourism industry:

- A tourism upskilling workshop was held to enhance the skills for local travel agents in effectively promoting Brunei tourism packages and catering to various tourists' preferences for the upcoming international tourism expo³⁰.
- A career talk organised by the tourism department for students in Sengkurong Sixth Form Centre early July this year to provide a comprehensive understanding and knowledge about tourism industry in Brunei Darussalam³¹.
- Youth Development Unit under Institute of Brunei Technical Education (IBTE) has prepared a three-day workshop held in Belait which focusing at housekeeping and hospitality services that include activities such as theoretical presentations, practical sessions and assessments for basic housekeeping knowledge and services skills³².
- **Brunei 29th Consumer Fair** event has been organised in late June 2024; showcasing 250 exhibitors and 580 booths to promote local businesses including international participants for Indonesia Halal Expo, Mega India Expo and Thailand Grand Fair held in International Convention Centre (ICC)³³.

Info-Communication & Technology (ICT)

In Q1 2024, the ICT Sector, which consists of Publishing, Motion Picture, Video, TV, and Radio; Telecommunication; and Computer Programming, Consultancy and Information Service activities amounted to BND136.6 million, increasing slightly from BND127.1 million recorded in Q1 2023 (**Exhibit 21**).

Exhibit 21 : ICT Sector GVA at Current Prices (Q1 2023 – Q1 2024)



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

TELECOMMUNICATION

In Q1 2024, telecommunication activity has increased from BND90.3 million during the same period last year to BND103.1 million in line with an increase in the number of mobile and internet subscribers.

The number of **mobile subscribers** increased by 1.4 per cent mainly due to the introduction of 5G services and attractive promotions offered by telecommunication companies³⁴ (**Table 41**).

Table 41 : Mobile Subscribers

Persons	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Prepaid	406,188	411,737	1.4
Postpaid	129,051	130,842	1.4
TOTAL	535,239	542,579	1.4

Source: Authority for Info-Communications Technology Industry (AITI)

Moreover, the number of **internet subscribers** also increased by 1.3 per cent with the increase of mobile broadband and fixed broadband internet subscribers by 1.3 and 1.6 per cent respectively (**Table 42**).

Table 42 : Internet Subscribers

Persons	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Mobile Broadband	539,863	546,679	1.3

³⁰ Developing Brunei's tourism through upskilling workshop. (June 22, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

³¹ 70 students attend tourism, hospitality career talk. (July 2, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

³² Belait youth join housekeeping, hospitality workshop. (July 10, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

³³ Partnerships inked for upcoming Consumer Fair. (June 6, 2024). *Borneo Bulletin*.

³⁴ Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry (Aiti)

Fixed Broadband	92,494	93,964	1.6
TOTAL	632,357	640,643	1.3

Source: Authority for Info-Communications Technology Industry (AITI)

As for fixed broadband, the number of subscriptions by residential increased due to low-price-per-Mbps offered by telecommunication companies. Meanwhile, business/government broadband customers registered a decline which may be due to companies moving towards mobile options³⁵ (**Table 43**).

Table 43 : Fixed Broadband Subscribers

Persons	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Residential	85,016	86,733	2.0
Business/ Government	6,890	6,718	-2.5
Leased Lines	588	513	-12.8

Source: Authority for Info-Communications Technology Industry (AITI)

In terms of mobile and fixed broadband traffic, since the school year has resumed, broadband performance has improved, with a positive gain of 28.4 per cent from 44.53 PB to 57.20 PB of broadband traffic (**Table 44**).

Table 44 : Mobile and Fixed Broadband Traffic

Petabyte (PB)	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Mobile Broadband Traffic	4.76	5.12	7.6
Fixed Broadband Traffic	39.78	52.08	30.9
TOTAL	44.53	57.20	28.4

Source: Authority for Info-Communications Technology Industry (AITI)

COMPUTER PROGRAMMING, CONSULTANCY, AND INFORMATION SERVICES

The value of Computer Programming, Consultancy and Information Services activity in Q1 2024, however, decreased from BND31.3 million during the same period in 2023 to BND28.1 million. The decline was mainly contributed by computer programming activities related to mobile app creation, followed by decline in computer consultancy activities referring to relevant technology transformation services.

PUBLISHING, MOTION PICTURE, VIDEO, TV AND RADIO

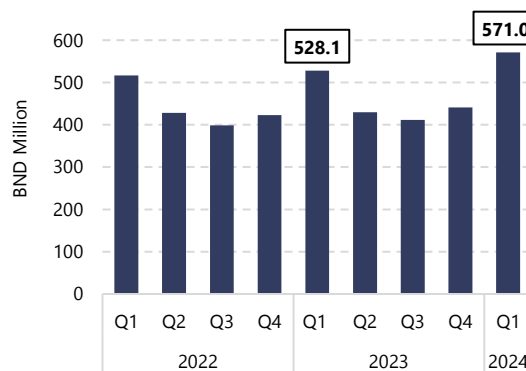
Moreover, in Q1 2024 Publishing, Motion Picture, Video, TV, and Radio activity also decreased slightly from BND5.6 million in Q1 2023 to BND5.3 million. The decline was mainly contributed by publishing of newspapers activities.

Services

The Services Sector is comprised of selected economic sectors, notably Wholesale & Retail Trade, Business Services, and Transport & Logistics.

In Q1 2024, the sector continued to register a y-o-y increase of BND571.0 million compared to BND528.1 million in Q1 2023 (**Exhibit 27**).

Exhibit 22 : Services Sector GVA at Current Prices (Q1 2022 – Q4 2023)



Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

WHOLESALE & RETAIL TRADE

By sector, Wholesale and Retail Trade was valued at BND396.5 million, an increase from BND365.5 million in Q1 2023 due to an increase in domestic demand.

Moreover, the increase in this sector was in line with the increase in overall retail sales performance which recorded a 3.0 per cent increase (**Table 45**). The main contributors to the increase are electrical household appliances and lighting equipment in specialized stores (15.3 per cent); hardware, paints and glass in specialised stores (10.2 per cent); and department store (2.9 per cent).

³⁵ Authority for Info-communications Technology Industry (Aiti)

Table 45 : Quarterly Retail Estimated Value of Sales and Growth Rate by Activity (Q1 2024)

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Department Store	117.1	120.5	2.9
Supermarket	76.3	77.1	1.0
Mini Mart	14.4	14.9	3.5
Food and Beverages in Specialised Stores	7.7	9.0	17.5
Petrol Station	44.1	45.9	4.1
Computer & Telecommunications Equipment	20.4	18.3	-10.0
Textiles, Wearing Apparel & Footwear	16.3	18.0	10.2
Hardware, Paints and Glass in Specialised Stores	26.0	28.7	10.2
Furniture & Household Equipment	11.7	13.5	15.4
Electrical Household Appliances and Lighting Equipment in Specialised Stores	26.0	28.7	15.3
Books, Newspapers and Stationery in Specialised Stores	6.4	6.5	1.1
Recreational Goods	9.0	8.5	-5.4
Pharmaceutical and Medical Goods, Cosmetic and Toilet Articles in Specialized Stores	11.2	9.8	-12.1
Watches & Jewellery	15.6	15.7	0.1
Others	32.3	31.0	-3.9
Total	434.7	447.6	3.0

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

TRANSPORT & LOGISTICS

Transport and Logistics Sector recorded an increase in its contribution to BND46.8 million in Q1 2024 from BND43.0 million in Q1 2023.

In terms of trading activities, total trade via sea recorded an increase by 17.1 per cent (**Table 46**) which was due to higher total trade in Mineral Fuels, Chemicals and Manufacture of Goods.

Table 46 : Trade via Sea

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Export	3,728.1	4,202.4	12.7
Import	1,829.4	2,305.3	26.0
Total	5,557.5	6,507.7	17.1

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

However, the country's national port volume throughput has recorded a decrease by 17.0 per cent. (**Table 47**), primarily due to lower total volume cargo throughput to and from South Korea, People's Republic of China and Philippines.

Table 47 : Seaborne Volume Cargo Throughput

Tonnes	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Discharged	240,133	227,178	-5.4
Loaded	206,958	143,697	-30.6
Total	447,091	370,875	-17.0

Source: Muara Port Company (MPC)

As for trading activities by air, export value recorded an increase by 10.6 per cent contributed by Machinery & Transport, Manufactured Goods and Crude Materials Inedible. However, import and total trade values decreased by 45.7 per cent and 38.3 per cent respectively (**Table 48**).

Table 48 : Trade via air

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Export	52.1	57.6	10.6
Import	344.9	187.3	-45.7
Total	396.9	244.9	-38.3

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

Air freight cargo throughput (**Table 49**) on the other hand, recorded positive growth of 48.2 per cent, which was mainly due to the increase in number and frequency of flights³⁶. In addition, in this quarter, Malaysia Airlines resumed its scheduled chartered flight in which last year its operations ceased, **on the**

other hand, recorded a positive growth of 48.2 per cent, due to COVID restrictions.

Table 49 : Air Freight Cargo Throughput

Tonnes	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Import	1,498.9	1,644.6	9.7
Export	103.1	127.5	23.7
Transit	908.2	1,947.1	114.4
Total	2,510.2	3,719.1	48.2

Source: Brunei International Airport Cargo Centre (BIACC)

As for trade via land, export value showed an increase by 41.8 per cent (**Table 50**). However, import value recorded a decrease by 8.9 per cent due to the decrease in importation of Food, Miscellaneous Manufactured Articles and Crude Material Inedible.

Table 50 : Trade via land

BND Million	Q1 2023	Q1 2024	% Growth
Export	3.8	5.4	41.8
Import	84.2	76.7	-8.9
Total	88.0	82.0	-6.8

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

In terms of the main trading commodities by mode of transport (**Table 51**), export by air freight in Q1 2024 were mainly medicaments and machinery & transport equipment and the main import items by air were electrical equipment and medicaments.

For sea freight, the bulk of the exports was mineral fuels and chemicals, while the imports were mostly mineral fuels and assorted manufactured goods.

For land freight, the exports consisted of diverse manufactured goods such as steel pipes, while imports included diverse manufactured goods such as cement; animal feed and various fruits.

Table 51 : Main Exports and Imports in weight/volume by Transport Medium (Q1 2024)

	Main Exports	Main Imports
Air	Medicaments; Machinery & Transport Equipment	Electrical Equipment; Medicaments
Sea	Mineral Fuels and Chemicals	Mineral Fuels; Various Manufactured Goods
Land	Various Manufactured Goods	Various Manufactured Goods; Animal Feed & Fruits

Source: Department of Economic Planning and Statistics

The following initiatives and plans will help to grow our service sectors:

- The Minister of Transport and Info-communications stated during the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and scholarship with Darussalam Pilotage Services Sdn Bhd that the country's shipping needs will increase as a result of the renovation and expansion of Muara Port as well as the creation of an integrated marine maintenance and decommissioning yard.³⁷
- Brunei Darussalam has signed three agreements that marked 'a major milestone' for advancing economic relations in the Indo-Pacific region. This demonstrates commitments in building resilient supply chains; accelerate transitions to clean economies to achieve net zero emissions; and fair economy by providing predictable and transparent business environment in the region.³⁸

³⁷Brunei Recorded highest ship traffic in 2023: Minister (May 15, 2024), *Borneo Bulletin*.

³⁸Brunei signs Indo-Pacific economic agreements (June 7, 2024), *Borneo Bulletin*.