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Brunei parliament votes for poll - posted by lwpray (), on: 2004/9/29 6:24

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BRUNEI PARLIAMENT VOTES FOR POLL

The new parliament in Brunei has approved a constitutional amendment that will allow the sultanate to hold its first elections in more than 40 years.

Under the change, a third of the members of a new parliament will be directly elected.

All the others will be chosen by Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah.

On Saturday, September 25, the Sultan re-opened parliament as part of what he called a cautious programme of reform.

Brunei's last direct elections, in 1962, were won by a party opposed to royal rule.

Its demands for a union with Malaysia were rejected, the party disbanded and a subsequent rebellion was crushed by the father of the present Sultan, with the help of British forces.

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