

INDONESIANA

BRIEFING ON INDONESIAN ARTS AND CULTURE

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Ancient History
TROWULAN

World Heritage Site
**KOMODO
NATIONAL PARK**

Rites & Celebrations
BAU NYALE

Performing Arts
**TRADITIONAL
DANCES OF BALI**

Film & Visual Art
JERMAL

Food Culture
**INDONESIAN
RAW FISH**

VOL 2

2015



Salam Budaya

W

elcome to the second edition of our bulletin. In this edition we are focusing on Indonesia's marine legacy, places where salt water breeze touches our very skin, where you'll

find the glory of the old kingdom of Majapahit, and how it connects the myriad of islands that make up Indonesia.

The culture of Indonesia's seafarers can be traced back even before the Majapahit era, the apex of ancient Indonesian civilization, its remnants still vivid within the Bau Nyale and Pasola celebration, an ancient event held in West Nusa Tenggara and Sumba that is a kind of a thanksgiving ceremony for the sea.

Representing Indonesia's culture in the world stage is the Balinese Dance, which made its way to UNESCO's

nomination list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and the Pinisi sailing ship that is on the way to become part of the list of UNESCO World Heritage Site. We believe that the uniqueness and the craftsmanship of these heirlooms are indeed integral to the world's culture.

Last but not least, enjoy your day shopping in the traditional floating markets of Lok Baintan and Muara Kuin in Kalimantan, where a unique experience awaits those eager to start their adventure at dawn. Experience the lively market up close and personal, chat up the traditional vendors while touring the market by boat.

Continue on with a one-of-a-kind breakfast of rare fruits and local delicacies. It's going to be one unforgettable trip. ■



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CULTURE, as a part of a country, is a way of life and a legacy. No matter how small the country, at its root is its culture, the basis for its people's ideas and interactions. It is the thread that unites them.

With this project, we are proud to present to the world Indonesian culture. We invite all people from around the globe to come closer, to discuss anything and everything about Indonesia, from movies to books, from dances to theatres. This small bulletin, as an introduction to our country's culture, will hopefully pique your interest and encourage you to seek out more from our local House of Indonesian Culture.



A portrait of the Pinisi boat heading into a storm in Raja Ampat, Indonesia.

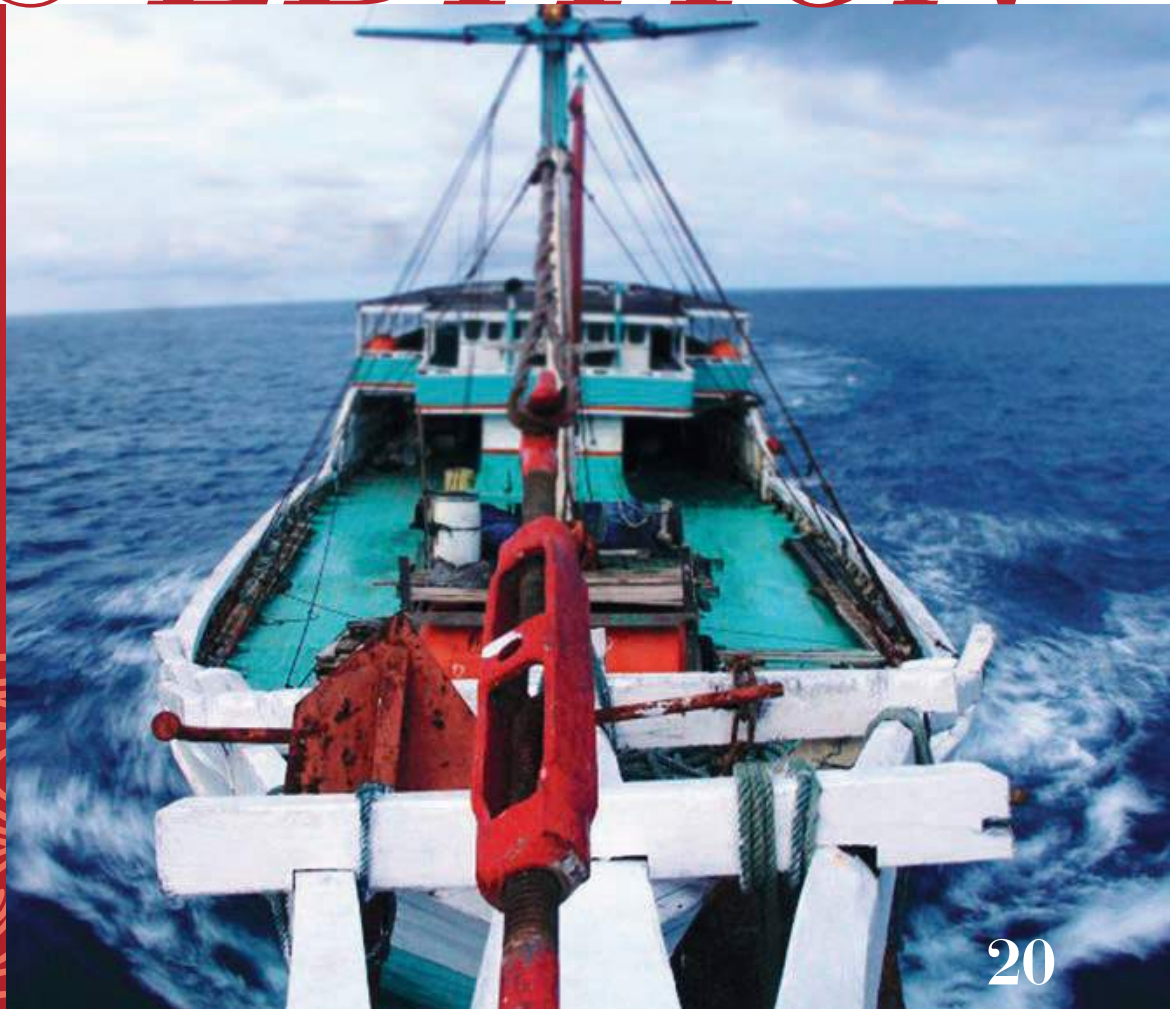
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FAST FACT INDONESIA



THE ISLANDS

Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world. It houses 1.9 square kilometres of landmass within 17,000 tropical islands, big and small, many of which are uninhabited and even unnamed. The major islands are Sumatra, Kalimantan, Java, Sulawesi and Papua, with the island of Bali being, arguably, the most famous.



THE RING OF FIRE

Adventurous travellers and history aficionados are surely familiar with the term “Ring of Fire”. It refers to a group of active volcanoes that line up the Pacific belt. Tectonic shifts caused by the eruption of these volcanoes accounts for around 90% of the world’s earthquakes. Some of the most notable eruptions within this horseshoe-shaped area have led to a number of historic events for Indonesia – from Lake Toba’s colossal eruption 70,000 years ago, which gave birth to Samosir Island; Mount Tambora, which erupted in 1815 and caused widespread crop failure in Europe and the Americas; to the eruption of Krakatau that obliterated three volcanic peaks and unleashed huge tsunamis in 1883.



TIME ZONES

Indonesia’s area spans from Sabang – the western tip of the archipelago located in the island of Sumatra – to Merauke, the eastern tip in the island of Papua. Some 8,514 kilometres-long from border to border, Indonesia is divided into three time zones. The island of Sumatra, Java, and half of Kalimantan are in the Western Indonesian Standard Time (GMT +7.00). The other half of Kalimantan, Bali, Nusa Tenggara and Sulawesi abide by the Central Indonesian Standard Time (GMT +8.00). The island of Maluku and Papua fall under the Eastern Indonesian Standard Time (GMT +9.00).

INDONESIA

THE NAME

The name “Indonesia” is derived from the Greek word *nesos*, which means “island”, and *Indus*, which means “Indian”. English ethnologist George Windsor Earl proposed the terms *Indunesia* or *Malayunesia*, while his student James Richardson Logan preferred the term *Indonesia* as it is synonymous with the word “the Indian Archipelago”. During the colonial era, Dutch academics were reluctant to use that name, opting instead to use the name “the Netherlands East Indies”. It was reverted back to Indonesia by nationalists in the early 1900’s.



LANGUAGE

Indonesia’s cultural diversity results in around 600 indigenous languages. Young nationalists developed a new, unified language modified from Bahasa Malay, which ended up being adopted as a national language called Bahasa Indonesia in 1928. Most Indonesians continue to speak using their indigenous language daily, while Bahasa Indonesia is used as a secondary basis, mainly for school and businesses. Therefore, most Indonesians are bilingual. English is also taught at schools, but mostly in major cities.



THE RESIDENTS

Indonesia has a massive population of over 250 million people, making it the fourth most populous country in the world, right after China, India and the US. Among the five major islands of Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Papua, Java is the most populous with over 140 million people living in the island. It is also home to the country’s capital of Jakarta. Being the centre of government and businesses, Jakarta is the most populous city in the country with a population reaching up to 10 million people, and counting.



ETHNICITY

There's a reason why Indonesia is so culturally rich. Its more than 250 million people originated from around 300 ethnic groups, each with their own customs, traditions and dialects. One of the reasons for this diversity is Indonesia's geographical position. Situated between two continents and two oceans, around 6,000 out of its 17,000 islands are inhabited. The relatively isolated ethnic groups are thus better facilitated to preserve their unique cultures and traditions. Malay, Arab and European influence from traders further enrich the nation's melting pot. Additionally, each ethnic group also boasts different physical attributes. People from the Sumatra and Kalimantan have deep roots in the Malay culture, possessing fair skin, slanted eyes and pronounced jaws. Javanese are usually brown skinned and have delicate features, while people from the east are dark skinned and have curly hair.



MOTTO AND IDEOLOGY

Despite the cultural and religious differences among its citizens, Indonesia is built on tolerance and unity, and it relies on those core values to maintain peace within the country. After declaring its independence on August 17, 1945, Indonesia adopted the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, which is loosely translated to Unity in Diversity. This national motto is reinforced by its national ideology of Pancasila, and it is the platform of which all Indonesian laws are based on.



RELIGION

Religion, particularly Islam, plays an important role in Indonesian society. The government recognises five religions: Islam, Protestant, Catholic, Buddhist and Hindu. Around 87 per cent of the population embrace Islam, or around 12 per cent of the world's Muslim population. It is thus often confused as the largest Muslim country in the world, while the fact is it's the country with the largest Muslim population in the world.



COFFEE

Indonesia is no stranger to coffee enthusiasts. It is the third largest coffee producer and exporter in the world, right behind neighbouring Vietnam and the undisputed champion Brazil. According to a 2013 International Coffee Organization's report, Indonesia's total coffee production exceeds 675,000 tons per year, with Robusta being the dominant bean. The history of coffee in Indonesia dates back to the Dutch colonial era. 1696 saw the first shipment of coffee seeds, and 1711 saw the first export of beans from Java to Europe by the Dutch East Indies Company. In the mid 1700's, the Dutch East Indies expanded coffee growing to Sumatra, Bali, Sulawesi and Timor.



NATURAL RESOURCES

Indonesia is rich in natural resources. Its tropical climate has led to Indonesia's fame as the home of many indigenous spices. This particular resource was a source of contentions among colonists for centuries, and the country itself has been colonised by various European countries, including the Portuguese, the English and, most prominently, the Dutch. Furthermore, Indonesia is also one of the largest oil producers in the world. Natural oil has been discovered since the Dutch colonial era. Indonesia remains a significant player in the international oil industry.

INDONESIAN PHRASES

BASICS

Communicating with locals is a common problem for travellers. Here are some basic phrases Indonesians use to start a conversation.

1. Good morning /
Selamat pagi
2. Good afternoon /
Selamat siang
3. Good evening/night
/ *Selamat malam*
4. How are you? /
Apa kabar?
5. My name is ____ /
Nama saya ____
6. Can you help me? /
Bisakah Anda membantu saya?
7. I don't speak Indonesian very well /
Bahasa Indonesia saya kurang bagus
8. Do you speak English? /
Apakah Anda bisa berbahasa Inggris?
9. Speak slowly, please /
Mohon bicara pelan-pelan
10. Thank you /
Terima kasih
11. You're welcome /
Sama-sama
12. I'm sorry /
Mohon maaf
13. Excuse me /
Permisi
14. Be careful /
Hati-hati

TRAVEL

Whenever language barriers pose an issue, visiting a new place ultimately becomes an inane task. Here are some phrases that will help you settle in and get through the day.

1. Where can I get a taxi around here? /
Di mana saya bisa mendapatkan taksi di sekitar sini?
2. Can you take me to ____? /
Bisakah Anda mengantarkan saya ke ____?
3. Where can I rent a car? /
Di mana saya bisa menyewa mobil?
4. Where can I rent a motorcycle? /
Di mana saya bisa menyewa sepeda motor?
5. Where is the nearest hotel? /
Di mana hotel terdekat?
6. I'd like to check-in /
Saya mau check-in
7. Do you have a room available? /
Apakah ada kamar yang masih kosong?
8. Is there a restroom around here? /
Apakah ada toilet di sekitar sini?
9. How far is it? /
Sejauh apa dari sini?
10. Religious offerings /
Sesajen
11. Beware of monkeys
Hati-hati dengan monyet

SHOP

Getting special prices and discounts at the local markets is very possible, though it all boils down to how well you haggle with the merchants. Here are some phrases to tip the scales to your favour.

1. Traditional market /
Pasar tradisional
2. Can I try this one? /
Boleh coba yang ini?
3. I'm interested /
Saya tertarik
4. How much does it cost? /
Berapa harganya?
5. Do you take credit cards? /
Bisa bayar dengan kartu kredit?
6. It's too expensive /
Terlalu mahal
7. It's quite cheap /
Cukup murah
8. Lower the price please /
Mohon turunkan harganya
9. Do you have it in another colour? /
Apakah tersedia dalam warna yang berbeda?
10. Can you deliver this to my country? /
Bisakah Anda mengirimkan barang ini ke negara saya?
11. How much is the delivery cost? /
Berapa ongkos kirimnya?

EAT AND DRINK

Finding good food is essential in elevating any travel experience, irregardless of whether you're ascribe to foodism or not. Here are some phrases you can use to spoil your taste buds during your journey.

1. I'm hungry /
Saya lapar
2. I'm full /
Saya kenyang
3. Delicious /
Enak
4. Can I see the menu? /
Bisa lihat menunya?
5. Can you take my order? /
Bisa pesan makanan?
6. Which one would you recommend? /
Menu apa yang Anda sarankan?
7. What's the house specialty? /
Apa menu andalan restoran ini?
8. Check, please /
Minta bon
9. Can I order some drinks? /
Bisa pesan minuman?
10. Do you have any alcoholic drinks? /
Apakah Anda menyediakan minuman beralkohol?

INDONESIA CULTURAL HOUSE





INTRODUCING THE WONDERFUL INDONESIA

INDONESIA'S MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE PROUDLY PRESENT THE INDONESIA CULTURAL HOUSE - A PROJECT THAT WILL BRING THE COUNTRY'S MANY WONDERFUL CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS TO GLOBAL RECOGNITION.

Cultural diplomacy is a means of exerting political influence by drawing upon one country's culture, values and ideas. It is thus distinct from hard power, which uses military muscle to reinforce diplomatic ventures. Another goal of cultural diplomacy is to improve the image of Indonesia by introducing Indonesia's rich cultural resources to the world, while at the same time strengthening Indonesian cultural resources as an integral part of global civilization

We now live in an era of a new world order in which most countries are becoming more and more border-less. It is here that culture takes its position as an important element within the realms of international relations and diplomacy. Its ultimate goal: to build a global community and to strengthen international relations and regional networks.

It takes massive effort to preserve Indonesia's rich diversity and vast cultural legacies. It is with that basis that Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture and Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs have joined together in developing the Indonesia Cultural House program.



Indonesia is situated on the equator and its territory extends all the way from Sabang to Merauke, encompassing some 1.9 million square kilometres along the way. Indonesia, moreover, boasts 17,000 odd islands, as well as over 500 distinct ethnic groups speaking some 742 dialects. Each of the country's tribes and ethnicities has its own specific cultures and traditions, and these make up Indonesia's priceless cultural inheritance. Despite this huge diversity, the country remains united by its national motto, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika", or "Unity in Diversity".



“

*Despite this huge diversity,
the country remains united
by its national motto,
“Bhinneka Tunggal Ika”, or
“Unity in Diversity”.*

”

Various elements of Indonesia's cultural heritage have already been recognised as parts of our wider world heritage by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). These elements include the country's traditional puppet shows, batik textiles, the *saman* dance, kris swords, the *angklung* and the *noken*. Meanwhile, in terms of Indonesia's more tangible cultural heritage, there are the temples of Borobudur and Prambanan, as well as the Sangiran early-man site in Central Java. These are crucial groundwork in Indonesia's goal of becoming a major player on the world stage.

Having established Indonesia's cultural diversity as an important building block of our ever-evolving global civilization, Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture will develop Indonesia Cultural House in several strategic locations around the world. Indonesia Cultural House will introduce the country's many wonderful customs and traditions to people living all over the globe. With this objective in mind, it is important for the project to develop activities aimed at the dissemination and proliferation of Indonesian culture, which, at its unveiling, will be laid open to the general public in various place around the world. In these enriching spaces, people can learn about Indonesia's culture, history, arts and social development, all packaged in an all-encompassing national journey. More than just a passive spectacle though, visitors to the centres and people interested in Indonesia will also have the opportunity to learn language, music and traditional dances directly from Indonesian experts in their respective expertise.

With its aim of galvanising appreciation for Indonesia in all of its fascinating cultural wealth, Indonesia Cultural House will be focusing on several areas. There will be exhibitions of Indonesian art work, both classical and contemporary. Dances and music are also on the agenda. Expect plenty of the country's traditional puppet shows, as well as screenings of Indonesian movies, traditional martial-arts demonstrations, exhibitions of traditional weaponry such as the kris, literary readings, last but not least, a cavalcade of Indonesian culinary bazaars.





In addition, basic knowledge on the country's rich cultural heritage will also be available in the form of classes in order to allow visitors to play a much more active part in their relationship with Indonesia. In its role as an Indonesian cultural-learning centre, the Indonesian Cultural House will offer classes in traditional dances, musical instruments such as the *gamelan* and *kulintang*, batik-making sessions, Indonesian language instruction, and even classes in cooking traditional food.

Indonesia Cultural House is being developed as a joint effort between the Ministry of Culture and Education of Indonesia and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and preparations have been underway since 2012. In the near future, the project is expected to bear fruits in the ten countries of the United States, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Turkey, Australia, Japan, East Timor, Singapore and Myanmar.

Currently, the Indonesia Cultural House has already been built in East Timor, and soon will also be gracing Australia and the Netherlands. ■

What's new on INDONESIA CULTURAL HOUSE AROUND THE WORLD IN 2015

Indonesia Cultural House in Australia

1. Indonesia Movie Screening
*17th August in Indonesian Embassy and
Indonesia Consular*
2. Traditional Puppet Screening
9th August in Indonesia Embassy
3. Indo-Oz in Brisbane
8th August 2015
4. Indonesia Festival in Canberra
8th October 2015
5. Indofest in Adelaide
September/October 2015

Indonesia Cultural House in Netherlands

1. Rise of Indonesian Architecture
Rotterdam, September 2015
2. Indonesia Bazaar
Den Haag, 5th-7th September 2015
3. Indonesia Cultural Night
Den Haag, October 2015
4. Leine Robana
Amsterdam, December 2015

Indonesia Cultural House in Japan

1. Indonesia Culinary Workshop
Tokyo, August 2015
2. Rampak Kendang and Debus
Workshop
Tokyo, September 2015

Indonesia Cultural House in Turkey

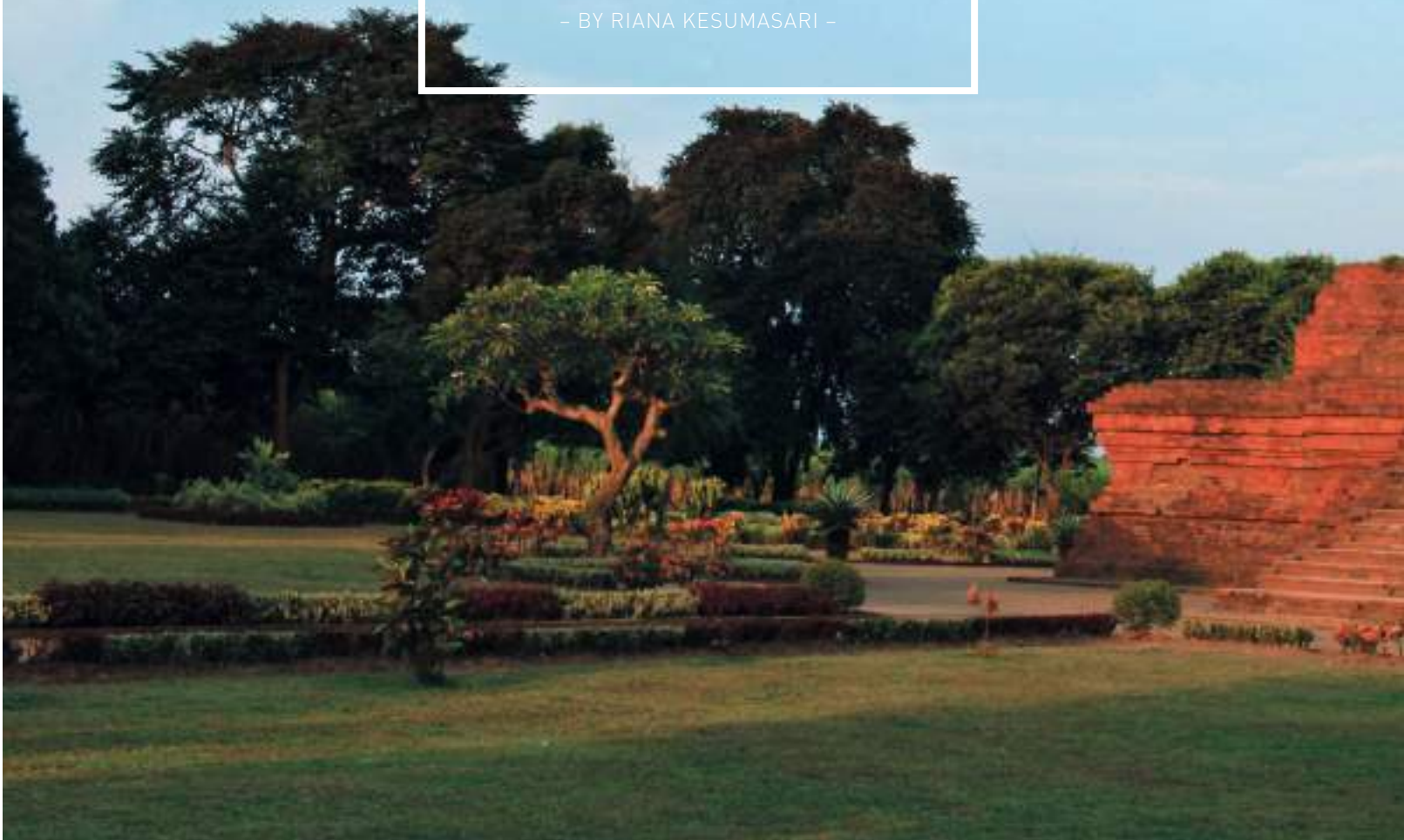
1. Indonesia Culinary Week
September 2015
2. Endonezya Taritim
August and September 2015

ANCIENT HISTORY

Trowulan

The Heart of Majapahit

– BY RIANA KESUMASARI –





If we look back into the history of Indonesia, we can ascertain that the kingdom of Majapahit is indeed one of the biggest influences as to how Indonesia is now shaped as a nation. Just imagine the ancient scattered kingdoms amongst the sprawling islands within the archipelago. One cannot help but be in awe of how all of that became what is known as Indonesia today. We have Majapahit, the largest and strongest amongst these kingdoms, to thank for that. Even the Kingdom of Champa and China were well-acquainted with the power held by Majapahit back then.

And yet as we gleaned further into details; how the kingdom was formerly a mere woodland area, how Raden Wijaya first fashion at the Majapahit village, and how, with his tenacity, this man who would later be crowned as Kertarajasa Jayawardhana, successfully transformed that little village into one of the most powerful and well-respected kingdoms in the history of the nation; it's confounding how little we really know about Majapahit.

Having said that, it's understandable why many archaeologists are so determined to find anything related to the kingdom. In this story, we'll focus on where the heart of the kingdom used to be located. Our starting point is the ancient manuscript of Negarakertagama and a number of other artefacts, all of which points to a place known as Trowulan.

Kedaton Temple

Considered to be the most mysterious temple in Trowulan, since no archaeologist has been able to assert the original form of the site.

IN BETWEEN MANUSCRIPT AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Negarakertagama, a manuscript written by Mpu Prapanca, reveals a number of details of what Majapahit was like in its heyday. According to this old manuscript, the settlement's palace was surrounded by tall, red brick wall and that the main gate, which was a massive entrance made of iron ornate, was located at the north end of the building.

On the courtyard of the north gate were houses of worship. A pool surrounds the west side of the courtyard and it's not uncommon to see people taking their baths in the water here. At the south end were doors that led to the building that houses the royal family's ranks of maids, while the other side boasts a yard filled with *bale-bale* that doubles as a waiting area for those who wanted to see the king. Meanwhile, Sebalah Royal Palace – a building with red brick, decorated with carved wooden pillars and ornate clay – can be found at the east ward.

The manuscript revealed more than just the palace's layout. Another poem within the manuscript also depicts its housing situation, particularly that of the capital. It was described as “a place of settlement that can be addressed





without having to go through the rice fields". This is further supported by reliefs found in the temples in Trowulan, which portrays a city in a ward surrounded by a wall – a unique characteristic among coastal royal cities.

An archaeological excavation carried out a few years ago showed Trowulan as an area of approximately 10,000 hectares. There have been many discoveries in the area. Some are artefacts, while others are in the form of manmade constructs. Numerous temples have been found in various

sites within the excavation project. Some are still in good condition, while others are struggling to stay intact.

One of the most remarkable discoveries in the area is a massive, ancient pond called Segaran. It's 6.5-hectare in size and is surrounded by a tiered brick wall 1.6-metre high and 2.8-metre deep. It is said that the pond was discovered by Maclain Pont, a Dutch architect and archaeologist famous for his thesis on Javanese and western architecture.

This pool is said to serve a number of purposes. It was supposedly used

Waringin Lawang

The grand split gate which is believed to be the entrance to the residence of Majapahit's most popular prime minister, Gajah Mada.

as a water reservoir and that, back in the 14th century, was made to address and manage flood water in Trowulan. The discovery of this pool, as well as the discovery of clay-made water pipes around the area, has led to theories that Majapahit was already equipped with a well-constructed irrigation system at the time.

MAP TROWULAN



LAND OF TEMPLES AND CEMETERIES

There are approximately eight temples that have been found in Trowulan. The temples are found standing somewhat far apart from each other and do not seem to form from a single site. It is strongly believed that some temples, such as the Bajangratu Temple, were made as a symbol of the coronation of the king. Bajangratu, in particular, is locally believed to be the symbolic site of the coronation of King Jayanegara, who was crowned when he still a child. No one has been able to assert the exact function of the temples. Indeed, there are many who believe that these temples are the gates of Majapahit Kingdom.



Candi Tikus
Bathing Place

Bajang Ratu
Believed to be the symbolic site of the coronation of King Jayanegara.



Tikus Temple

Earned the name from the fact that the site used to be inhabited by rats.

Two temples were found relatively well preserved. One is the Brahu Temple located in Bejijong village. It appears to be a single part of a cluster of temples surrounding the Trowulan area. According to documents now being kept in the Trowulan Museum, Brahu was made of bricks and was fashioned, back in the 14th century before the restoration, after Buddhist-style design. It was 25.7-metre tall,

15-metre long and 22.5-metre wide. Brahu Temple is also known as the tallest temple in East Java.

The second is the Tikus Temple – the name of which was derived from the fact that, before its discovery, the site was often inhabited by rats. Archaeologists say that the temple was likely used by the royal family to store its water supply and as a bathing pond, though there are also those who argued that it was more of a communal storage site used by the general populace of Trowulan.

There is another significant site found in the area Trowulan: the tomb of Princess Campa. It is even referred directly in the Negarakertagama manuscript, specifically regarding the stories of Bhre Kertabumi and King Brawijaya, kings of Majapahit who were married to the daughters of Campa. The marriage is a political one and the manuscript illustrates how the marriage would secure economic and trade relations between Majapahit and Campa. Indeed, the existence of the tomb is proof that the ancient manuscript is not a manmade fabrication.





Reliefs crafted on one of the temples in Trowulan.

We can ascertain that the kingdom of Majapahit is indeed one of the biggest influences as to how Indonesia is now shaped as a nation.

VARIOUS ARTEFACTS AND HANDICRAFTS

We cannot leave the topic of Majapahit without the mention of ancient artefacts found in the archaeological sites of Trowulan. Commonly made of clay, wood, iron and gold, these artefacts are found scattered in various parts of the site. The discovery of gold, in the form of coin or craft, showed that there were goldsmiths in Majapahit at the time. Java has no gold reserves, which means that the gold found here was imported from Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi – an important indication of thriving trade.

In fact, there was a village in Trowulan called Kemas, the name of which is perhaps derived from the word *emas* or “gold”. Aside from gold, Trowulan also has caches of jewelry,

as well as tools used to work on the gold, such as small cups of clay used to melt gold. These cups would later be used to print the gold using a wax method.

There are also clay containers used to melt bronze. Pakis Village, which is located in the south end of the site, is rich with these discoveries. Most of the bronze were apparently used to print money in the form of large coins or talismans in stone moulds. Other metal items include lights ornate bronze, water containers, bells, objects used in religious ceremonies, as well as musical instruments. In Java and Bali, discoveries have been made on similar items, but made of wood. Another sign of a lively trade conditions is the discovery of iron ores, which, like gold, is not a

commonly found natural resource in Java and were thus most likely a result of trade.

And then there are the pottery and terracotta artefacts. Objects found from the era are shaped delicately yet intricate and in diverse forms, which indicates that the craft of terracotta was an important profession at the time. Archaeologists have discovered terracotta crafts with unique shape – some depicting gods, animals and buildings, while other are slabs that portray the state of nature. These crafts were so intricate that antique collectors were said to be hunting them at the black market. These days though, such objects fall under the protection and preservation of the Majapahit Museum. ■



FAST FACT

- Trowulan site has been suggested as the site of the eponymous capital city of the Majapahit Kingdom, which is described by Mpu Prapanca in the 14th-century poem Nagarakertagama and in a 15th-century Chinese source. It was razed due to the invasion of Girindrawardhana to defeat Kertabhumi in 1478. After this event, Majapahit's capital moved to Daha.
- The ancient city ruins at Trowulan had been discovered by the 19th century.
- Excavations in and around Trowulan have shown that parts of the old settlement still lie buried under several metres of mud and volcanic debris, a result of the frequent eruptions of nearby Mount Kelud, as well as frequent flooding of the Brantas River.

Bajang Ratu is located a mere 0.7 kilometres away from Tikus Temple.

***EARLY MODERN
HISTORY***

The Pinisi Tradition

The Seafaring Pinisi

**A story about
Indonesia's seaworthy
ancestral past**

– BY YULITA RANGKUTI –





There is a reason why the song “Nenek Moyangku Seorang Pelaut” – literally translated as “My Ancestors Are Sailors” – is a popular folksong. Indonesia is an archipelago, so it stands to reason that our ancestors are expert seafarers. The old wooden ships – still standing strong after months of journeying the sea – are testament to their skills as excellent navigators.

Tribesmen from Sulawesi are especially regarded for their sailing and boat-making skills. These wooden ships were the main mode of transportation for many people in the globe and ship builders are highly prized for their craft as they play a major role in the economic and political development of any nation. Seafaring nations such as England and Spain are also famous for their ships.

Pinisi boat,
Sumbawa island,
Indonesia

“
*The first pinisi was
made in the 14th century,
though the boat had a
different name at the time.
The designer is Prince
Sawerigading, the crown
prince of Luwu Kingdom.*
”

A SULAWESI PRIMA DONNA

The Indonesian prima donna of ships is the pinisi. It was designed and produced en masse hundreds of years ago by boat makers from Bulukumba or Makassar, two tribes that are well-known as ship builders whose talents have been employed by sailors from many regions in the country.



The wooden boat
of Pinisi sailing
the sea.

It's amazing to consider that the boat is completely made of wood. There is no modern or magical technology keeping the boat intact. The wood boards themselves are stuck together without nails to prevent cracks from permeating during the trip. The average pinisi are between 15 and 40 metres long and they boast two masts that are 35 metres tall, as well as seven fore-and-aft sails. These sails give the boat unparalleled speed among other boats in the region at the time.

According to a number of ancient manuscripts, the first pinisi was made in the 14th century, though the boat had a different name at the time. The designer is Prince Sawerigading, the crown prince of Luwu Kingdom. It was used to sail to China to propose to a Chinese Princess named We Cudai. The boat carried him safely to China, where Princess We Cudai would agree to be his betrothed. On his journey back to Luwu, his boat was struck by a massive wave that tore his ship into three, each marooning to the three villages of Ara, Tanah Lemo and Bira.

The people of the three villages ended up putting the boat back together. The people of Ara repaired the parts, while the people in Tanah Lemo put the parts together. The people of Bira then added the finishing touches, including the idea of putting seven sails on the boat. They all agreed to call the boat the Pinisi, which means "sail" in their native tongue.



A SPECIAL BOAT-MAKING RITUAL

The pinisi was originally constructed as a transporter of goods, and it is thus much smaller than other ships travelling the ocean at the time. Even so, the effectiveness of its design has led to continued production up until today. An area that, until today, is still making boats is Tana Beru district in Bulukumba Regency. The builders here are steadfast in nurturing the age-old traditions that goes into making a pinisi.

A pinisi has always been made using simple tools and it is done by no more than 10 craftsmen – usually

called a sawi – led by a chief craftsman called a punggawa. All the core elements of the ship are made of wood, particularly teak, ironwood and the new guinea teak. As mentioned earlier, no iron nails are used in the making of the pinisi. The boards are nailed together using wood leftover from the body-making process. The length of building depends on the size of the boat, though a single boat could take from one to two years to finish. The materials for the ships are also handpicked and special rituals are held in the making of the boat – from its creation to when the time comes to let the boat go to sea.



Today, Tana Beru and Bira (Bulukumba, South Sulawesi) are the centres of pinisi making craftsmanship. And it's quite amazing to see these people at work. There is no book or papers with guidelines on how to make the boat. All is done completely by memory. This specialised skills has led Bulukumba regency to given the moniker Butta Panrita Lopi or "the ground where the pinisi makers live". Their boats have sailed as far as Vancouver in Canada, as well as Japan and Madagascar, where they are displayed in maritime exhibitions.

That said, the livelihood of the pinisi builders are under the threat of

extinction. As technology improves, so do wanes the interest of the younger members of the people of Bulukumba. Builders are lacking apprentices to pass their skills unto. Another problem is the lack of wood. The quality of wood in the area has been on the decline, with mass deforestation further exacerbating the issue. A ship builder would often go to the forests themselves to pick the wood because they can't use just any wood. The wood for the hull, for example, must be slightly bent so as not to break. The new guinea trees supplying this wood are ideal for this purpose but the process to replant the new guinea trees is very time-consuming.

Facing those threats, the state has to safeguard the traditional technology system in the boatbuilding process developed by the custodian of the knowledge and skills – the Bulukumba Regency, South Sulawesi Province. The government is now committed to the implementation of pinisi safeguarding efforts and will cooperate with UNESCO and other countries to further the cause.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Education and Culture, together with the local governments and other relevant parties will maintain and strive to improve the cultural ecosystem and supply of the boat raw material by allocating their budget, and provide the expertise.

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The government is now committed to the implementation of pinisi safeguarding efforts and will cooperate with UNESCO and other countries to further the cause.
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A NATIONAL MARITIME ICON

For both the Indonesian and international public, pinisi has become the epitome of the Archipelago's indigenous sailing craft. Construction and deployment of such vessels stand in the millennia-long tradition of Austronesian boatbuilding and

navigation that brought forth a broad variety of sophisticated watercraft, ranging from the outriggered boats that enabled man to migrate throughout the vast expanses of the Pacific and Indian Oceans to the massive ships encountered by the first European intruders into the Malay Archipelago.

Out of the two types of pinisi boats – namely the lambo and palari – only the lambo has remained in use. Out of the two, the palari is the smaller sized boat. Furthermore, most of the more modular lambo are now equipped with motors.

This national maritime icon has seen use both as a transportation device and a liveaboard vessel. Many pinisi have been decked out with modern facilities. Trips from Labuan Bajo in Lombok, and many other tourism destinations in Maluku, continue to employ the pinisi. Indeed, the pinisi may be an old lady, but it remains the prima donna of the Indonesian seas until today. ■

The Pinisi has sailed to Vancouver, Canada, as well as Japan and Madagascar.

After hundreds of years, the Pinisi remains the nation's maritime icon until today.



WORLD HERITAGE SITE





KOMODO ISLAND

A Blast From The Past

A Real Jurassic Park
Right Here In Indonesia

– BY MARIA SUSANTI –



Komodo dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*) is a giant monitor lizard found on a few islands in Indonesia, including Komodo Island.

Steven Spielberg, the Director of Jurassic Park captured our imagination of what would happen to human beings if dinosaurs were to exist today. The fourth film in the franchise, dubbed Jurassic World, is also set to entertain moviegoers in June. But why wait till then to taste the thrill of looking back into the era of giant lizards. Why not head to Komodo National Park, where real giant lizards roam the earth.

One of Indonesia's most treasured national heritages, Komodo National Park is located in a border region between the provinces of East Nusa Tenggara and West Nusa Tenggara. The park consists of three main islands: Komodo, Padar and Rinca, as well as 26 smaller islands. As whole, the park encompasses a total area of 1,733 square metres, only 603 square metres of which is land. Founded in 1980, this national park is erected in order to protect the Komodo dragon, the world's largest lizard. In 1991, the national park was declared as UNESCO World Heritage Site and has served as a sanctuary for a number of species, land-based and marine alike.

AN ISLAND OF ITS KIND

The Komodo Dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*) was first discovered by the scientific world in 1912 by J.K.H. Van Steyn. The islands to which they are endemic to are inhabited by a population of around 5,700 komodos. It was their fearsome appearance and aggressive behaviour that led to them being called 'Komodo dragons'. They have also become the subject of the study of evolution due to the fact that they are found nowhere else – not to mention the scenic landscape of the islands, which are rich in craggy hillsides, dry savannah, green vegetation, brilliant white sandy beaches and the cerulean surfaces of its coral-laden shores.

The island is home to dry and hot climates, as characterised by vegetation found mostly in savannah. This in turn makes it a good habitat for the endemic Komodo. Their population are restricted to the islands of Komodo (1,700), Rinca (1,300), Gili Motang (100), Gili Dasami (100), and Flores (2,000). It was also found on the island of Padar but they have been hunted to extinction there. The climate in the island is also one of the driest in Indonesia, with annual rainfall estimated to be between a mere 800mm and 1000mm. The highest daily temperature – 40 degrees Celcius – occurs during the dry season from May to October.





Komodo dragon
on Rinca Island.



Komodo dragon seen at one of the beaches of Komodo Island.

Another fauna that has made the park their home possess characteristic similar to the Wallacean zoogeographic region, with seven notable species of terrestrial mammal, such as the endemic rat (*Rattus rintjanus*) and the crab-eating macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*), as well as 72 species of birds, such as the lesser sulphur-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua sulphurea*), the orange-footed scrub fowl (*Megapodius reinwardt*), and the noisy friarbird (*Philemon buceroides*).

The coral reefs found off the coast of Komodo are diverse and beautiful because of the clear water, its intense sunlight and the rapid exchange of nutrient-rich water from the deeper areas of the archipelago helps nurture their growth. The marine fauna and flora are generally similar to

other genera found throughout the Indo Pacific area, though there is a significantly larger diversity in terms of species. Notable marine mammals include the blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*) and the sperm whale (*Physeter catodon*), as well as 10 species of dolphins and dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) and five species of sea turtles.

The diversity of the marine flora, together with the crystal clear sea water and the white sandy beach makes the islands a perfect retreat for beach activities and diving. One of beaches in Komodo Island even sports pink sand due to the disjointed coloration from chipped off corals and shell. The sea current is also one of the strongest in Indonesia; divers must be certified and experienced, or must at least be accompanied by one.



ON KOMODOS AND HUMAN

The majority of the people who live in and around the park are fishermen from Bima (Sumbawa), Manggarai, South Flores and the Bajao, and Bugis tribes from South Sulawesi. The Bajao was a nomadic tribe before they settle as a people in the islands of Sulawesi, Nusa Tenggara and Moluccas. The original people of Komodo island – the Ata Modo – still live there, but have intermixed with members of other tribes and very little of their original culture and language are left intact.

Currently, there are nearly 4,000 people living within the four main settlements within the park; living in villages that have existed before the area was declared a national park. Human settlements in the islands have been traced to the year

1928, when as many as 30 people were recorded living in Komodo Village. In 1930, 250 people have settled Rinca Island. The population has since increased rapidly and, by 1999, there were 281 families and 1,169 people living on Komodo. Komodo Village is the most densely populated village within the park following an influx of people from Sape, Manggarai and South Sulawesi.

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The diversity of the marine flora, together with the crystal clear sea water and the white sandy beach makes the islands a perfect retreat for beach activities and diving.

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The settlement within the park.



Traditional village in Bajawa, Flores.

According to the Statistic Bureau of Indonesia, the number of buildings in Komodo village has also increased rapidly – from 30 houses in 1958, to 194 houses in 1994, and then 270 houses in 2000. Papagaran village is similar in size, with 258 families comprising of a total of 1,078 people. As of the 2010 census, Komodo village is inhabited by 1,508 people, while Papagaran village has 1,262 inhabitants. Meanwhile, in 1999, as many as 835

people lived in Rinca Island, while another main village, Kerora, boasts a population of 185 people. The total population currently living in the park is 3,267 people, with 16,816 people living in the area immediately surrounding the park.

The majority of those who live in these islands have not finished elementary school. There is an elementary school located in each of the villages but new students are not recruited each year. Those who do go on to continue to high school would have to migrate to Labuan Bajo – which in itself is rare among the fishermen's families there.

Indeed, Labuan Bajo may be regarded the main vein that connects Komodo Islands to the rest of the world because every vessel heading to Komodo Island departs from this city. Labuan Bajo has benefited greatly from the park's touristic value, with immigrants from Bali, Sape, Manggarai and other regions in Nusa Tenggara settling themselves down and growing the local economy. ■

A komodo dragon seen on Horseshoe Bay, Rinca Island.





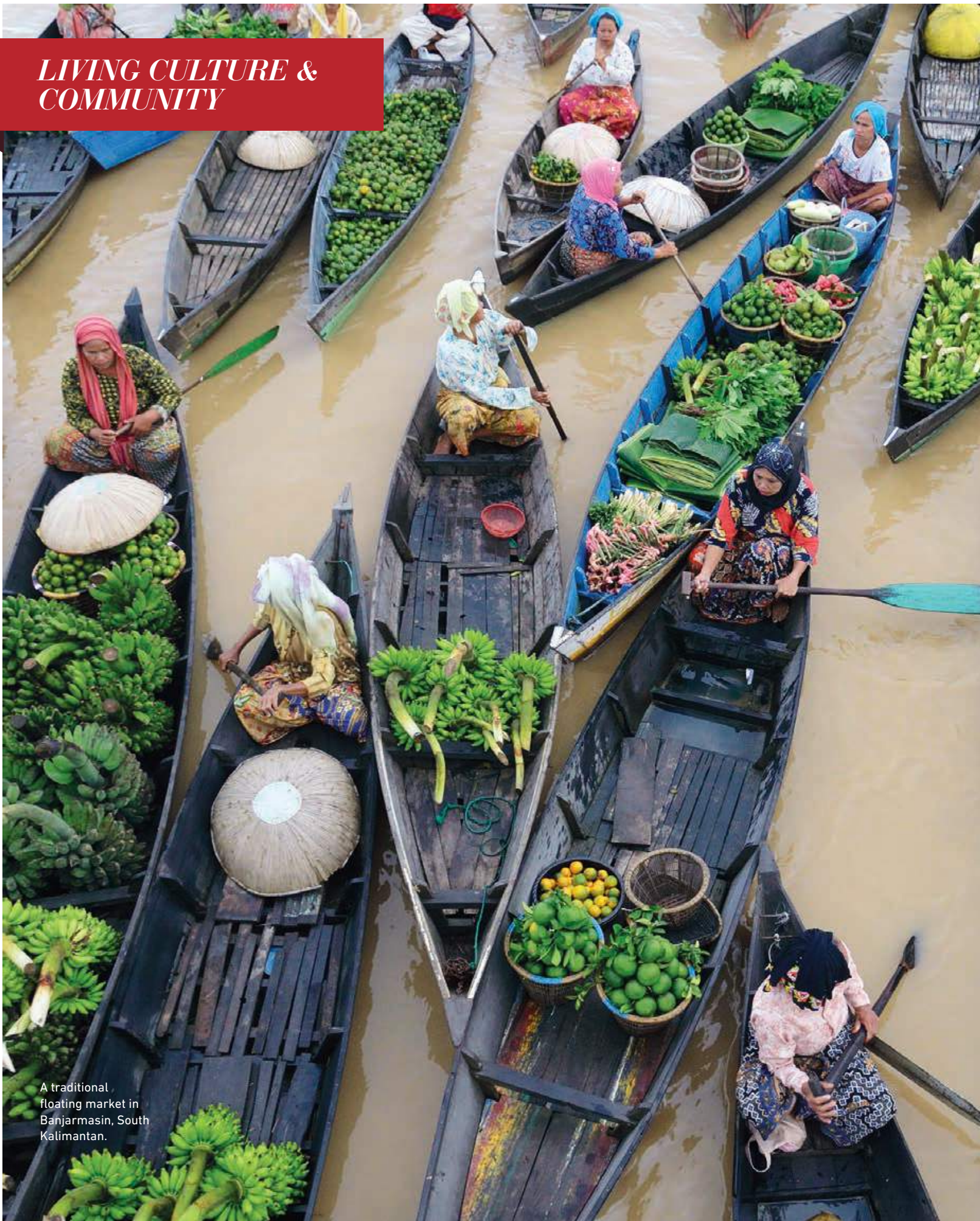
FAST FACT

- Komodo National Park comprises three major islands: Komodo, Rinca and Padar, as well as numerous smaller islands creating a total surface area – marine and land – of 1,817 square kilometres. However, proposed extensions would bring the total surface area up to 2,321 square kilometres.
- The fishing village of Kampung Komodo is an hour-long walk south of Loh Liang. It's a friendly stilted Bugis village that's full of goats, chickens and children. The inhabitants are said to be descendants of convicts exiled to the island in the 19th century by one of the sultans in Sumbawa.
- The Komodo Dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*) is an endangered species which can only be found in the Komodo National Park. Because of the unique and Arare nature of this animal, the park was then declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1986.

HOW TO GET THERE

- There are daily flights from Jakarta to Labuan Bajo, as well as from Denpasar, Bali. Those who crave adventure may take a sailing trip from Lombok on a wooden vessel. The latter makes for an unforgettable escapade before the real adventure begins on Komodo Islands.

LIVING CULTURE & COMMUNITY



A traditional floating market in Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan.



THE FLOATING MARKETS OF

Muara Kuin and Lok Baintan

A New Way to Haggle and Peddle

– BY BUDI SANTOSA –

One of joys of being a traveller is to witness the habits of locals elsewhere around the world; to see how people outside our own home live their daily lives. The market is thus one of the most revealing places that visitors would want to visit. There is just something very charming about observing people haggling over goods or naturally conversing. It's also where you'll find the some of the most exotic things, and even bigger surprises the deeper we go into a market.

In some cities where rivers are extensively as a means of transportation, a floating market is often a common sight. There is a quaint, and almost acrobatic quality to this type of traditional market where traders peddle and transfer their good straight from their boats. Thailand and Vietnam are well known for this kind of market. In Indonesia the city of Banjarmasin in South Kalimantan also boasts a number of floating markets, the most prominent of which are Lok Baintan and Muara Kuin.



SOUTH KALIMANTAN



AN ICON OF BANJARMASIN

Banjarmasin has a long history as a city. Founded on September 24, 1526, the city owes its formation to the rising number of businesses developing within its waterways. It is the trade activities bore the floating market of Muara Kuin, which is located downstream of the Kuin River in Banjarmasin, and Lok Baintan on the Martapura River in Banjar. It is in fact a privilege to witness the trading in action, as it dates back to the reign of the Banjar Sultanate.

Indeed, the market is home not only to the buying and selling of goods. Traders trade commodities, and business deals are brokered regularly in boats. And while the amount of marketable goods continues to decline with the advent of more technologically advanced methods, many indispensable goods, such as agricultural products, are still being traded today. It goes without saying that the floating market has also become a major tourist attraction.

Traders in Lok Baintan try to find customers.

The Lok Baintan Floating Market usually opens from just after dawn until the boats disperse mid-morning. Buyers and sellers use small traditional boats called a “klotok”. Traders, mostly women, would pre-emptively approach buyers in their *klotoks* to hawk their goods; which range from fruits like rambutans, bananas, guavas and oranges, to vegetables like cassava leaves, water spinach and cauliflowers. You’ll also find plenty of traditional snacks. Casual conversations and intense haggling are widely practiced, if not expected, as it makes the market livelier.

The sellers in these floating markets usually offer their goods in large quantities so you can forget buying one or two rambutans as souvenirs. Be prepared to share your purchase with your family or share them among friends. Thankfully, there are plenty of exotic fruits worth buying. Take the Kalimantan mango or *kasturi* (*Mangifera casturi*) for example. It may taste similar to an ordinary mango, but it tends to be softer and with less flesh. There is also the *rambai* (*Baccaurea motleyana*), which is a bit like *longan* or similar to another rare fruit, the *menteng*. There is also the *duku* fruit, which is also known as *langsats* or *lanzones*, the latter of which is somewhat common in Indonesia.

Traders trade commodities and marketable goods in Lok Baintan floating market.





ENJOYING THE FLOATING MARKET

To have the best experience in enjoying the floating market, it is advisable to depart from your hotel very early in the morning. The market start soon after dawn and there's nothing quite like getting involved in all the talking and haggling before the sun starts rising too high and more and more people crowd the river. You can even rent a "klotok" or small motor boat to get a real feel of the process.

Do take caution, as travelling in the small boats can be challenging. They are usually only 5-metre long and 1.5-metre wide. Inexperienced visitors can expect to fall of the boat as its rocks frequently and unsteadily. That said, once you've acclimated yourself to the shifting balance of the boat, you'll find yourself treated to some wonderful sceneries as you travel to the market – from sparsely populated sedge grass meadows to dewy green plantations. Another perks to leaving early in the wee hours are the beautiful scattering of stars of the-pre-dawn sky, fading ever so slowly as the sun rolls in.

Another reason why the floating markets are so popular is the fact that they are run by farmers who would bring their yields directly to the merchants, who purchase them in bulk. The merchants, with their *klotok*, would then take the produce and re-sell it to the townsfolk. You'll also find craftsmen selling clothes and handicrafts.

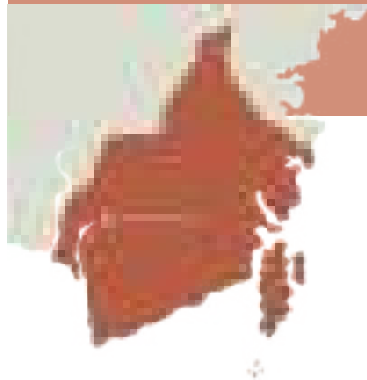
After all the talking, bumping of boats and the haphazard balancing act of trying to stay on the boat, end your day with a portion of Soto Banjar. A combination of *lontong*, spicy clear broth with shredded of chicken, eggs, vegetables and potatoes, there is no other meal more rustic to complete your floating market adventure. ■

FAST FACT

- The existence of floating market is very much part of the city's history. In 1526, Sultan Suriansyah built a kingdom on the edge of the Kuin and Barito rivers that later became Banjarmasin city.
- A traditional trade centre gradually developed along these rivers and Banjarmasin then became home to the floating market in Muara Kuin and the other in Lok Baintan on the Martapura River.
- The Martapura River divides the city and provides for water transportation, trade and tourism.
- Banjarmasin is dubbed Kota Air or Water City since it lies a few centimetres below sea level.

HOW TO GET THERE

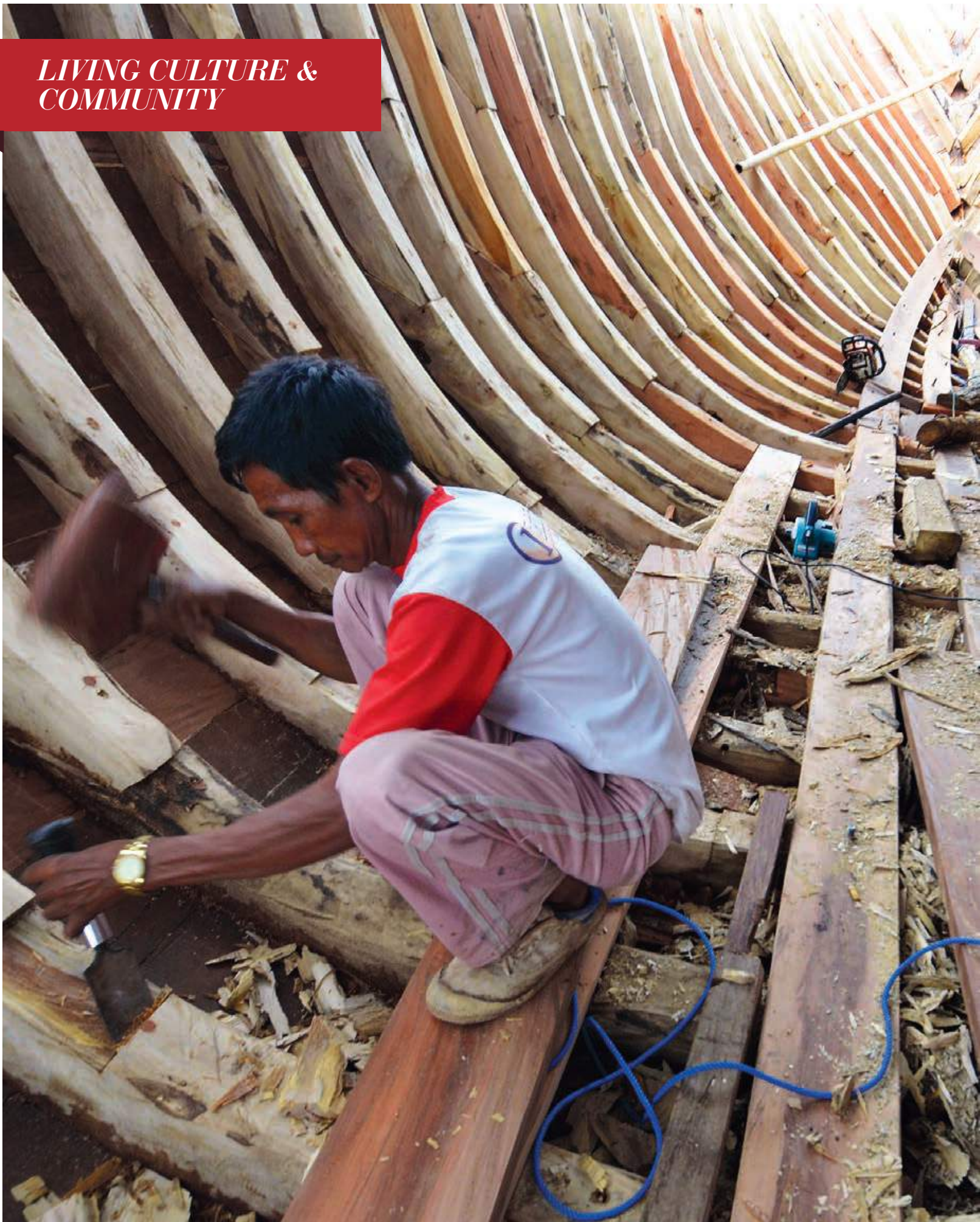
- Fly in the afternoon or at night to Banjarmasin and stay for one night.
- Use a chartered or rented car and boat (plus a local guide) to take you to the floating market. Get up before dawn and get there early.
- If you had decided to rent a car, look for a driver with experience of driving guests. It's a four hour trip to Loksado and it's a good time to glean some local tips and tricks from your driver.





The greatest floating market at South Borneo (Kalimantan) Indonesia.

*LIVING CULTURE &
COMMUNITY*





House Building and Boatbuilding Ceremony

Behind the Boats and Houses

– BY NOVIA RAHMAWATI –

Many native Indonesians still believe that there is a cosmological power ruling over nature that continues to have profound effect on the lives of men and all other living things on earth. This is why you'll find many Indonesian rituals dedicated to craftsmanship. This is particularly prevalent in the construction of boats and houses, two manmade objects crafted with the bounty of nature expected to have long-lasting effects.

ALL BEGINS LONG BEFORE IT SAILS

Boatbuilding is an integral part of the daily life in many villages in the country, especially in the three villages of Lemo-Lemo, Ara and Bira. It governs most of the community's social, economic and cultural fabric. Indeed, about 70 per cent of the population of the districts make a living through work related to boatbuilding and navigation. For them, those elements are not only their economic mainstay, but the central focus of their lives and identity as well. Having said that, it's highly understandable that the boatbuilding ritual becomes an essential part one must learn in order to complete the task.



One of the workmen responsible to build the boat.

The first thing one needs to know about the ritual of boatbuilding is the key parties involved. There are Panrita Lopi, Sawi and Sambalu. The Panrita Lopi – the master shipwrights of Lemo-Lemo and Ara – are the bearers of the erudite knowledge of *tatta* (plank patterns) plans. In most cases, they also lead the essential rituals performed throughout the building process. A Panrita Lopi oversees a group of workmen and manages the division of work and labour. The position of Panrita Lopi is inherited through family ties or through persistent engagement in boat construction.

The other party needed to complete the ritual is Sawi, a group

of workmen who are responsible to build the boat. Based on their skills and dependability, Sawi are ranked from Sawi Kepala (foreman), Sawi Kabusu (senior shipwright) to Sawi Pamula (a novice shipwright). And finally, the last key persons required in the boatbuilding ceremony are Sambalu, the customers of the Panrita Lopi. They submit the measurement and type of boat to be built.

Out of all the stories involving the relationship between the sea and man's main method of traversing it, the story of the pinisi from Tana Beru and the sailors from the Bira, Bulukumba, stand apart. Few now realise the skills required to be on par with the past sailors from these areas in the southern

tip of Sulawesi Island. But it's a skill that's been honed across hundreds of years of sailing – a tradition that cannot be separated from the fact that these are the same people who created Indonesia's most well-known boat.

The creation of the pinisi is akin to a complete ritual. Led by a Panrita Lopi, villagers would first conduct various biddings in order to prepare ceremonies. Cakes and sweets are made to ensure that the boat would be profitable. A white chicken is sacrificed – its head given to the Panrita Lopi to

affirm his position as chief, a piece to the sea to protect its voyage, and another piece thrown to the ground to ensure its safe return. All of these must be done before the building process itself.

Such rituals are not exclusive to Sulawesi. The people of Bali and Madura, for example, would drill a hole in the end of the bow of the keel, which would be filled with spell. The hole is then closed using the blood of the animal. The builder and the buyer would then exchange gifts at the end of the ceremony.

Today, the centres of boatbuilding are located at Tana Beru and Bira (Bulukumba, South Sulawesi) and Batu Licin (South Kalimantan). The shipwrights of Ara would also offer their services at any location throughout the Malay Archipelago. However, until the 1950's, the main construction sites were at Lemo-Lemo and Bira.

The boatbuilding ritual is an integral part one takes seriously before creating a boat in many villages in the country.

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Out of all the stories involving the relationship between the sea and man's main method of traversing it, the story of the pinisi from Tana Beru and the sailors from the Bira, Bulukumba, stand apart.”



PASSED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

To ensure the boatbuilding tradition is alive and well, the knowledge and skills of the ceremony are passed down from generation to generation within the family circle, and may also be transferred to individuals outside the family who evince a desire to learn. Any knowledge transmitted within the family is passed from parents to children through habituation, example and repetition, whilst knowledge transmission to individuals outside the family circle is conducted through the division of labour. And noted that knowledge related to *tatta* building plans and the ritual background is passed only to individuals who are capable and passionate to master the skill.

The pull-chain of the Pinisi is ready to be used.

The worker of Pinisi boat giving offerings during the boat-building ritual.





To inherit further sophisticated knowledge about boatbuilding, one must demonstrate self-efficacy and spiritual maturity. Based on intuition and guidance that is believed to come from God, a Panrita Lopi would then select a “rightful” inheritor to such learning and gradually share his “secret and sacred” knowledge. This final training commences with the details of *tatta* plans and concludes with the erudition related to rituals and their esoteric background.

HEAVEN ON EARTH

Akin to boatbuilding, the adherence to tradition also extends to the practice of creating one’s home. Indeed, much like how a sailor would develop a close relationship to the sea, a farmer must also maintain his relationship to the land.

Take the people of Buton, Riau Islands, who equate the house to a woman. Each section of a home must thus possess all the parts of a woman, each part serving the specific purpose it is based on. Other communities believe that a house must have poles that stick to the ground – a reflection of the tree from which the house is made of.

It is often the case that, even before the construction process, builders must ask pray to ask permission of the “gatekeeper” waiting construction site. Furthermore, when the main pole is inserted into the ground, builders must also bury several objects in the hole before decorating with *sesajen* (offerings) such as coconut, sugar cane and bananas. The installation of the roof also plays an important role and is traditionally assisted by all members of the nearby community.

The people of Aceh have a special house

Villagers are trying to pull the Pinisi to the sea.



Blood stain comes from a goat which is sacrificed during the boatbuilding ritual.

building ceremony, which starts all the way from the point where builders gather the materials to the point in which the owners officially move in. For example, the people of Aceh would sacrifice an animal to the spirit of the forest, in which the wood for the boards of the house are taken from. On the other hand, the coastal cities of Aceh such as Aceh Besar, Aceh Utara, Aceh Barat and



Pidie, logs and timber may only be harvested at specific time. Procuring these materials during the high tide, for example, would cause the wood to be brittle.

In any case, such ceremonies are often celebratory, with close relatives, neighbours and community members gathering together for a feast and a communal prayer. In such events, the intent and purposes of

building the house are made clear – whether it's about sheltering and nurturing a family or becoming a more productive member of society. It is refreshing to see how the act of building a house can bring people together, while at the same time escorting the journey of a home owner and hoping that his path would be filled with health, prosperity and security. ■

Villagers are working together to pull the Pinisi to the sea.

RITES & CELEBRATION



Bau Nyale and Pasola

A Closer Look On How the Sasak Community Gives Thanks

– BY RAHMI DIAN –

Sometime in February or March, the Sasak community in Lombok will find themselves extremely busy preparing for the celebration of Bau Nyale – a traditional ceremony to express gratitude to nature.

There is no Gregorian equivalent to the day of Bau Nyale. According to the Sasak calendar, the celebration is to be held five days after the full moon or at the 10th month of its calendar. These past few years however, this traditional ceremony is often seen occurring on the first few days of either February or March.

The Rato – a community leader in the local Marapu belief – is the person responsible for setting the date. This is done via a number of traditional meetings between members of the community and by watching the signs in the sky. Once all the conditions have been met and the date is agreed upon, the Sasak community makes no delay in their preparation to welcome the event.

The tradition of Bau Nyale has an extensive backstory and it has evolved alongside the Sasak community. Initially, the more prominent ceremony in Bau Nyale was the Pasola – an ancient war ritual where two groups of Sumbanese men rode horses and fling wooden spears at each other. However, another interesting element of the celebration

that involves a ritual of worm-hunting on Sager Beach, Lombok, has somewhat eclipsed the former, almost brutal, Pasola.

It is this element, in which the Sasak community is told to look for colourful sea worms or Nyale that gives this festival its current name. These worms would usually end up being eaten or taken back home. Interestingly enough, no matter how many Nyale worms are harvested during the celebration, there always seems to be enough worms for everyone. The story behind this never-ending supply of worms is attributed to the story of Princess Mandalika.

A LOMBOK FAIRYTALE

There is no exact date as to when the tale of Princess Mandalika began to take centre stage. But ask any Lombok native about the origin of the Nyale and this will be the story you'll hear.

The legend states that, once upon a time lived a princess named Mandalika, the daughter of the ruler of Lombok island, whose grace and beauty is so powerful that it became the object of contestation by the princes of the royal Nusa Tenggara area, the name of which the cluster of islands that include Lombok and Bali used to be known. The competition for her hand became so heated that it led to war between the many kingdoms of Royal Nusa Tenggara.

Distressed by the conflict, the princess secluded herself to the forests to look for answers. She reappeared later on the 20th day of the 10th month of the Sasak Calendar, having gathered the warring princes on a beach. And thus it was there, in front of her suitors, her parent and the people of Lombok, that she promised that she would not pledge herself to any one prince and that she would instead divide herself equally to everyone. She then plunged herself into the sea to the horror of everyone who gathered at the beach.

The horror turned into amazement however as, not long after, colourful blob worms began arriving to shore. Believing it was their princess returning to them, the people of Lombok began taking the worms and feast upon them. It is since then, during Bau Nyale in Seger Beach in Kuta, Lombok, that the Sasak community would gather at the beach to wait for these colourful worms.

The ritual also signifies the importance of the Rato, a person whose greatness must be apparent in order to obtain the privilege to lead the ceremony. During Bau Nyale, the Rato would perform a special ritual called “nende ayu ayuning jagad” to welcome princess Mandalika. These days, the Sasak community would also perform an epic play in keeping the memory of their dear princess.



Locals are looking for Nyale during the Bau Nyale Festival.

The worms that have been taken then will be eaten as a homage to Princess Mandalika.



It is never understood exactly how the Nyale worms began appearing off the coast of Lombok. There have been theories attributing the arrival of these sea-borne worms to the reversing flow of the Indian Ocean in accordance to the Indian Monsoon current. That said, no theory has managed to explain the seemingly unending supply of Nyale worms that washes unto the Lombok shore.

The act of eating the worms, on the other hand, is quite real as it is considered a blessing to feast upon the Nyale. Some would eat it raw while others would cook them beforehand. And yes, visitors are also expected to eat the worms, as it is considered bad luck to reject an offering of Nyale. So if you're considering on witnessing the event first-hand, do come prepared. The worms supposedly taste salty and somewhat chewy. If you want to see the festival but are unwilling to eat raw worms, feel free to ask the locals to cook them for you. They will be more than happy to share the love of Princess Mandalika.

PASOLA, A SUMBANESSE THANKSGIVING

Pasola is the name of an ancient war ritual festival that is held by two groups of selected Sumbanese men. They come riding colourful decorated horses and fling wooden spears at each other. This traditional ceremony is held in adherence to the ways of traditional norms, every year.

The festival occurs in February or March in Lamboya and Kodi, Lombok. The main activity starts several days after the full moon and it coincides with the annual arrival of the multihued sea worms locally known as Nyale upon Lombok's shore. The exact date of the event is decided by the Rato – a local community leader – who announces the date one or two weeks prior to the festival.

Pasola comes from the word Sola or Hola, which refers to a spear-like wooden stick that is flung between two opposing groups of horsemen. Only the best equines are ridden in this ritual, and only the bravest of the Sasak people are allowed to participate in all their elaborate traditional costumes.

The people of Sumba believe that the ritual has a very close link to the original customs of their people. Indeed, the act requires a strong balance between the physical, as in the material needs, and the mental, as in the spiritual needs. In other words the ritual is believed to be able to habitually

shape the people both physically and mentally, and thus allow them to achieve happiness in both earth and heaven. In addition, the Pasola is also believed to be closely linked to agriculture. Therefore any bloodshed – from sacrificial cattle or from the men participating in the ritual – is considered a symbol of prosperity.

Without blood, the Pasola is rendered meaningless. And those who fail to draw blood in a Pasola arena are believed to have broken tradition. That said, the violence in a Pasola is never egregious and there is always a level of extreme sportsmanship displayed by the participants of this ritual. ■

FAST FACT

- Bau Nyale, or the Nyale Festival, takes place every year in the tenth month of the Sasak calendar at a time close to the full moon, it's celebrated in February around 14th and 15th in the south coast beaches of Lombok.
- The most popular site for celebrating Bau Nyale is at beautiful Seger Beach near Kuta; an area called Putri Nyale (Princess Nyale) by the people of Lombok
- Meanwhile, Pasola is a thanks giving ceremony to the ancestral spirit of people from West Sumba East Nusa Tenggara, also celebrates around Februari.

HOW TO GET THERE

- There are a number of direct flights available from Jakarta and Surabaya to Lombok. If you have the luxury of time, a boat trip is the most scenic way to get to the island. You will require a car to see the Pasola ritual, which is held much further inland.

JAKARTA

SURABAYA



Pasola Tradition
 Believed to be a thanks giving ceremony to the ancestral spirit of people from West Sumba

Tabot and Tabuik

Remembering the Prophet Through Festivities

– BY ERWIN DARMAWAN –

Two celebrations in Bengkulu and Pariaman bear similar rituals and purposes. These celebrations, namely Tabot in Bengkulu and Tabuik in Pariaman, are celebrated around the Islamic New Year.

Both ceremonies, the names of which are Arabic, have the same rough meaning of “wooden ark”. The Tabot and Tabuik are local, traditional ceremonies commemorated on the 10th of Muharram of the Lunar Calendar. Aside from its significance as an Islamic New Year celebration, the ceremonies are also symbols and expressions of sorrow for the Prophet Muhammad’s grandsons Hasan and Husein bin Ali bin Abi Thalib, who died in battle in the plains of Karbala.

THE HISTORY OF TABOT AND TABUIK

There are no written records as to when Bengkulu and Pariaman began observing the tradition of Tabot and Tabuik. It is believed that the original tradition was originally brought in by workers employed in the construction of Fort Marlborough during the early 1700s’ in Bengkulu. The British, back then, transported builders from Madras and Bengal in Southern India.

A number of these workers, led by Imam Senggolo, also known as Sheikh Burhanuddin, decided to remain in Sumatra and establish a new settlement. Their traditions thus began assimilating with the indigenous communities of Bengkulu via marriage and other means. Their offsprings, known as the people of Sipai, are those responsible for continuing the tradition until today.



The Rabot festivity
in Bengkulu.



The musical performance plays an integral part in the Tabot/ Tabuik festival.

FAST FACT

- Tabot (Bengkulu) or Tabuik (Pariaman - West Sumatera) is a traditional ceremony to commemorate the story of heroism and death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Hasan and Husayn ibn Ali ibn Abi Talib in a battle with Zaid bin Ubaidillah troops in the field of Karbala, Iraq on 10 Muharam 61 Hijri (681 AD).
- In recent years, this tabot-tabuik celebrate soon after Islamic New Year.
- Tabuik/tabot means ark or wooden box in arabic.

Back then, the ceremony was celebrated from Bengkulu to Painan, as well as in the cities of Padang, Pariaman, Maninjau, Pidie, Banda Aceh, Meuleboh and Singkil. Nowadays however, the festival has lost its widespread popularity, with only two places in Sumatra continuing to revel in the festivities. And while the original tradition has diverged into the two ceremonies of the Tabot in Bengkulu and the Tabuik in Pariaman, the practice remain quite a sight to behold.

LET THE FESTIVITIES BEGIN

The people of Bengkulu and Pariaman would start preparing for the Tabuik two weeks prior to the main event. Many would fast to prepare for the revelry, as traditional snacks and typical Tabuik food are to be expected during the event. Teenagers are commonly responsible for creating the most important component in the celebration: a makeshift ark or wooden box, from which the festival derived its name. Made from bamboo and wood, the ark is usually made up of a body of

a winged-horse with a bust and head of a person. In Islamic literature, this creature is called the Al-Buraq, and it is believed to have carried the Prophet Muhammad in his journey from Mecca to Medina, which in itself is known as the Is'ra Miraj or "Night Journey". This ark is usually 15-metre tall and is decorated in red and gold.

The musical instruments to be used in the ceremonies are called the *dol* and the *tessa*. The *dol* is made of wood that has been hollowed in the centre and then covered with cow skin. A percussive instrument, the *dol* is between 70 and 125 centimetres in diameter, while the stick used to beat the *dol* is 5 centimetres in diameter and 30 centimetres in length. The *tessa* is also a percussive instrument, though it is made of copper, iron or aluminium. The hollowed out space of the *tessa* is covered with dried goatskin.

Once the celebration starts, revellers will begin marching to the beach. A single Tabot/Tabuik will be carried by about 40 peoples. Behind

The revellers of Tabuik Festival are arriving at the beach, marked the end of the parade.

the Tabot/Tabuik are traditionally-dressed groups of people bringing and banging the *dol* and *tessa*. Participants chant as an expression of respect to Hasan and Hussein. Along the way, you will also find martial artists demonstrating their skills while being accompanied with the traditional music. The procession comes to an end on sunset, when the Tabuik/Tabot has been brought to its destination. Local belief states the Tabuik/Tabot carries along the misfortune with its departure, thus ensuring the locals better luck in the future.

There are a number of differences between the Tabot and the Tabuik. In Bengkulu, for example, the number of Tabot that need to be carried are 17. In Pariaman there are only two Tabuik, namely Tabuik Subarang and Tabuik Pasa. The biggest difference however is the final destinations of each of the Tabot and Tabuik. The Pariaman carry the Tabuik unto the shore, finally allowing it to drift away to deep sea. The Tabot in Bengkulu ends in the swamps around the cemetery known as the resting place of Imam Sheikh Burhanuddin.

Lately, there have been a number of criticisms from various elements of society in regards to the implementation of these ceremonies. One of the most fundamental being shift in the function of the ritual ceremonies from a religious one to cultural festival. Either way, the ceremonies are two of the more important cultural and historical legacies of the country's past and it deserves preserving for that alone. ■





PERFORMING ARTS

Balinese Dance

A Pathway To Serve God

– BY MARIA SUSANTI –



***RELIGION IS NOT THE
SOLE ELEMENT OF A
BALINESE DANCE. IN IT IS
THE BALINESE ATTITUDE
TOWARDS LIFE: HOW THEY
LOOK AT NATURE AND
HOW THEY REGARD THEIR
FAUNA AND FLORA.***

As the most popular travel destination in Indonesia, Bali has a lot of attractions going for it. From a slew of nightlife entertainments to cultural and spiritual excursions, Bali has a lot to offer.

In the cultural department, Balinese dances are easily some of the more attractive aspect of the island. Two factors contribute to this fact: the art itself and the sanctity of the dances. Balinese dance has always been a part of the island's religious facet. It's a prayer, an offering to the Gods and the islanders' way of giving thanks.

These dances are believed to be an amalgamation of Indian and local sensibilities. Traditional dances and music play an important role in Hindu-Indian religious ceremonies. In Bali, the islanders' strong identity lends to the various influences of indigenous animistic and folklore-ish elements, creating an expression that is distinct to Bali.



Young dancers perform a welcome dance in a 'full moon ceremony' in the Bedulu village in Ubud, Bali.

DANCES IN BALINESE DAILY LIVING

If you pay attention, the dances actually reflect to day-to-day lives of the Balinese people. Religion is not the sole element of a Balinese dance. In it is the Balinese attitude towards life: how they look at nature and how they regard their fauna and flora. For most of them, traditional Balinese dances are a part of their customs and cultural expressions. Some even believe that the dances give them cultural identity and a feeling that they are continuing their ancestors' cultural heritage.

The traditional dances and drama are usually performed during temple festivals and in ceremonies. The dances tourists often see in hotels are only a small fraction of what Balinese dances has to offer.

Because of the importance of dance and music, Balinese people learn these

skills early in their life. The training is widely recognised as rigorous. Balinese parents would also often leave their children's dance and music education completely to their teachers. This is because they believe that well-known teachers possess a *taksu* (dance spirit) and that these teachers are obliged to transfer their knowledge and spirit to maintain this *taksu*. The process itself is not unlike what you see in kung-fu movies, with masters and pupils developing a relationship based on discipline and training.

Dance classes often start very early at dawn and is held a few days in a week. Children as young as 6-7 years old would stand in a row in the *banjar* (a communal building used for social or religious activities) before starting their daily training. They would pray to the goddess of art and ask for her blessing. The dance maestro is usually an old lady or a man and they would almost always possess a thin, yet muscular and healthy body. These are your most experienced dancers and it's not uncommon for children to initially be fearful towards their dance teachers.

The most basic teaching is the *ajeg* – the stand and pose of a dance. This is the most important position in a Balinese dance. Any student who fails to perform the perfect *ajeg* would not continue to see their dance career evolve. Many would continue to learn the *ajeg* for weeks, and even months. You can always tell a good Balinese dancer by their *ajeg*, the way their body lean and the grace and pliant posture with which the *ajeg* is revered.

The teacher will then stand in front of the children and begin dancing. The children will follow his or her every movement. Once the teacher feels that a child understands the basic sequence, she will stand behind the child, and direct the child by holding her wrists. Practicing with a gamelan orchestra is only allowed when the dance is considered to have "entered" the

A young Balinese is performing the Balinese dance.



student. The dancer must learn to fully express the character she is performing; self-expression is a null concept here.

For all students, the first dance they will learn is either the Pendet or Panyembrana. Both of these dances are, essentially, welcoming dances, though the Pendet is more often used in this function. It is important to know that, when opening religious ceremonies

in a *pura* or Balinese temple, the Panyembrana is the original welcoming dance, while the Pendet is the more sacred dance. Usually performed by married women, the dance is basically a series of dignified and elegant movements of carrying and presenting offerings to the Gods and Goddesses.

And while the duration and costumes are mostly similar between the two dances, the Panyembrana is more complicated. This is perhaps why, along the way, the Pendet Dance has been the more commonly performed dance. It could also be noted that the Panyembrana dance could also be performed by teenage girls. And while outsiders would tend to assume that the Pendet is the main dance, any proper Balinese dancer knows that it is the other way around, and that, despite the dance being somewhat pushed aside for the simpler version, they must practice the Panyembrana just as intensively, if not more.

Most people in Bali are able to dance at least several dances in order to support their family during religious ceremonies. A dedicated dancer, thus, is generally much more knowledgeable and possessing that of a much deeper ties with the dances. For one, dancers must have joined a troupe called *sekehe*, and they must follow daily training as well as obey to the standard regulation of a troupe such as being on-call when the troupe needs to perform. A dancer, especially the well-trained ones, has an important position in the community. The life of a dancer requires a lifetime of work and dedication, often ending up in teaching position as they obtain seniority or continuing to dance all the way into their golden ages. "Until our last breath," said Kompiang Raka, a dancer, teacher and Director of Saraswati Dance Studio in Bali and Jakarta.

FROM SACRED TO ENTERTAINMENT DANCES

BASED ON THEIR RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONS, BALINESE DANCES CAN BE CATEGORISED INTO SEVERAL SECTIONS:

1 Wali (sacred dances)

These dances are considered sacred, and must be performed in the inner court (mandala utama) of the temple. Some dances may performed for the public, though with some alteration.



REJANG

Generally performed by females, the Rejang dance is a procession of children who have just learned how to walk. Dancers move slowly towards the altar, carrying twirling fans while lifting their belts. Costumes range from very simple traditional attires to an elaborate traditional dress complete with a gold headdress.

BARIS UPACARA

Baris literally means a warrior formation and it is usually performed by men. Consisting of dramatic

movements, the dancer wear costumes designed in tapestry, headbands in gold and strings of frangipani blossom. It is occasionally performed by women and children and it is easily seen in Sanur, Tabanan and Ubud.

PENDET UPACARA

This dance is usually performed by married women. Moving in very dignified and elegant way, they carry and present offerings to their Gods and Goddesses.

SANGHYANG DEDARI

This dance is performed to give thanks to the Gods and Goddesses or to ask for blessing. A bad harvest or an outburst of illness may call this dance to be performed. The preparation for this dance takes several months and it involves preparing a girl for the sole purpose of being a Rejang dancer – she must not have reached her puberty and has never danced before in order to qualify. And then, with help from a local priest, the dancer would be

taught on how to pray and clear the mind in order to attain the trance. When the priest concludes that the dancer is ready, she will perform it in the court of the temple. Dressed in an elaborate attire and with a burning incense at the top of her crown, this young girls would slowly dance as a chant prepares to accompany her into her trance. Once she has entered the trance phase, people belief that the Gods and Goddesses have entered her body and the ritual can then commence.

BARONG

The most well-known dance in Bali, this dance is a story-telling dance. It narrates the fight between good and evil. This dance is a classic example of the Balinese way of acting out mythology, resulting in myth and history being blended into a single reality. The Barong is usually paired with the Rangda, the antithesis of Barong.





2 **Bebali (semi-sacred/ ceremonial dances)**

These types of dances are performed in the middle compound (madya mandala) of Balinese temples as accompaniment to ceremonies. The dances usually have scenarios when it is performed for the audience.



TOPENG SIDHAKARYA

The Topeng Sidhakarya is performed by masked dancers to neutralise the evil spirits in a ceremony.

WAYANG WONG

The Wayang Wong combines dance, epic drama and music in one performance. It is performed by a group of dancers who mostly wear masks as part of the tradition.

GAMBUH

Formerly known as royal theatrical performance, the Gambuh Dance drama is now accompaniment to ceremonies and is usually performed by 25–40 dancers.

3 Balih-Balihan

These dances are mostly performed to entertain and have no relation to Balinese religious ceremonies. Some are historical depiction, while others are comical. It is performed in the outer compound of temples or in parties and gatherings.



A Balinese dancer is performing Janger.

JANGER

Performed by young girls, the dancer wear a peacock-shaped headwear and the clothes are gold. Most of the dances are performed sitting down, with highly coordinated hand, shoulder, and eye movements.

KEBYAR

The Kebyar is usually performed by two women with long, shiny black hair, which are accentuated at the top by a band of *cempaka* blossoms, and a fan on each one of their hands.

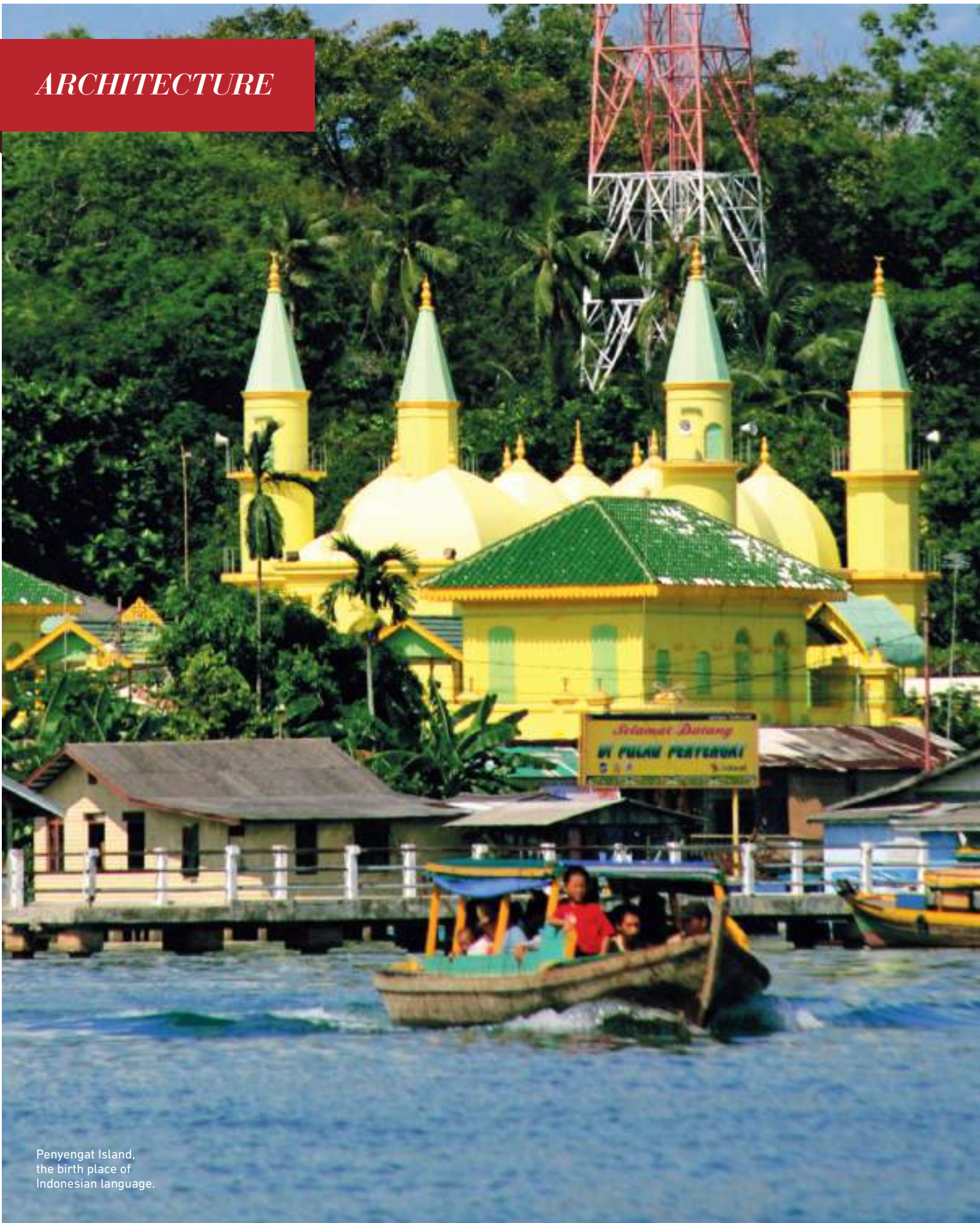
LEGONG

Considered as one of the more important Balinese dance, the Legong is a romance dance that describes the emotions of a young man who has fallen in love with a young girl. There are several Legong dances. The Legong Trunajaya, for example, reflects the love and attempts of a young man who is trying to attract a girl. It is the most feminine dance, what with its use of graceful and slow movement. The dance is usually performed by two girls who have yet to reach puberty. In fact, these girls must retire by the time they reach puberty. Another example is the Legong Lasem, which is a long and complicated dance that depicts the journey of King Lasem. Performed by two dancers, the series of Legong Lasem opens with the Condong dance, who himself act as a story teller. This is an advanced dance known for its long duration and complicated techniques. ■



Legong
A romance dance
depicting the emotions
of two young lovers.

ARCHITECTURE



Penyengat Island,
the birth place of
Indonesian language.



Penyengat Island

The Princess' Wedding Gift

– BY YULITA RANGKUTI –

Penyengat Island may seem like a tiny, insignificant island within the Riau Islands province (Kepri), but it has a major role in the proliferation of Islam and the development of the Melayu culture and language. Indeed, it can be said that it is where our own Indonesian language originates.

BEGINNINGS

Penyengat Island, otherwise known by its complete name of Pulau Penyengat Inderasakti, is located 6 kilometre across Bintan Island, where the capital of the Kepri, Tanjungpinang, lies. The island is a 15-minute motorboat ride and only 3.5 square metres large. One can easily circle the whole island on a motorbike in just 30 minutes.

Penyengat Island is closely related to the figure of Engku Putri Raja Hamidah, the daughter princess of Haji Fisabilillah Yang Dipertuan Muda Riau IV or the ruler of the Riau-Lingga Kingdom circa 1777-1748. The island is said to be a wedding gift from Sultan Mahmud Marhum Besar, also known as Sultan Mahmudsyah III, the ruler of Johor Kingdom, to Raja Hamidah.

The sultan fashioned the island to act as the heart of the Riau-Lingga Kingdom. He built a palace, a grand hall, a mosque and even a fort on the island. Legend concludes that these gifts were all a part of the Sultan's effort to quell an interracial conflict between the Melayu and the Bugis.

The Sultan decreed that Engku Putri Raja Hamidah would have complete ownership over the island, as well as the entire descendant of Raja Haji, Raja Hamidah's late father. Penyengat Island would later be run by Raja Ja'far, Raja Hamidah's step-brother.

But the Sultan would grant Raja Hamidah more than just the island. He also gave her ownership of the Kingdom's royal regalia. This creed would later be contested following the death of Sultan Mahmudsyah III by Raja Ja'Far himself.

Raja Hamidah, who did not have a female heir because her only daughter did not live long enough to sit on the throne, demanded that her oldest son, Tengku Hussain, to take the Sultancy. Raja Ja'far, who had managed to muster a much larger influence in the kingdom, opted instead for Tengku Hussain's younger brother, Tengku Abdul Rahman.



The Mosque of Egg Whites. Legend has it that a large part of the building material was made of egg whites.

Raja Hamidah then fled in anger with the royal regalia, forcing the coronation of Tengku Abdul Rahman as the next Sultan to proceed with the absence of these royal items, thus shedding doubt over the legitimacy of the coronation. Not only is the royal regalia a symbol of power for the Sultancy, it is also said to possess magical powers to avert disasters.

So powerful was the royal regalia that both of Raja Hamidah's sons begged her to hand the regalia to either one of them. Abdul Rahman eventually asked the Dutch-Indies for assistance in taking the regalia by force, and he was eventually crowned the King of Riau-Lingga.

The royal regalia is now kept safely in the National Monument, Jakarta. Engku Putri Raja Hamidah herself passed away in 1844 and was buried in the island that was her wedding gift. Her tombstone, which now stands along a number of tombstones belonging to other royalties in what is a cemetery of Riau-Lingga royalties,

is still well preserved up until today. Within the mosque-like dome that houses her remains are other significant figures in the Riau-Lingga kingdom, such as Mariam, a concubine of Sultan Mahmudsyah III; Raja Haji Abdullah Marhum Mursyid Yang Dipertuan Agung Riau IX, and his consort, Raja Aisyah.

Just outside the main building of the cemetery is the grave of Raja Ali Haji, a noted Melayu poet who is well-known for his magnum opus, "Gurindam Dua Belas". Raja Haji Ali is the one who documented the handing over of Penyengat Island as a wedding gift to Engku Putri Raja Hamidah in his book, *Tuhfat Al Nafis* or "precious gift".

A MOSQUE OF EGG WHITES

A notable building within the grand royal complex of Penyengat Island is a mosque. It was initially a simple wooden building equipped with brick stairs and a 6-metre tall minaret.

This mosque has since seen major renovations during the reign of Sultan Abdul Rahman. In fact, renovations

began exactly right after the Eid al-Fitr prayers on the first of Syawal, 1284 of the lunar calendar or 1832 AD.

The Sultan supposedly used egg whites to keep the materials intact. According to the legend itself, the local people gave rice, vegetables and eggs to the workers during the renovation. Tired of eating the same thing over and over again, the workers would eat the yolk and throw away the whites. The architect, rather than let the whites be wasted, ended up mixing them to the building materials.

Whether it's the egg whites or plain good design, the mosque has nevertheless stood strong for the next two centuries. It is said that the mosque never required any further renovation, nor was there any call for a major revamp since the first major change conducted by Sultan Abdul Rahman.

The mosque, known as Masjid Raya Sultan Riau, now has 13 domes and

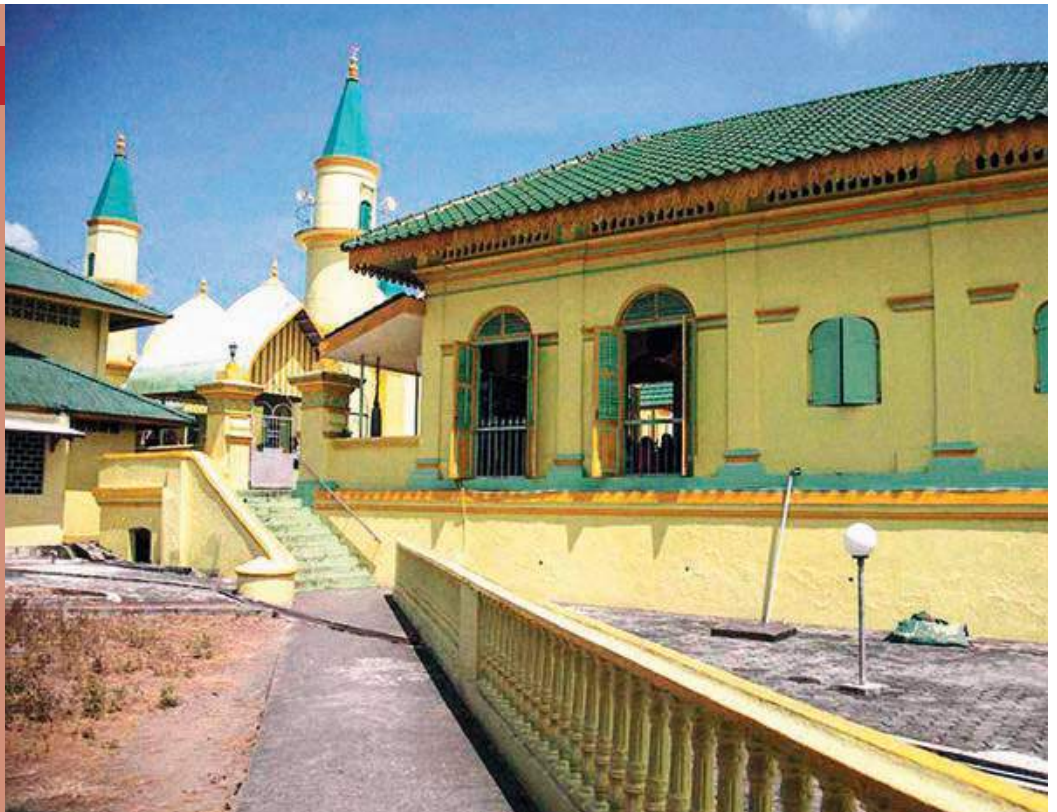
4 minarets, which adds up to 17. The number 17 symbolises the number of *rakat* or movements done in an Islamic prayer in a single day.

Nearly all the buildings left by the Riau-Lingga are yellowish gold and moss-green. For the Melayu people, the yellowish gold represents magnanimity, authority, grandeur and power. During the reign of the Melayu kings, only those of royal lineage may use the colour. Moss-green represents fertility, loyalty, adherence and submission towards the teachings of Islam.

The wealth and uniqueness of this cultural and historical legacy is but a small party of what has been passed down by the ancient inhabitants of Penyengat Island. Fortunately, these legacies have been very well preserved. It is, until now, a brilliant pilgrimage destination, not only for Indonesians, but also for the people of neighbouring Malaysia and Singapore. ■

FAST FACT

- An island in Riau Province, Indonesia, of approximately 2 square kilometres. It lies just off Bintan Island, close to Tanjung Pinang, the capital of Riau Province.
- The island has historical significance, dating back to the 18th century, when it was established as a fort as part of the Sultanate of Johor-Riau by the Bugis.
- The island has the tomb of Raja Ali Haji, a 19th century Islamic historian and scholar.
- Today, the Sultan's palace is being restored. It is an interesting blend of Javanese and Dutch architecture, still imbued with an air of dignity, even though it has been abandoned for more than 80 years.



Jermal

**The Story Behind
Indonesian Ocean**

– BY MARIA SUSANTI –

N

early 70 per cent of Indonesia's territory is made up of the ocean.

And in this vast cerulean blue territory, in a number of far flung corners of the ocean, are lives that some of us have never even heard of. It's a harsh life – one that is supported by an elevated platforms supported by wooden stakes and tensile nets. In Indonesia, such platform is known as a jermal. And those who live in jermal would spend months without ever seeing land. For the fishermen in jermal,

every day is a constant battle against the sea for the purpose of harvesting its bounty.

Brush off any romantic notion about life in the seas however, as many of the fishermen in jermal are actually fisher-children. Having brought to sea by relatives or by their parents, these kids have little choice to follow their elders as there is nothing waiting for them beyond the gates of a school except for that which is known to their parents: the sea.



THE STORY

It was due to the efforts of three-screenwriters, Rayya Makarim, Ravi Bharwani and Orlow Seunke, that the conditions in jermal came to light. Believing the harsh working conditions in jermal to be too much for any children, indeed any adult, to bear, they brainstormed and came up with a cinematic offering in the hopes of securing the children a brighter future.

This film tells the story of Jaya, a boy who has just lost his mother. Bandi, one of his relatives, took the 12-year-old to meet his father who worked on a jermal. Bandi himself works as a cook there. Jaya however, never even knew he had a father and was surprised to meet the man. And though he hesitated to meet this aspect of his life, it was a life that he could not avoid.

A number of ideas involving adulthood, childhood, as well as acceptance and rejection are explored in the movie – and in a way that is much

deeper than the average story of a boy who is forced to grow up much sooner than he should due to circumstances. And indeed, Jaya was even more perturbed after discovering that, having moved with his father unto a jermal, his mother's many letters to his father about his son and that his father himself had not even known that he had a boy.

The father greets the news in a manner akin to a petulant child, essentially refusing to have anything to do with the youngster. But neither could he allow Jaya to leave. And so he sets him to work among the other kids on the platform. And amidst the free-range kids is another element of the movie, wherein Jaya finds he must adapt quickly to survive. Initially, he is rejected by the other kids and is forced to sleep out on the deck. But he quickly learns to live off of his wits and it isn't long before he is winning friends and making the sort of adult choices those with rights and responsibilities have

to make – indeed, choices his father, as we see in the movie, often shies away from. With Jaya slowly taking up the mantle of adulthood, Johar finds himself having a lot of growing up to do as well.

Johar's issue (and a main focus of this film) is the fierce environment that would nurture Jaya into a too harsh of a teenager. Johar see the life on board a jermal as being ill suited for a child. And yet therein lies the contrast. Here is a disharmonious father and son relationship, with the father rejecting the son. The son, having been rejected, now becomes unsympathetic to the attention given by Johar. An incident would eventually overturn the situation and force the father-son relationship to switch places. Jaya gets involved in a fight, which eventually reverts him to consider his father's offer to return to land. Johar himself has decided to abandon work on the platforms and return to land. ■

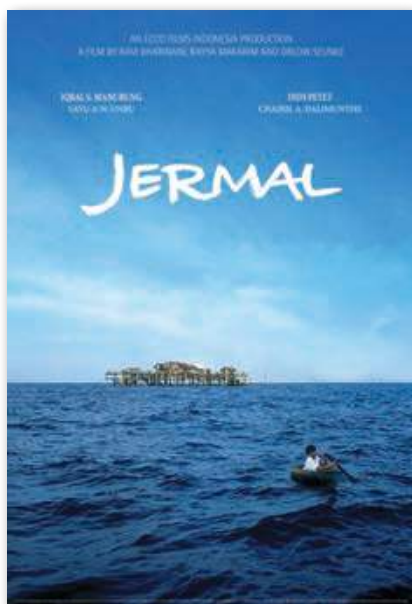
We wanted this film to be watched by the whole family. Family film should have a fresh nuance, even if the message can be quite serious.

'Jermal' tells people about the dark and grim life in the coastal area in the country.





Indonesia's renowned actor, Didi Petet in one of the scenes in 'Jermal'.



AWARD WORTHY

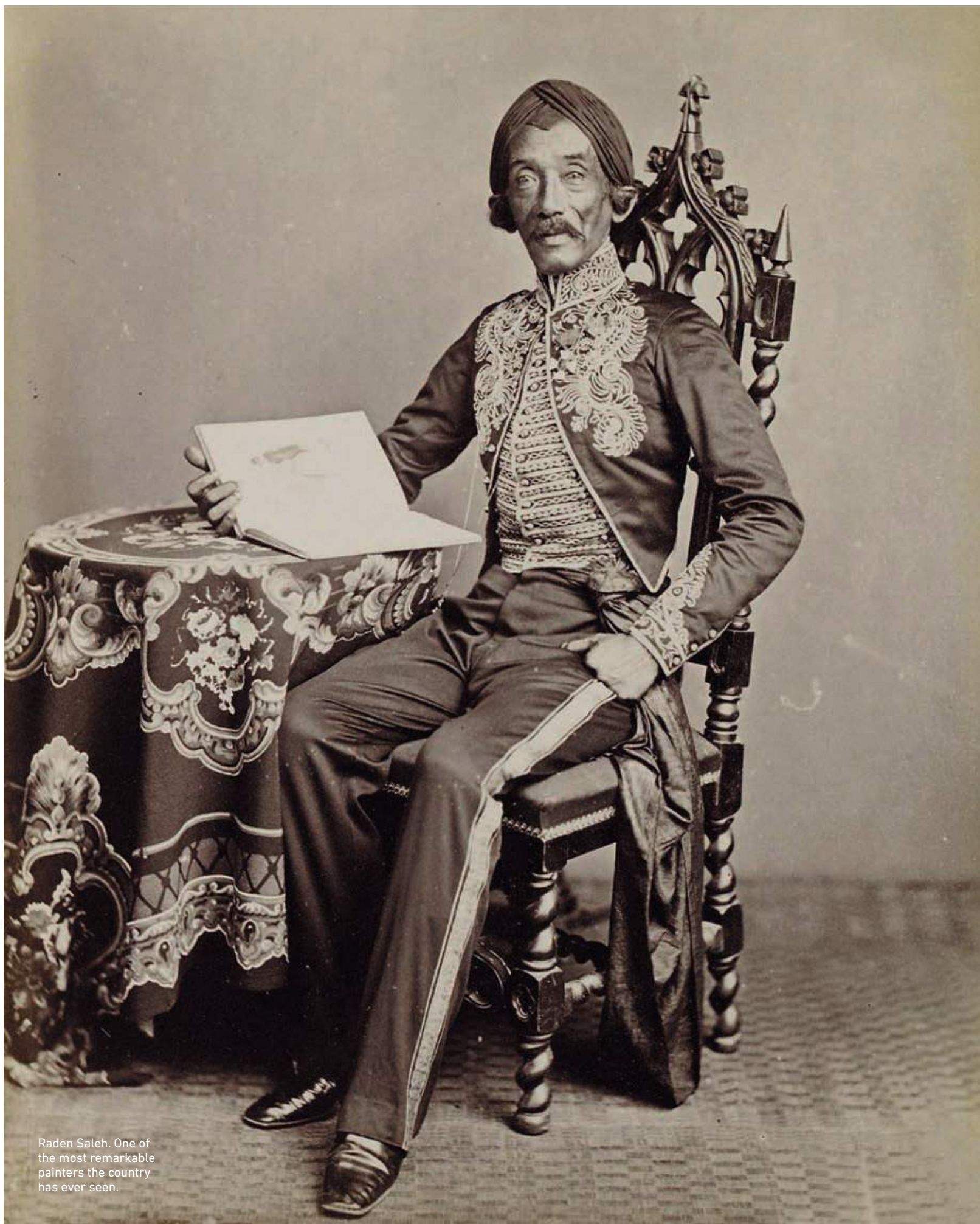
"Jermal" was first released in 2008 at the Pusan International Film Festival in Korea. It later won numerous awards at various film festivals, including the Milan International Film Festival and the Indonesia Movie Awards. It's by no means a mediocre movie.

It is perhaps quite telling in regards to the vision shared by the three people who initiated the project. So much of them came together in the movie that, in terms of writing and cinematography, the movie flowed effortlessly from beginning to end. They wanted the film to convey a message about the other side of Indonesia, one that is so far

removed from the usual mass consumption of soap operas and cheap horror thrills.

The story does bear a tendency to go serious and dark, and so the directors made sure to slip some humor and wit here and there so as not to bog down the audience. "Moreover, we wanted this film to be watched by the whole family. Family film should have a fresh nuance, even if the message can be quite serious," said Orlow.

"Jermal" was released long time ago, but it still works well in today's context, particularly with the current administration's ambition to bring return to being a maritime power. Just a quick reminder. The life of the jermal people continues until today. Out there in this vast archipelago is a dark and grim life being led by young Indonesian children. A dark legacy of our maritime country.



Raden Saleh. One of the most remarkable painters the country has ever seen.

Raden Saleh

The Romantic Indonesian Painter

– BY BUDI SANTOSA –

One of, if not the most famous paintings in Dutch-Indonesia history, “The Arrest of Diponegoro”, has long been recognised as a work of unusual interests. The Javanese artist responsible for the painting, Raden Saleh Sjarif Boestaman, is an Indonesian Romantic painter of Arab-Javanese ethnicity who pioneered modern Indonesian art. He was considered to be the first modern artist from Indonesia, then Dutch East Indies, and his paintings corresponded with nineteenth-century romanticism – a popular movement in Europe at the time. At the same time, he also expressed his cultural roots and inventiveness in his work.

Born in 1811 in Semarang, in the island of Java, Raden Saleh is born into a noble Hadhrami family to Sayyid Husen bin Alwi bin Awal bin Yahya, an Indonesian man of Arab descent.

He grew up with his uncle, Raden Adipati Suraadimanggala, the regent of Semarang. Raden Adipati was both one of the best-educated and wealthiest Javanese of his time. He was also an important supporter to sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, a Lieutenant Governor of British Java in the early 1800s’ and a prominent figure in South-East Asian history.

His interest and finesse in drawing was first discovered by acquaintance Prof. Caspar Reinwardt, founder of the Bogor Botanical Garden. He introduced Saleh to a Belgian-born painter from the Netherlands, A.J. Payen. Payen is a professional painter who would often create landscape paintings of Java for commission, his works of which are displayed in the Department van Kolonien in the Netherlands. Payen was smitten by the talents of Saleh, and later decided to teach the young Saleh.

Payen, who is a former professor of the Academy of Fine Arts in Doornik, Netherlands, was quite instrumental in preparing Saleh for his future studies of Western painting, as well as the art of manufacturing techniques such as painting with oil paints. Payen also had Saleh travel with him across Java to seek out subjects for paintings, erstwhile commissioning Raden Saleh to draw people they come across in their travels.

Impressed by his student's extraordinary talent, Payen persuaded Saleh to study as far as the Netherlands, a proposal that later gained the support of Governor General Godert van der Capellen who ruled at that time (1819-1826).

EUROPEAN INFLUENCE

In 1829, the young Saleh travelled to Europe to hone his craft, first in Hague then in Dresden and Paris. It was in Dresden and later in Coburg that Saleh matured both personally and as an artist. He learned to speak German and developed such close relationships with the country that he befriended Duke Ernst II of Saxo-Coburg and Gotha, Queen Victoria's cousin and brother in law.

Cornelius Kruseman and Andreas Schelfhout were his teachers in the Netherlands. It was from Kruseman that Raden Saleh perfected his techniques in portraiture, a skill that would later grant him audience at various European courts, where he was assigned to do portraits. He even spent five years at the court of Ernest I, one of Saleh's most important patrons.

HIS FAMOUS WORK

Finished in 1857, after his return to Java, the painting was presented to the Dutch king William III as thanks for his 23 years of education and training as an artist.

"The Arrest of Pangeran Diponegoro" depicted the betrayal of the colonial government to Prince Diponegoro – an act that the Java War of 1830. The Prince was tricked into entering a Dutch territory near Magelang, believing he was there for negotiations of a possible truce. He was captured instead and then exiled.

This historic event had actually been previously depicted by Dutch painter Nicolaas Pieneman, who did so by commission from Lieutenant General Hendrik Merkus de Kock. It is believed that Saleh had seen this painting during his stay in Europe. His work, however, saw significant changes compared to the Pieneman's version. Pieneman painted the scene from the right, Saleh from the left. Pieneman depicted Diponegoro with a resigned expression. In Saleh's, he appeared defiant. Pieneman's painting is titled the "Submission of Prince Diponegoro", while Saleh titled his "The Arrest of Pangeran Diponegoro". Furthermore, Saleh painted Diponegoro's Dutch captors with large heads to make them appear monstrous, as opposed to the more proportionally depicted Javanese.

One of Raden Saleh's masterpiece, "A Flood on Java 1865-1876"







"Kapal Karam Dihantam Badai". One of Raden Saleh's paintings, which is now being kept at Galeri Nasional Indonesia.

Raden Saleh's work has been regarded as a sign of incipient nationalism in what was then the Dutch East Indies. This can also be seen at the depiction of Diponegoro's men. Pieneman had never been to the Indies, and so depicted Diponegoro's men in a more Arabic slant. Saleh's version has a more accurate depiction of native Javanese clothing, with figures wearing the batik and the *blangkon*.

It perhaps important to note one of his less-famous, but just as significant work called "Ship in the Storm". Finished in 1837, the painting

exemplifies the Raden Saleh's romantic expression. On the other hand, the visuals are a stark representation of the artist's struggle in balancing the desire to appreciate and express the ideal world, and the complicated and fragmented real world.

In "Ship in the Storm", two ships are thrown about violently amidst a storm in the middle of the sea. Thick dark clouds shows tension, with imposing waves smashing one of the ships. From above, a glimmer of sunlight reflecting on the rolling waves highlights this dramatic scene even more.

AN INDONESIAN HERITAGE

Raden Saleh left a number of legacies to his home country. Upon his return to Indonesia, he worked as a conservator for the colonial collection of government art, where he would continue to paint portraits of the Javanese aristocracy and many landscape paintings.

His house in Cikini is based on Callenberg Castle, the residence of the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha where he had stayed during his European travels 1844. His fondness of animal prompted him to build a mini-zoo around this castle-home. The grounds around the castle were converted into public gardens in 1862 however, and were later closed at the turn of the century. In 1960, the Indonesian government built Taman Ismail Marzuki in the former gardens, turning it into the capital's more prominent art centre. The house itself is still used today as a hospital. His name was also inaugurated into a street name.

As for the "Arrest of Pangeran Diponegoro", the painting is currently kept in the National Palace, where it would serve as a constant reminder of an artist's relationship and struggle with the colonisation-era. ■



"Potret Adolphe". Also can be seen at Galeri Nasional Indonesia.

Gesang

The Quieter Side of Keroncong

– BY CHRISWAN SUNGKONO –

Though not as ubiquitously played throughout the country as the boisterously pulsating *dangdut* music, *keroncong* remains one of Indonesia's most important contributions to the panoply of global beat. Before the waning of the Dutch colonial era, when Indonesia was still known to the western world as the Dutch East Indies, the rich, charmingly textured tunes of *keroncong* had reverberated in the vast chambers of European royalties, as well as the rustic rooms of the common folk alike.

KERONCONG: A PORTUGUESE LEGACY

Following the aftermath of World War II, fierce confrontations took place in the Pacific theatre between the Dutch and Japanese armed forces against a united multitude declaring themselves

the newly formed nation of Indonesia. It was during that same period that countries as far away as Germany and Japan began warming up to *keroncong*, subsequently winning fond fans for *keroncong* musicians.

Keroncong was believed to have evolved from Portuguese folk music brought to the Malayan region by Portuguese seamen. Prior to the end of the nineteenth century, groups of troubadours had travelled across the archipelago playing such strains of music, entertaining affluent foreigners and citizens from various classes as they went, ukulele in hand. Many of them hailed from the eastern part of the island of Java, where *keroncong* was extremely popular.

But *keroncong* would arguably not have enjoyed such worldwide renown had it not been to the catchy and yet timeless works of Gesang Martohartono.

An emblematic example is his song titled *Bengawan Solo*, certainly the most frequently played *keroncong* tune in the world at that time, a legacy that echoes until today. Upon its debut in 1940, not only did *Bengawan Solo*'s lulling, meandering rhythm and trilling, twirling tones caught immediate attention of people across the east and the west, it also catapulted the eponymous river of his hometown of Solo (also known as Surakarta), in Central Java, to international recognition.

Lanky, unassuming in posture and strikingly serene in personality, Gesang was nonetheless a colossus in the world of *keroncong* songwriting. Born in 1917 to a batik trader in Solo, Gesang had already found the appeal of the art of sounds at a young age, promising to himself to deepen his grasp of *keroncong* music. He pursued formal education only up to the fifth grade at the *Sekolah Rakyat* (Public School) *Ongko Loro*, after which he shifted his focus to music making.

THE SHINE OF A QUIET ARTIST

Gesang's first composition, titled *Si Piatu* (The Orphan), was drafted when he was a member of the *keroncong* group "Marko". *Si Piatu* tells a tale derived from Gesang's own childhood, which he spent with his stepmother. It first aired on the SRV (*Solosche Radio Vereeniging* or the Solo Radio Company) in 1934, a year that not only marked the beginning of his adulthood, but also a defining point in what would be a lifetime career in *keroncong*.

A series of compositions then followed. These include *Roda Dunia* (Wheel of the World), *Dunia Berdamai* (World at Peace), *Impenku* (My Dream), *Jembatan Merah* (Red Bridge), and *Pamitan* (To Say Goodbye),



BENGAWAN SOLO

Gesang Martohartono

Arr. Chen Khin Wee

Con moto

p

mp

dolce

and of course the illustrious piece that embodied his fascination with his hometown's river, *Bengawan Solo*. However, unlike the steady flow of the Bengawan Solo River, these compositions trickled out of him. Indeed, few know that Gesang actually found song writing to be a long and arduous undertaking. It's a process for which he would often had to contemplate for months on end, fiddling around with his creations, his songs amassing endless revisions, until he — not anyone else — felt utterly content with the final result. Far from being prolific, even at his zenith Gesang completed on average less than two compositions per year. His entire body of *keroncong* works features no more than 42 pieces — all this from a career spanning more than seven decades.

If some artists, past and present, banking on and perhaps fully realising the brevity of their popularity, would try to churn out new works within short periods of time to rake in as much gold as possible, Gesang was decidedly not part of this get-rich-quick bandwagon. The booming, everlasting popularity of his *Bengawan Solo* and other *keroncong* works did not automatically translate into financial success. On the contrary, the most valuable object in his estate — apart from his compositions, naturally — was probably his modest house, located in a public residential area in Karanganyar, Surakarta. In fact, the house was a “donation” from the then Governor of Central Java, Soepardjo

Rustam, in a gesture of gratitude for Gesang's lasting role in preserving and popularising *keroncong* music. And this occurred late in his life, specifically when he turned 62.

For most of his years, Gesang led a reticent, quiet life. He wedded once and left the marriage in 1962 without a child. In his later years, he moved to his nephew's house in Surakarta, relying on what meagre royalty he earned from his music for his daily expenses. He perhaps knew what was coming the moment he decided to devote himself to music and let his ailing father's offer — to continue the family's *batik* trading business — pass him by.

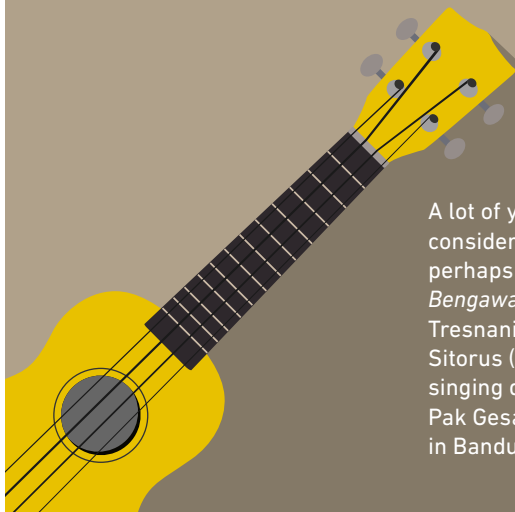
Many *keroncong* fans considered Gesang to be a natural, attributing his achievements in *keroncong* to an innate musical talent. In various interviews, Gesang openly admitted how he had never pictured himself as a musician, on account of his lack of mastery of

musical instruments. He saw himself as a lyricist first and foremost, and then as a singer; the accompanying music borne out of his tinkering with simple instruments, such as the recorder or the acoustic guitar. This was why his works are sparing in terms of musical complexity, their strong qualities held together rather by his profoundly honest, remarkably simple lyrics.

Years after his passing, in 2010, the evocative lyrics of *Bengawan Solo* has transcended geography and lifestyle, having been translated into more than 12 languages, and is still a stark reminder for mankind of the power of music in bringing people together in fellowship. The song has compelled many generations from all around the world to visit Surakarta to stand beside the Bengawan Solo River, admiring the scenery that once moved Gesang's heart and inspired him to contribute something to the world. ■

Tetangga Pak Gesang:

DREAM OF THE REVIVALIST DUO



A lot of young Indonesians may not consider Gesang a household name, despite perhaps knowing how to hum to the tune of *Bengawan Solo*. That's not the case for Arum Tresnaningtyas (vocal, ukulele) and Meicy Sitorus (vocal, kazoo), of the harmonic singing duo that call themselves Tetangga Pak Gesang (Gesang's Neighbour). Formed in Bandung, West Java, in 2013, the duo

infuse their lyrically amusing repertoire with Indonesian classics and vintage tracks from the 1940s to 1960s. They don't limit themselves to the works of Gesang — who, coincidentally, was a resident in the same neighbourhood as Arum in Surakarta — but also those from established female artistes, like Tetty Kadi and Lilis Suryani. Tetangga Pak Gesang performs regularly, often collaboratively, in various gigs across the archipelago, and tweets via @musiktetangga.

FOOD CULTURE





Raw Fish at its Best

– BY CHRISWAN SUNGKONO –

Apart from the ubiquitous tofu and *tempe*, Indonesians acquire protein via a vast array of animal meat, from the common chicken and beef to the more exotic forest rats and cats – though it should be noted that only a very few Indonesians continue to eat the latter. The most beloved of all types of meat among the people across the world's largest archipelago is the fish.

The comparatively lopsided water-to-land ratio in Indonesia's total area, as well as its geographical location at the confluence of the Indian and the Pacific Oceans, provides the nation with an extensive portfolio in marine diversity, resulting in the population's predilection towards fish.

ALWAYS COME FRESH

For many remote coastal communities in Indonesia, fish is the primary source of protein – often the only source of protein – to which they have constant access. Various methods for preparing fish are extensively practiced here: frying, drying, smoking and salting, to name a few. Although not so commonplace, the art of eating fish raw is also preserved in some societies, a tradition observed by one generation after another. Surprisingly enough, it's a tradition found in coastal villages and inland settlements alike.

In the mini-archipelago of Maluku — a scattering of small islands in eastern Indonesia that are more known in the history books as the spice-producing Moluccas — fish is often served sashimi-style, complemented with a fresh, tangy sauce. Known as *gohu ikan*, the dish is usually served at home. Local restaurants in larger towns such as Ternate would have it on display – though sometimes one needs to order it in advance.

The preferred fish species used for *gohu ikan* is the yellowfin tuna. And when the yellowfin tuna is not in season, then the skipjack tuna (*cakalang*, in the region's parlance) – a more widely available relative – is the common alternative. The fish is first skinned and washed thoroughly to remove the blood. The body is then filleted and sliced into dice-sized cubes (or coarsely minced) before being smothered with a solution of salt and freshly-squeezed *lemon cui* (calamansi orange). Marinated in this manner, the fish's deep red flesh begins to flaunt whitish streaks as it is "live-cooked" and tenderised at the same time in a pleasing display of chemistry.

The next step is preparing the condiment. The locally-sourced *balakama* (lemon basil or *kemangi* in Indonesian) is shredded altogether with bird's eye chilli, shallot, and a generous scoop of roasted and crushed ground nuts (or almonds, for a richer taste), before being drenched in pre-heated coconut oil. This intensely aromatic mixture is then poured over the fish, whereupon the now pinkish tuna cubes will become coated with a glistening veneer of oil and calamansi juice.

Across Maluku's palm-fringed islands, from Morotai in the north to Kei Islands in the southeast, *gohu ikan* is normally savoured by hand, alongside boiled cassava or banana fritters, or both. Should you happen

to find yourself snorkelling above the dazzling coral reefs of Halmahera or meandering in the streets of Ternate, make the time to look for *gohu ikan*. Its sumptuously tender texture and the delicate marriage of flavours make the dish worth adding to your local must-eat list.

THE EXOTIC AND WELL-REWARDED NANIURA

Similar in certain ways to *gohu ikan*, but strikingly different in other respects, is *naniura*, a raw fish dish native to the province of North Sumatra, home to the timelessly charming Toba Lake and the bold, ever-exciting Batak peoples. The Bataks predominantly populate the highlands of Sumatra, far from the sea and with natural access to more animals for sustenance. This partly explains their variegated culinary landscape that has shaped them into such eccentric, experimental eaters. And at the centre of their dining table is freshwater fish sourced from the bounteous Lake Toba.

This is what makes *naniura* distinctive: in lieu of saltwater fish, freshwater ones are used. *Naniura* traditionally should be made from the increasingly rare *ihan batak* (*Neolissochilus thienemanni*), a species found exclusively in Lake Toba. Nowadays, however, in many areas the common *ikan mas* (carp) is used instead.



Naniura, a raw fish dish originated from North Sumatra.

Similar to gohu ikan, the fish for *naniura* must be cleansed and properly descaled. Unlike gohu ikan however, not only the body is used, but also the head. And instead of being cut into pieces, the fish is simply split into two from the top to remove the bones. It is then dipped in the juice of *asam jungga* (rough lemon) and a pinch of salt. This will both cure the meat and kill the microbes within.

And then the waiting part begins. To reach the desired level of tastiness, the fish is left for three hours to half a day to marinate. This leaves plenty of time to prepare the seasoning. Shards of a quartet of herbs — ginger, turmeric, *lengkuas* (greater galangal) and *kencur* (aromatic ginger) — are stir-fried and then pulverised together with toasted candlenut, slices of shallot and garlic, a tiny bouquet of steamed torch ginger leaves and, preferably for the Bataks, a fair sprinkling of chilli.

The one spice not to be missed in the seasoning, as it defines the exquisiteness of *naniura* — as well as a host of other Batak dishes — is



andaliman, an endemic plant belonging to the same family as Sichuan pepper. Citrusy in scent and mildly prickly in small quantities — and tongue-numbing when used liberally — *andaliman* is what holds the flavours together once the mixture is applied evenly on the fish for another couple of hours before eating.

Let your palate take delight in the *naniura* and wash it down with a hearty helping of *tuak* (the Batak's palm wine) as your eyes feast on the shimmering sky reflected on the glassy surface of Toba Lake from up high. It's one of the most rewarding sensations Indonesia has in store for those who make the journey. ■

GO FOR THE MOST FRESH FISH IN SOME FISH MARKETS IN INDONESIA:

- **MUARA ANGKE FISH MARKET**, North Jakarta.
- **KOTO MASJID VILLAGE**, West Sumatera.
- **KAMPAR DISTRICT**, West Sumatera.
- **BANDA NEIRA FISH MARKET**, Molucca.
- **BERSEHATI FISH MARKET**, Manado.



CULTURAL SPOTS

WEH ISLANDS

A tiny tropical rock off the tip of Sumatra, Pulau Weh rewards travellers who've journeyed through the turbulent greater mainland below with a peaceful and serene landscape. Trek around the mainland's jungles, volcanoes and lakes, or jump into the languid waters of the Indian Ocean. Snorkellers and divers here get to bubble through the great walls of swaying sea fans, deep canyons and rock pinnacles, while marvelling at the prehistorically gargantuan fish. This is one of the finest underwater destinations you'll find.

DIVING
SPOT



DERAWAN

The Derawan Islands is everyone's dream of the perfect tropical paradise: warm and isolated with soft white sand beaches fringed with waving palm trees, pristine seas that change colour from green to deep blue, and an amazing underwater life of giant turtles, dolphins, manta rays, dugongs and barracudas, stingless jellyfish and occasionally, whales. Derawan is indeed one of the world's richest areas in bio-diversity. Small wonder that the Derawan Islands are considered the third best dive destination in the world. Located just away from the mainland of East Kalimantan in the district of Berau, the Derawan archipelago comprises 31 islands, most well known among these are the islands of Derawan, Maratua, Sangalaki and Kakaban.

NUSA LEMBONGAN

Coastal paths wind lazily around Nusa Lembongan, inviting travellers to explore the island on foot. Mangrove forests, seaweed farms and tranquil beaches like Jungut Batu and Dream Beach exemplify Nusa Lembongan's natural beauty, with clear blue waters that are perfect for surfing and drift diving. Walk the suspension bridge over to neighbouring island Nusa Ceningan and take in a spectacular sunset from Ceningan Ridge for maximum romance.



RAJA AMPAT

The abundance of natural resources that make up Raja Ampat archipelago is found not only in its waters, but also on land. The land contour without mount or mountains exceeding 1000 meter above the sea level makes this a geographical, as well as a national treasure.



SURFING AND WATER SPORT ACTIVITY

GILI

The **Gili Islands** is a cluster of three small islands — Gili Trawangan, Gili Meno and Gili Air — located just off the northwest coast of Lombok, Indonesia. The islands are a popular destination for tourists looking for an isolated experience, as civilization has yet to encroach upon the island's natural beauty. Each island has several small resorts, usually consisting of a collection of huts for tourists, a small pool and restaurant.

NIAS

Located in North Sumatra, Nias is one of Indonesia's last surfing frontiers. It receives similar swell to the Mentawais and enjoys a peak swell season from May to September. Despite Indonesia's reputation for hollow lefts, right-handers are slightly more prevalent in North Sumatra. Lagundri Bay (the bay in which the famous right unrolls) has become a starting point towards those new waves. As a result, one seldom finds more than twenty surfers at a time in a line-up, even in peak seasons. The Nias wave operates perfectly from 2 to 15 feet. Access is easy thanks

to a break in the reef called "The Keyhole", which will spare you from getting over the sand bar no matter how big the obstacle. The reef itself is safe compared to other surfing spots in Indonesia. The corals are abundant but not aggressive. Because of the geographical position of the archipelago, this cluster of islands provides one of the most interesting views in the world.



CANGGU BEACH

Famous among surfers, Canggu Beach has three spots: Echo Beach, Sand Bar and Bombies. Situated in west of Denpasar City, Bali, this beach is dominated by big and powerful waves suitable for adventurous surfers. It also features an amazing view of the Indian Ocean, with white sandy beaches that stretch from Seminyak Beach all the way to the west end of the island. Experienced surfers will fall in love with the challenge of its big rolling waves.

BEACH AND SURROUNDINGS



BANDANEIRA

Little Bandaneira has always been the Bandas' main port and administrative centre of Maluku. In the Dutch era, the townsfolk virtually bankrupted themselves maintaining a European lifestyle in spacious mansions that needed rebuilding whenever Gunung Api's volcanic huffs burnt them down. Today, Bandaneira's sleepy, flower-filled streets are so quiet that two *becak* count as a traffic jam. It's a charming place to wander aimlessly, admire late-colonial houses, ponder mouldering ruins, watch glorious cloudscapes over Gunung Api and stumble across the odd historic cannon lying randomly on your path.



BATU KARAS BEACH

A coastal area, Batu Karas beach is actually a blend between the nearby Pangandaran Beach and the Batu Hiu Beach – each offering both calm waters and challenging waves, making it a good fit for both swimmers and surfers alike. Located about 40 kilometres away, or about an-hour drive, from Pangandaran, West Java, this uniquely black sandy beach is a perfect getaway as it is less crowded compared to Pangandaran itself. Some have even dubbed this little alcove as little Bali since it offers a similar experience, but with fewer disturbances.

BITUNG

Bitung is a city on the northern coast of the island of Sulawesi, and is one of North Sulawesi's more touristic sites. It faces both Lembeh Island and the Lembeh Strait, which is known for their colorful marine life – with sea slugs being the popular feature.

LIHAGA ISLAND

Lihaga Island is located in Linkupang, Minahasa in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. It is a remote island with no hotels, resorts or any vehicles of any sort. Thus, Lihaga offers pure tranquillity with its pristine white sandy beach. If you're taking anything away from here, make sure it's just photographs.

MANDEH SEA PARK

Mandeh is a tourism destination located at Koto XI (nine) in Tarusan sub-district, directly bordering the capital city of West Sumatra, Padang. A 70-minute drive from Padang, Mandah boasts natural hills and a beautiful bay decorated by clusters of small islands located in the middle of Carocok Tarusan Bay. Known specifically for its coral reefs area, it currently maintains 70 hectare-worth of this beautiful underwater ecosystem.



HISTORICAL PLACE

MARITIME MUSEUM

The Maritime Museum is located in the old Sunda Kelapa harbour area of Old Town Jakarta. Inaugurated in the former Dutch East India Company's warehouse, the museum focuses on the Indonesia's maritime history and the importance of the sea to the economy of present-day Indonesia. The museum displays models of fishing boats and a myriad of maritime objects. It also houses the celebrated pinisi schooners of the Bugis people of South Sulawesi, which, at present, make up one of the oldest sea-going sailing fleets in the world.

MERU TEMPLE

Meru temple is the largest and most popular temple for the Hindu people of Lombok, Indonesia. Built by Anak Agung Made Karangasem in 1720, the temple is a combination of a number of small palaces and a symbol of his power. Overtime, not only has the temple become a sacred place for the Hindu people, it has also become the area's most popular destination. The temple is divided into three main yards: *Nista Mandala*, *Madya Mandala* and *Utama Mandala*. Each yard is divided by a brick wall that features two wooden doors, all of which sport familiar Balinese engravings.



BENA TRADITIONAL VILLAGE

A traditional village named Bena is a mandatory visit for those visiting the island of Flores in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). Here, time seems to stop at Stone Age. Enjoy the impressive hospitality of its people. Share the red smiles they sport on their mouth by chewing the local betel nut. Take your time absorbing the luxury and splendor of one of the more magnificent Nusantara cultural heritage found in Bena.

TRADITIONAL VILLAGE

WAMENA HIGHLANDS

Hidden among the rising 2,500-meter mountains in the Baliem Valley in central Papua, the town called Wamena was once hailed as the other Shangrila. Among advanced travellers, this is the other ultimate trekkers' rendezvous.

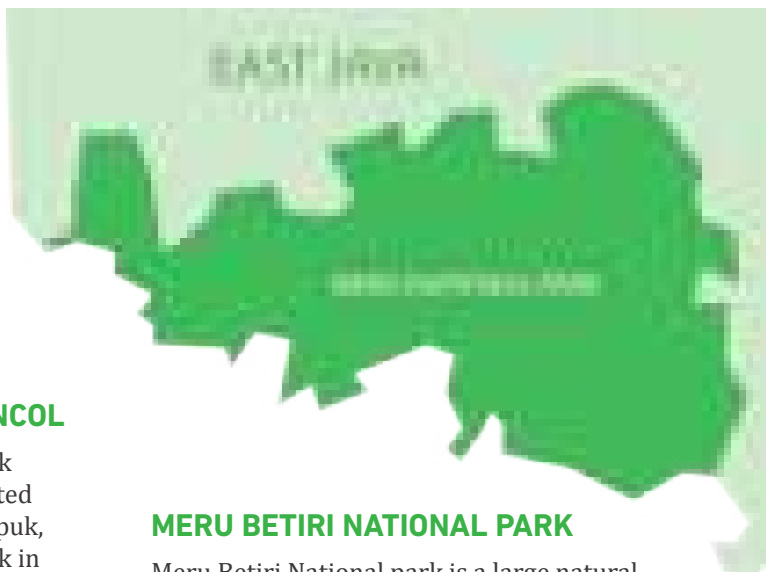
ASMAT

The Asmat are an ethnic group residing in East Papua, Indonesia. The Asmat inhabit a region on the island's southwestern coast bordering the Arafura Sea, with a landmass totalling at approximately 18,000 square kilometres (or 7,336 square mile). Consisting of mangrove, tidal swamp, freshwater swamp, and lowland rainforests, the land of the Asmat is located both within and adjacent to Lorentz National Park, the largest protected area in the Asia-Pacific region. The total Asmat population is estimated to be around 70,000. The term "Asmat" is used to refer both to the people and the region they inhabit.



MANGROVE ECOPARK – ANCOL

Taman Wisata Alam Angke Kapuk is an attractive destination. Located not too far from Pantai Indah Kapuk, Taman Wisata Alam Angke Kapuk in North Jakarta is a natural conservatory that is based on the development of ecotourism, social empowerment, culture and education. It boasts about 99.82 hectares of area, most of which are filled with mangrove trees.



MERU BETIRI NATIONAL PARK

Meru Betiri National park is a large natural reserve located on the southern coast of Jember Regency in East Java. It spans an area of 580 square kilometres and boasts varying topography from sandy, coastal plains, to highlands of over 1,000 metres. The park takes its name from the two mountains located within its compound: Mount Meru, measuring 500 metres above sea level, and Mount Betiri, 1,192 metres above sea level and the highest point of the park.

NATIONAL PARK



TANJUNG PUTING NATIONAL PARK

Tanjung Puting is the largest and most diverse protected example of extensive coastal tropical heath and peat swamp forest that used to cover much of southern Borneo. The area was originally declared as a game reserve in 1935 and later a National Park in 1982. While the Park has a checkered history of weak protection, it remains substantially wild and natural nonetheless. Tanjung Puting is covered by a complex mosaic of diverse lowland habitats. It contains 3,040 square kilometers (or 1,174 square miles) of low lying swampy terrain punctuated by blackwater rivers that flow into the Java Sea.

HOTEL



JAVA COVE BEACH HOTEL

JavaCove Beach Hotel is located in the relaxed coastal village of Batu Karas on the South coast of West Java, 35 kilometre from the popular domestic tourism beaches of Pangandaran.

Batu Karas Street, Cijulang, Ciamis
West Java
Tel: +62 265 708 2020



NOVOTEL BALIKPAPAN

One of few starred hotels in Balikpapan, Novotel offers the ultimate services and suites for business or travelling.

Jl. Brigjen Ery Suparjan No. 2
Balikpapan
Tel: +62 542 820 820
Fax: +62 542 732 999



MAULANA HOTEL

This rebuilt Dutch-colonial hotel has a lovely veranda overlooking the waterfront that sits between palm and shaggy ketapang trees. The best views are from the top-floor suites, while the larger, splashier rooms were under renovation at research time.

Jl. Maulana, Nusantara RT 3,
Banda Neira
Maluku
Tel: +62 910 21022

FOODS & BEVERAGES

RIA BEACH - ENDE

This beach boasts some breathtaking views during the day, whereas, at night, offers a lively seafood street market. Everything here is caught fresh from the sea. Just ask the chef how you want your seafood cooked and sit back and relax as you enjoy your meal.

RODA STREET

A place famous with traditional coffee stalls along with assorted Manado traditional food. Located in Central Manado, go directly to the alley near President Plaza to find it.



BLAURAN MARKET

You'll find any kind of Surabaya style foods in Blauran street, Central Surabaya. Here are just some of the unique treats available: *klanting*, *lontong balap*, *rujak cingur*, *rujak gobet*, *tahu campur*, *tahu tek*, *semanggi suroboyo*, *dawet*, *legen* and *dawet campur*. At night, this place becomes even more rowdy.



UBUD MARKET

There is something undeniably iconic about Ubud's main market. Located in the centre of city, this easy-to-find market is where the locals buy their daily groceries, as well as where they go for some local lunch like *nasi ayam* and *babi guling*.

FESTIVAL

SINGKAWANG CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

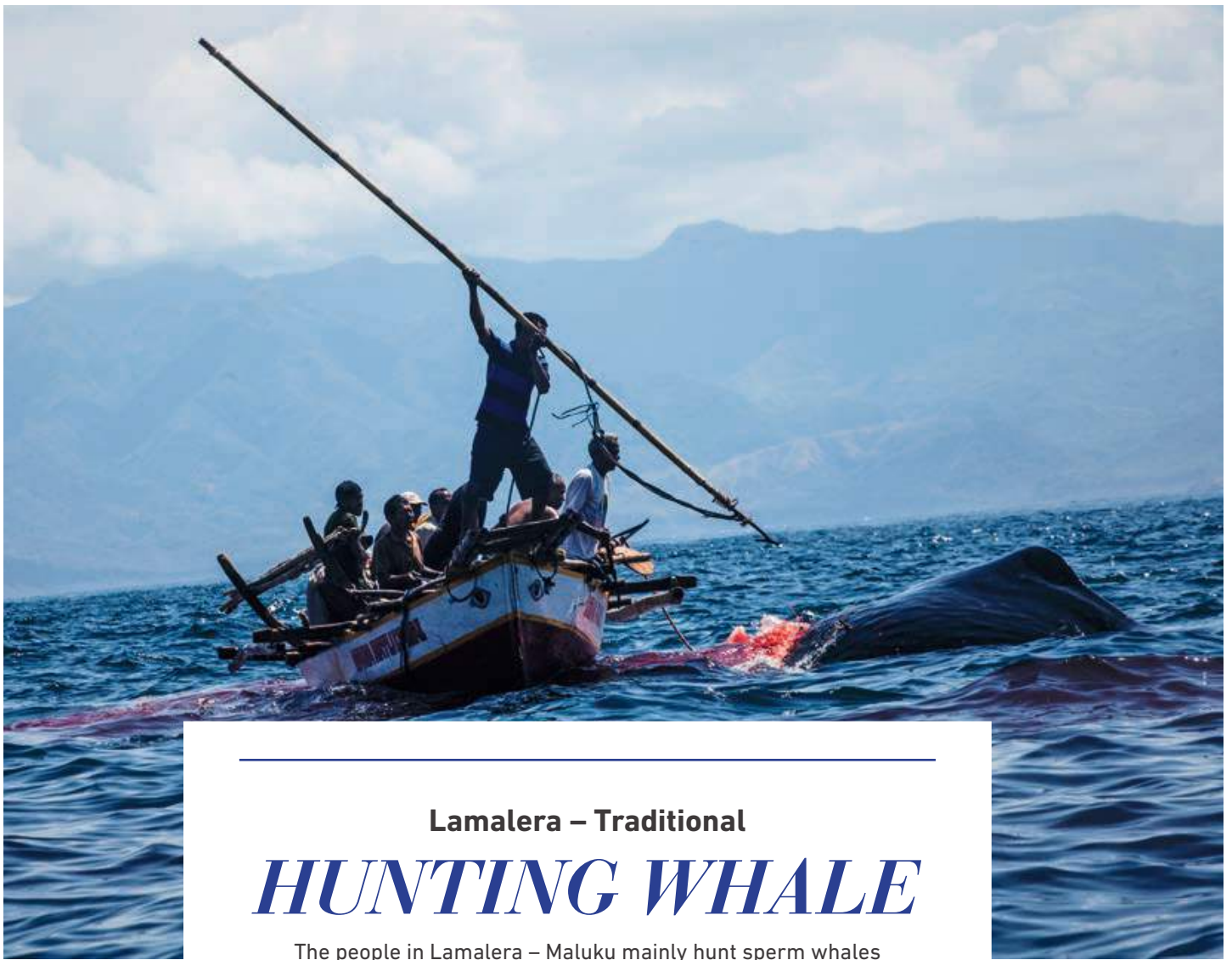
Known for its production of fine Chinese ceramics and its hundreds of Chinese temples, Singkawang traditionally holds a lantern parade on the eve Cap Go Meh. The peak of the festival and of the entire Chinese New Year series of celebrations will then climax in a parade of the ancient art of Tatung.

Intended to repel misfortunes for the rest of the year, Tatung is the principle medium of the Cap Go Meh ritual. During the Tatung rituals, its participants will enter into a trance and perform many unbelievable stunts such as stepping on a sword or sticking steel wires or nails into their cheeks. What is perhaps most extraordinary is that, despite such torture, the Tatungs are not wounded or even scarred.



SEMANA SANTA

Each year, during the week before Easter Sunday, the town of Larantuka, East Flores, solemnly celebrates the Holy Week, popularly known here as "Semana Santa". During this special week, thousands of pilgrims from Flores Java, Bali as well as many international tourists, throng this small city to watch Larantuka's unique commemoration of the Holy Week, which blends Old Portuguese devotion with local tradition. It's one of a kind.



Lamalera – Traditional *HUNTING WHALE*

The people in Lamalera – Maluku mainly hunt sperm whales and orcas. Before the hunt, hunters hold a prayer ceremony and sing songs about the mother sea as The Lamalera's people, the lamafa, believe it is bad luck to go to the sea angry. The hunting season is between May and October.



SAIL MOROTAI

Sail Morotai is an international sailing event held by Sail Indonesia in cooperation with the Indonesian Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Indonesian Maritime Board, and a number of other government agencies. More than 100 participants from various countries across the world has partook in the event, with many more expected to come in upcoming events.

MAP

1. **Trowulan.** Mojokerto Regency, East Java.
2. **Komodo Islands.** East Nusa Tenggara.
3. **Muara Kuin and Lok Baintan Floating Market.** At the mouth of the River Barito Kuin, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan

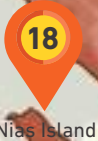
4. **Seger Beach.** Lombok, approximately 2 kilometres from the east of Kuta Beach.
5. **Bengkulu.** A province of Indonesia on the southwest coast of the island of Sumatra.
6. **Pariaman.** A coastal city in West Sumatra.

7. **Bali.** An island and province of Indonesia, famous for its beautiful travel destinations.
8. **Penyengat Island.** An island in Riau Province, lies just off Bintan Island, close to Tanjung Pinang
9. **Muara Angke Fish Market.** Jl. Dermaga I Muara Angke, Pluit, Penjaringan, North Jakarta

10. **Koto Masjid Fish Market.** Koto Masjid Village, Kampar Regency, West Sumatra
11. **Banda Neira Fish Market.** Banda Neira Island, Molucca Province.
12. **Bersehati Fish Market.** Jl. Nusantara, Manado, North Sulawesi.
13. **Weh Islands.** Northwest of Sumatra, Indonesia.



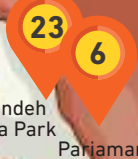
Weh Island



Nias Island



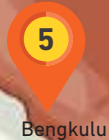
Riau



Mandeh Sea Park



Pariaman



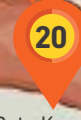
Bengkulu



Penyengat Island



Batu Karas



Batu Karas



Barito



Mojokerto



Bali



Nusa Lembongan



Lombok



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14. Derawan. Islands in the province of East Kalimantan. Located in the Sulawesi Sea, on the coastal shelf of East Kalimantan

15. Nusa Lembongan. An island on the southeast of Bali.

16. Raja Ampat. An archipelago located on the island of New Guinea, West Papua Province.

17. Gili. An archipelago of three small islands in the West Nusa Tenggara.

18. Nias. An island off the western coast of Sumatra.

19. Canggu Beach. A beach area in South Bali, north of Seminyak and south of Tanah Lot.

20. Batu Karas Beach. A coastal area in West Java.

21. Bitung. A city on the northern coast of the island of Sulawesi.

22. Lihaga Island. Located in Likupang, Minahasa, South Sulawesi.

23. Mandeh Sea Park. Located at Koto XI in Tarusan sub-district, West Sumatra.

24. Maritime Museum. Located in the old Sunda

Kelapa harbour area of Old Town Jakarta.

25. Meru Temple
Jl. Selaparang, Cakranegara, Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara.

26. Bena Traditional Village. A traditional village in the Tiwuriwu Village, Aimere District, about 19 km south Bajawa, Ngada, Flores.



INDONESIAN PINISI

THE SEAFARING BEAST



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